

Area of Study 4: Popular Music

Candle in the Wind – Student Sheet

Words by Bernie Taupin / Music by Elton John

VERSE 1

Goodbye Norma Jeane, though I never knew you at all,
You had the grace to hold yourself while those around you crawled,
They crawled out of the woodwork and they whispered into your brain,
They set you on the treadmill and they made you change your name.

CHORUS 1

And it seems to me you lived your life like a candle in the wind,
Never knowing who to cling to when the rain set in,
And I would've liked to have known you but I was just a kid,
Your candle burned out long before your legend ever did.

VERSE 2

Loneliness was tough, the toughest role you ever played,,
Hollywood created a superstar and pain was the price you paid,
And even when you died, oh the press still hounded you,
All the papers had to say was that Marilyn was found in the nude.

CHORUS 2

And it seems to me you lived your life like a candle in the wind,
Never knowing who to cling to when the rain set in,
And I would've liked to have known you but I was just a kid,
Your candle burned out long before your legend ever did.

VERSE 3

Goodbye Norma Jeane, though I never knew you at all,
You had the grace to hold yourself while those around you crawled,
Goodbye Norma Jean from the young man in the twenty-second row,
Who sees you as something more than sexual, more than just our Marilyn Monroe.

CHORUS 3

And it seems to me you lived your life like a candle in the wind,
Never knowing who to cling to when the rain set in,
And I would've liked to have known you but I was just a kid,
Your candle burned out long before your legend ever did.
Your candle burned out long before your legend ever did.

Candle in the Wind was written in 1973 in honour of the Hollywood actress Marilyn Monroe who had died eleven years earlier. The lyrics of the song are a sympathetic portrayal of her life. Bernie Taupin said the song is about 'the idea of fame or youth or somebody being cut short in the prime of their life. It's about the way that we glamorize death and how we immortalize people'.

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1) Which of the following musical devices does NOT occur in the introduction?
(Underline one).

Triads Sequences Syncopation
(block chords) (restatement of an idea at a higher or lower pitch) (off-beat rhythms)

2) Which of the following instruments does NOT perform during Verse 1?

Bass Guitar Acoustic Guitar Electric Guitar

3) What is the time signature of this piece?

4/4 (four crotchet beats per bar) 12/8 (twelve quaver beats per bar)
3/4 (three crotchet beats per bar) 9/8 (nine quaver beats per bar)

4) During Chorus 1, how many backing vocalists accompany the lead vocalist?

2 3 4

5) In between Chorus 1 and Verse 2 there is an instrumental link during which an electric guitar plays a short riff (a short repeating phrase used in Jazz and Popular Music). How does the riff end each time?

With its lowest pitch With its median pitch With its highest pitch

6) During Verse 2, most of the words are set syllabically (each syllable of text is matched to a single note). However, there are occurrences where words are set melismatically (a single syllable moves between different notes). Identify a word that is set melismatically.

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7) The backing vocalists accompany the lead vocalist using both text and vocalisations (Ah, Oh etc.) When, during the first two lines of Chorus 2, do they use the text?

At the beginning of each line During the middle of each line At the end of each line

8) Which statement best describes the general dynamic of Verse 3?

Piano (Quiet) Mezzo forte (Moderately Loud) Forte (Loud)

9) And which statement best describes the musical texture of Verse 3?

It is at its thickest It is the same as the previous verses It is at its thinnest

10) For the most part, each Chorus is harmonised using only the Primary Chords (I, IV and V), all of which are major. However, there is one occurrence of a Secondary Chord (vi), which is minor. Which words of the text are harmonised with this minor chord?

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11) During the Outro, how is the final statement of the electric guitar riff different from all the earlier occurrences?

It is performed in dialogue with another instrument It is harmonised

12) Identify the tonality of this piece.

Minor Major