

**ESCUELA
OFICIAL
DE
IDIOMAS
OVIEDO**

CENTRO DE AUTOAPRENDIZAJE

IDIOMA: INGLÉS

PRÁCTICA: COMPRENSIÓN ORAL

NIVEL: NIVEL INTERMEDIO

MATERIAL: CINTA-CD / CUESTIONARIO / SOLUCIONES

TEMA: VOCABULARIO

ABBA®



The ABBA story started in June 1966 when Björn Ulvæus (born 1945), member of a very popular folk music group, met Benny Andersson (born 1946), who played keyboards in Sweden's biggest pop group of the 1960s, The Hep Stars, met for the first time.

In the spring of 1969, Björn and Benny met the two women who were to become not only their wives but also the other half of ABBA. Agnetha Fältskog (born 1950) had been a successful solo singer. She and Björn were married in July 1971. Anni-Frid Lyngstad (born 1945), also known as Frida, had started her recording career shortly before Agnetha. Benny and Frida didn't get married until October 1978.

After some not very successful attempts, in the spring of 1972 they recorded a song called 'People Need Love', garnering a medium-sized hit in Sweden. At this time they called themselves Björn & Benny, Agnetha & Anni-Frid.

Encouraged by this success, they entered the 1973 Swedish selections for the Eurovision Song Contest with the song 'Ring Ring', which finished third. The group entered the selections again in 1974, this time with 'Waterloo', which took them all the way to the finals in Brighton, England. By this time they had changed their name to ABBA, an acronym of their first names. ABBA was also the name of a Swedish canned fish company, which luckily agreed to lending their name to a pop group. The Eurovision Song Contest on April 6, 1974 turned out to be the most famous moment in ABBA history. Soon 'Waterloo' was Number One on the charts all over Europe, and even reached the US Top Ten. However, the "stigma" of being winners of the Eurovision Song Contest made it difficult for ABBA to be taken seriously when they tried to follow this first success. It was not until some 18 months later that they got a major worldwide hit again with 'SOS', taken off their third album, simply titled ABBA.

'Mamma Mia', also taken from ABBA, returned the group to the UK Number One spot, which they occupied a total of nine times between 1974 and 1980.

1976 was the year when ABBA finally and firmly established themselves as one of the most popular groups in the world. Classic single releases such as 'Fernando' and 'Dancing Queen' topped the charts all over the world. In April 1977, 'Dancing Queen' became ABBA's only US Number One.

In late 1976 ABBA's fourth album, *Arrival*, was released. The album stormed up the charts and spawned hits such as 'Money, Money, Money' and 'Knowing Me, Knowing You'. The spring of 1978 saw the group embarking on a major promotional campaign in the USA. The hit singles 'Summer Night City' and 'Chiquitita' were followed by ABBA's sixth album, 'Voulez-Vous', released in April 1979. Earlier that year, Björn and Agnetha announced their divorce. This did not mean the end of ABBA, but it did overthrow their image of two happy, music-making couples.

ABBA's single 'Gimme! Gimme! Gimme! (A Man After Midnight)' was released in the autumn of 1979, coinciding with a major tour of Canada, the United States and Europe. Around the same time a second compilation album, *Greatest Hits Vol.2*, became an international success.

In February 1981 the final blow was dealt to ABBA's happy-couples image of the 1970s, when Benny and Frida announced their divorce. 1982 saw the energy gradually running out of the group. At the end of 1982, ABBA decided to take a break. If they wanted to they could always get back together after a few years, they reasoned.

