

END-OF-COURSE TEST

Listening 1

Presenter Hello and welcome to *Science Matters*. In the studio today I have Professor William Jones from the Cardiff College of Neurological Research. His research into the way the brain behaves when stimulated by noise completely changed the way we looked at the functions of the brain in the nineties. And before that, some of you may recall Professor Jones's first piece of published research on how the brain responds to words. In his latest research, however, Professor Jones has been looking at a related but different field. Good afternoon, Professor.

Prof. Jones Good afternoon.

Presenter So, what has your latest research shown?

Prof. Jones Well, my team and I have been looking at how music is understood by our brains. Unlike the study of the brain and its response to everyday noise, where most of the research is being carried out in America, I believe we are the only people looking at this area of study. And an important one at that.

Presenter Indeed. So, how exactly do you measure the brain's responses?

Prof. Jones Well, we selected the music carefully first. We wanted music that was composed of a number of short sections so that we could find out how the brain was able to make sense of short pieces followed by brief silences. That suggested to us that eighteenth-century baroque music would be best suited rather than the longer movements of nineteenth-century music or the more experimental sounds of the twentieth century. Our other consideration was that we didn't want to involve the part of the brain connected with memory, so it was extremely important that the people who took part in the research had no idea who the composer they were listening to was. We then recorded computerized images of people listening to these short pieces of music.

Presenter And what are your findings?

Prof. Jones The most interesting image that we recorded involved how the brain responded in the silence between each section of music – the pause when the music stops then starts again. It seems that the brain is more attentive during this silence than it is when music is playing. And this has significant implications. It suggests that listening to music is a way of training your brain to pay attention more. Equally, it might mean that playing music while studying or working will help your brain to focus better and for you to better think about the task you are carrying out.

Presenter Fascinating, Professor. Thank you.

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Listening 2

1

Presenter Welcome to *Rock Today*, the weekly radio programme that lets you interview the stars. On today's programme we have Mick Stagger, the legendary rock singer. Hi Mick. Welcome to the *Rock Today* studio. You've been doing this for a long time, haven't you?

Mick Hi everyone. It's great to be here. Well, I've been in the music business for a while, as you say. Before the band and I got together almost two decades ago, I performed on my own, solo, for three or four years.

2

Nigel Hi. I'm Nigel on line 1.

Mick Hi Nigel.

Nigel Hi Mick. My question is: what's your best-ever song?

Mick Wow. Good question. I always used to say that it must be either *Love is the Answer* or *I'm Always Wrong*. And I know the fans love those early songs, especially the first one I mentioned. But I think we just get better and better as a band so, for me, it'd have to be one of the songs off our last CD.

3

Jackie Hi Mick. It's Jackie on line 3.

Mick Hi Jackie.

Jackie What's your greatest regret, Mick?

Mick Well, you should never worry about the things you do. It's those things you wish you'd done that frustrate you. We should've gone to America much earlier than we did, I reckon. We would've been huge there ten years ago. The two live concerts we've played, one last year and one the year before, were both successful, but I wish we'd built up that fan base way back when we were young. We'll be returning to America in the summer, that's for sure.

4

Diana It's Diana on line 2. Hi Mick.

Mick Hi.

Diana What did you use to do at school when you were a kid, Mick?

Mick What a question, Diana. I guess you expect me to say the usual bad boy rock star things like being rude to the teachers and stealing stuff. But you'll be surprised to hear that I was no wild child, and although I didn't exactly work hard at school, I did just enough not to fail my exams, and I didn't get expelled or anything.

5

Paula Hi Mick. Paula on line 1.

Mick Hi Paula.

Paula I'm in a band myself. What advice would you give us?

Mick Well, you've got to believe in yourself. That's the main thing. Think you're better than everyone else. Work hard and don't take no for an answer, even if you secretly think no is actually a pretty good answer. Be honest with yourself and everyone else, and get to know and mix with people who matter. And be ruthless with hangers-on who don't matter – this is a tough business, and it's all about knowing the right people.