

## Introduction

This support pack contains the following materials:

- a pre-reading vocabulary activity;
- the story that you can listen to;
- a comprehension activity based on the story;
- a vocabulary activity based on the story.

## Before you read.

Choose the best meaning for each of the words from the story.

1. A **fix** is...
  - a. When somebody mends something that is broken
  - b. A dishonest result
  - c. A type of award
  - d. A result that makes everybody happy
2. A **judge** is...
  - a. Somebody who decides something
  - b. Somebody who wins an award
  - c. Somebody who makes something
  - d. A type of musician
3. An **album** is...
  - a. A long book
  - b. A collection of songs
  - c. A photograph
  - d. A concert
4. A **critic** is...
  - a. Somebody who sings songs
  - b. A type of journalist
  - c. Somebody who writes about music, art, film, books, etc.
  - d. A review of a book or concert
5. An **envelope** is...
  - a. A bag
  - b. A box
  - c. A piece of paper which contains another piece of paper
  - d. A jacket

**The Fix**

by Chris Rose

The four judges have been sitting in a small room in the Milton Hotel in London for three hours now. The judges must agree on who will win the four awards in the important Global Music Awards: best album, best song, best new band and lifetime achievement award. Outside the small room where the judges are, five hundred people are sitting waiting. They are all very excited, and they are all very nervous. They want to know who is going to win the important awards. The television show goes live in 30 minutes. Excitement is growing; tension is rising.



But there is a problem. A big problem. The judges have not yet agreed on one single thing.

The judges must all agree on each winner. If they can't all agree, then the award will not be given – nobody will win.

The four judges are David Froth, the music critic for an important newspaper, Betty Weill, the head of a big record company, Jake Dangerous, a singer who won the award for best song last year and Dan Snaith. Dan Snaith isn't an important person. Dan Snaith is a reader of *New Music Weekly*, a music magazine. He won a competition in the magazine to be one of the judges of the Global Music Awards.

"OK guys, come on...we have to decide now," says David Froth. "We can't wait any more. Best Album - I vote for the Polar Gorillas' first album,

their punk-influenced sound and intelligent lyrics make them the best band around."

"I agree," says Betty Weill. "But they're all very young – we can give them the Best New Band award, then we can give the Best Album award to Janie Waller. Her album, *Smooth as Chocolate*, is a great jazz-pop crossover."

"It's already sold a million copies" says Jake Dangerous.

"Exactly!" says Betty.

"No!" says Jake. "It's already sold a million copies, so she doesn't need an award! The Best Album should go to Missy Queen. Her album *Girlz Can Rap* is the best hip-hop record in years."

"Hmmm...it's certainly an impressive record," says David Froth, "but I think there's only one really great track on it – the song 'Hey! You! Listen Up!'"

"We can give her Best Song then!" says Jake.

"Ok, now we're getting somewhere. We're finally making progress," says David Froth. "What about Lifetime Achievement? Remember, this is a really important award. It's recognition for a singer who has changed the course of popular music!"

"I think Jake Dangerous should win," says Jake Dangerous. Nobody listens to him.

"Dan – what do you think?" asks David Froth.

Dan says nothing. He was very excited about being a judge for the Global Music Awards, but now he is disappointed. Dan knows that David Froth wants the Polar Gorillas to win because he was the first person to write about them – he "discovered" them, and so when they become very famous, Froth will take the credit. Betty Weill wants Janie Waller to win because Janie Waller releases records for her record company. If Janie Waller wins, her record will sell even more copies, and Betty Weill will become even richer. Jake Dangerous wants Missy Queen to win because Missy Queen is his girlfriend. Dan is disappointed because now he knows that the Global Music Awards are, in fact, a fix.

"Look, our time is up!" says Froth. "Can we agree on this: Best Album, Janie Waller. Best

Song, Missy Queen. Best New Band, Polar Gorillas. Lifetime Achievement...ok Dan, we'll leave this up to you. But remember – Dylan Roberts is in the audience tonight, so is Jack Michaelson, and Nobbo from X5. I don't have to tell you that Dylan Roberts is the voice of a generation, Jack Michaelson is very, very rich, and Nobbo from X5 is bringing peace to the world. He's also a friend of the Secretary General of the United Nations. The choice is yours!"