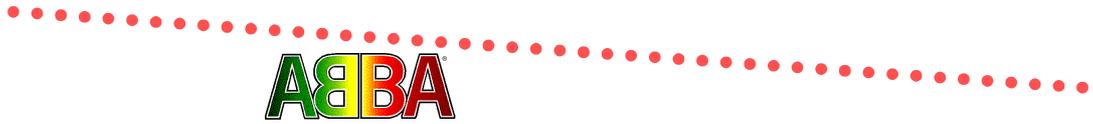
Some two decades later, there still has been no ABBA reunion. But ABBA's music lives on: the 1990s saw the beginning of a major revival, with high-profile movies using ABBA songs on their soundtracks attracting a great deal of attention. The compilation CD *ABBA Gold*, released in 1992, has sold 25 million copies to date, becoming a seemingly permanent fixture on charts all over the world.

The 1993 companion album, *More ABBA Gold*, went on to sell 2.5 million copies. The box set *Thank You For The Music* followed in 1994, containing all the hits, selected album tracks, plus rare and previously unreleased recordings.

1999 saw the London première of the hugely successful musical *Mamma Mia!*, based on the songs of ABBA. *Mamma Mia!* opened in Toronto in May 2000 and separate productions have toured the US, Australia, The Netherlands, Korea, etc.



THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC



ABBA

The following words have been removed from the lyrics:

<i>bore</i>	<i>sing</i>	<i>before</i>	<i>proud</i>
<i>bringing</i>	<i>walk</i>	<i>can</i>	<i>talk</i>
<i>fan</i>	<i>heart</i>	<i>thing</i>	<i>loud</i>
	<i>start</i>	<i>singing</i>	

① Check that you know their meaning (see the *language notes* below) and pronunciation and match them in twos according to their rhyme.

e.g. *What would life be?*
Without a song or a dance what are we?

be rhymes with *we*

② Read through the lyrics and try to reconstruct the ending of the verses by putting in the pairs of words.

③ Listen to the song and check your answers.

I'm nothing special, in fact I'm a bit of a _____
 If I tell a joke, you've probably heard it _____
 But I have a talent, a wonderful _____
 'Cause everyone listens when I start to _____
 I'm so grateful and _____
 All I want is to sing it out _____
 So I say

Thank you for the music, the songs I'm _____
 Thanks for all the joy they're _____
 Who can live without it, I ask in all honesty

What would life be?
 Without a song or a dance what are we?
 So I say thank you for the music
 For giving it to me

Mother says I was a dancer before I could _____
 She says I began to sing long before I could _____
 And I've often wondered, how did it all _____?
 Who found out that nothing can capture a _____
 Like a melody _____?
 Well, whoever it was, I'm a _____
 So I say

Thank you for the music...

I've been so lucky, I am the girl with golden hair
 I wanna sing it out to everybody
 What a joy, what a life, what a chance!
 So I say

Thank you for the music...



LANGUAGE NOTES

bore = a tiresome or dull person or thing.

chance = the way things happen; fortune; luck.

find (something) out = to get information about something.

grateful = thankful; showing or expressing thanks.

joy = great happiness.

wanna = want to.

whoever = the person who; any person who.

wonder = to ask yourself questions or express a desire to know about something.

KEY

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC



① **bore-before** **thing-sing** **proud-loud** **singing-bringing**
 walk-talk **start-heart** **can-fan**

②

I'm nothing special, in fact I'm a bit of a bore
 If I tell a joke, you've probably heard it before
 But I have a talent, a wonderful thing
 'Cause everyone listens when I start to sing
 I'm so grateful and proud
 All I want is to sing it out loud
 So I say

Thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing
 Thanks for all the joy they're bringing
 Who can live without it, I ask in all honesty
 What would life be?
 Without a song or a dance what are we?
 So I say thank you for the music
 For giving it to me

Mother says I was a dancer before I could walk
 She says I began to sing long before I could talk
 And I've often wondered, how did it all start?
 Who found out that nothing can capture a heart
 Like a melody can?
 Well, whoever it was, I'm a fan
 So I say

Thank you for the music...

I've been so lucky, I am the girl with golden hair
 I wanna sing it out to everybody
 What a joy, what a life, what a chance!
 So I say

Thank you for the music...