The judges walk out onto the stage in the Milton Hotel. Five hundred excited, nervous people are watching them. Five hundred cameras flash when they go on stage. Dan feels very scared. He also knows that millions of people around the world are watching on TV.

The judges all stand up on the stage and pretend to open envelopes.

"And the winner is..." they all say. There is a moment of silence then lots and lots of really loud applause as the judges read out the names of their friends.

Then it is Dan's turn.

"Ok everyone," says David Froth, "Are we having a good time?!" Everyone shouts and claps. "Finally, we arrive at perhaps the most important award this evening: the Lifetime Achievement Award. Who will win this year? Will it be Dylan Roberts, voice of a generation? Or Jack Michaelson? Erm...dancer of a generation. Or Nobbo, bringer of world peace? To present the award, here is Dan Snaith, winner of the *New Music Weekly* competition." Five hundred people applaud and shout. Five hundred

cameras flash again in Dan's face. Millions of people are watching him on TV. Dan gets up nervously and stands in front of the microphone.

"Good evening!" he says. He opens an envelope which has a piece of paper in it. Nothing is written on the piece of paper. He says the words, "...and the winner is..." He stops and pauses. There is total silence in the room.

"The winner is....you!"

There is more total silence in the room. A few people say "What???"

"That's right!" continues Dan, feeling more confident now. "You!" He looks directly into the TV cameras. "All the people around the world who listen to music and play music and love music! You are the most important people!"

There is the sound of surprise in the big room. Dan sees Dylan Roberts, Jack Michaelson and Nobbo leave the room.

"These awards," Dan continues, "are a fix! The music business is a fix! If nobody listened to or bought the music, there would be no winners here tonight. That is why YOU are the winners!"

Some people cheer and applaud, some people say "boooo!".

But tonight, Dan Snaith knows that he has won, too.

## After reading

### Exercise 2

Look at the events or opinions from the story and match them to the character who says or thinks them.

David Froth	Betty Weill	Jake Dangerous	Dan Snaith

- Is a music critic
- Is a record company boss
- Is a singer
- Is a prizewinner
- Is disappointed
- Is Missy Queen's boyfriend
- Likes Missy Queen
- Likes the Polar Gorillas
- Must choose the Lifetime Achievement award winner
- Surprises everybody
- Thinks Dylan Roberts is the voice of a generation
- Thinks Jake Dangerous should win the Lifetime Achievement award
- Thinks Janie Waller is great

### Exercise 3

Put one of the words from the table into each of the sentences below.

a. achievement	b. agree	c. applause	d. audience
e. critic	f. judge	g. lyrics	h. vote

1. I think that Dylan Roberts is a poet, not just a singer. He writes such great words, more than typical song \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In an awards competition, often members of the public are asked to \_\_\_\_\_ for their favourite artists by sending text messages or emails.
3. I'm not sure what my greatest \_\_\_\_\_ is – it's difficult to think about all the good things I have done in my life.
4. When the band came onto the stage of the stadium, there were 10,000 people there, all clapping and cheering. The \_\_\_\_\_ was really loud!
5. When I want to know if a film or a record is good, I often go and read an article by a good \_\_\_\_\_ in the newspaper or online.
6. Usually, judges in an award have to \_\_\_\_\_ on who wins.
7. As Dan went on stage, there were five hundred people in the \_\_\_\_\_ watching him.
8. When we \_\_\_\_\_ something, we express an opinion on it.

**Answers**
**Exercise 1:** 1. *b*; 2. *a*; 3. *b*; 4. *c*; 5. *c*
**Exercise 2:**

<b>David Froth</b>	<b>Betty Weill</b>	<b>Jake Dangerous</b>	<b>Dan Snaith</b>
Is a music critic Likes the Polar Gorillas Thinks Dylan Roberts is the voice of a generation	Is a record company boss Thinks Janie Waller is great	Is a singer Likes Missy Queen Thinks Jake Dangerous should win the Lifetime Achievement award Is Missy Queen's boyfriend	Is a prizewinner Is disappointed Must choose the Lifetime Achievement award winner Surprises everybody

**Exercise 3:** 1. *g*; 2. *h*; 3. *a*; 4. *c*; 5. *e*; 6. *b*; 7. *d*; 8. *f*

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