

You probably already know that music is a great way to learn and practice English. Choosing who to listen to can be difficult, though, as there are so many great artists and music genres available. Choosing who to listen to can be almost as difficult as learning English.

In these handouts, we're going to look at some of the more popular western artists. We'll talk a little bit about their personal lives and also learn the lyrics (words) from one or two of their more popular songs. Questions about the artists and their music can be sent to me at [teacher@englishforlife.ca](mailto:teacher@englishforlife.ca).

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There are many storied musicians who have had long careers in the music industry but perhaps none is more **iconic** than Sting. He was born Gordon Matthew Thomas Sumner in Wallsend, Northumberland, England, in 1951; he later became Sting when a bandmate nicknamed him after the black and yellow striped sweater he was wearing that made him look like a bumblebee. Whether it was his reaction to having such a long and official sounding name, or his artistic **temperament**, Sting adopted the nickname from that moment on. In 2002, a journalist who addressed him by his given name was strongly rebuked by the musician, who insisted that "Sting" was his one and only name.

Sting's career got off to a slow start; his passion for music drove him to take in concerts whenever possible, by artists such as Eric Clapton's original band, Cream. However, Sting did well at school and immediately attended university after leaving grade school, if only for one semester. This was followed by a **succession** of jobs before returning to university and graduating with a teaching degree in 1974. He spent the next two years teaching at a **distinguished** school in Cramlington while devoting his evenings and weekends to jamming in local pubs.

Sting joined Stewart Copeland and Henry Padovani (who was quickly replaced by Andy Summers) to form The Police. The band quickly rose to fame with a series of albums containing one hit song after another. Many of the songs were written by Sting, and his political and other concerns became very **apparent**. Songs like "Every Breath You Take" and "Roxanne" were accompanied by others such as "Don't Stand So Close to Me". The last of the three discussed a potentially controversial situation where a student develops a crush on her teacher; this topic has become a **taboo** in recent decades and Sting responded to the controversy with a complex and well-thought approach rather than a blind conservative reaction.

The band dissolved in 1984 and its members pursued solo careers while occasionally reuniting in support of various important causes. Among the wide array of causes he's supported, Amnesty International and groups promoting child and environmental **issues** have been the most prominent. His work with The Police had already established his stardom and his solo career continued its upward **trajectory** into superstardom. Sting has been often listed as one of the wealthiest entertainers in music and has a long and distinguished list of awards and accolades. His musical influences have been as diverse as pop, jazz, rock 'n roll, reggae and classical, just to name a few. His body of work has made him a magnet for other artists wanting to collaborate and learn from his example and talent.

In his personal life, Sting is the father of six children, two from his first marriage and four from his current marriage. Some of his children have **followed in his footsteps**; all have done well. Sting is also a disciplined athlete, a yoga practitioner and a chess **afficionado**. Sting and a handful of friends once challenged chess legend Gary Kasparov to exhibition games (Kasparov playing all five men at once) but the result was not as spectacular as Sting's musical career. Kasparov defeated all five men in under an hour.

All of these accomplishments are a testament to Sting's intense work ethic, which he likely developed in his school years. They also signify that Sting's career and influence are far from over.

## Lyrics

### If I Ever Lose My Faith in You lyrics

You could say I lost my faith in science and progress  
You could say I lost my belief in the holy Church  
You could say I lost my sense of direction  
You could say all of this and worse, but  
If I ever lose my faith in you  
There'd be nothing left for me to do

Some would say I was a lost man in a lost world  
You could say I lost my faith in the people on TV  
You could say I'd lost my belief in our politicians  
They all seemed like game show hosts to me  
If I ever lose my faith in you  
There'd be nothing left for me to do  
I could be lost inside their lies without a trace  
But every time I close my eyes I see your face

I never saw no miracle of science  
That didn't go from a blessing to a curse  
I never saw no military solution  
That didn't always end up as something worse, but  
Let me say this first  
If I ever lose my faith in you  
There'd be nothing left for me to do

You'll remember me when the west wind moves  
Upon the fields of barley  
You'll forget the sun in his jealous sky  
As we walk in fields of gold

So she took her love  
For to gaze a while  
Upon the fields of barley  
In his arms she fell as her hair came down  
Among the fields of gold

Will you stay with me?  
Will you be my love?  
Upon the fields of barley  
We'll forget the sun in his jealous sky  
As we lie in fields of gold

### Englishman in New York lyrics

He deals the cards as a meditation  
And those he plays never suspect  
He doesn't play for the money he wins  
He don't play for respect

He deals the cards to find the answer  
The sacred geometry of chance  
The hidden law of a probable outcome  
The numbers lead a dance

I know that the spades are the swords of a soldier  
I know that the clubs are weapons of war  
I know that diamonds mean money for this art  
But that's not the shape of my heart

He may play the Jack of diamonds  
He may lay the Queen of spades  
He may conceal a King in his hand  
While the memory of it fades

I know that the spades are the swords of a soldier  
I know that the clubs are weapons of war  
I know that diamonds mean money for this art  
But that's not the shape of my heart  
That's not the shape, the shape of my heart

And if I told you that I loved you  
You'd maybe think there's something wrong  
I'm not a man of too many faces  
The mask I wear is one

But those who speak know nothing  
And find out to their cost  
Like those who curse their luck in too many places  
And those who fear a loss

I know that the spades are the swords of a soldier  
I know that the clubs are weapons of war  
I know that diamonds mean money for this art  
But that's not the shape of my heart  
That's not the shape of my heart  
That's not the shape, the shape of my heart

### Fields of Gold lyrics

See the west wind move like a lover so  
Upon the fields of barley  
Feel her body rise when you kiss her mouth  
Among the fields of gold

I never made promises lightly  
And there have been some that I've broken  
But I swear in the days still left  
We'll walk in fields of gold  
We'll walk in fields of gold

Many years have passed since those summer days  
Among the fields of barley  
See the children run as the sun goes down  
Among the fields of gold

You'll remember me when the west wind moves  
Upon the fields of barley  
You can tell the sun in his jealous sky  
When we walked in fields of gold  
When we walked in fields of gold  
When we walked in fields of gold

## **vocabulary**

<b>iconic</b>	widely known & well established in their field (“iconic writer”)
<b>temperament</b>	an emotional quality that is common to a person (“happy” or “sad”)
<b>succession</b>	the action of one person taking the place of another
<b>distinguished</b>	easily recognizable from others, sometimes to due excellence at a task or personal quality
<b>apparent</b>	easily seen; easy to see or recognize
<b>taboo</b>	something that is not acceptable to say, mention, or do
<b>issues</b>	something that is important; a dispute between two or more people
<b>trajectory</b>	the path which something is following (such as a plane or a rocket)
<b>followed in his footsteps</b>	(idiom) to do something that someone else did (such as a father or mother)
<b>afficionado</b>	a person who likes something (an object or activity) and knows much about it

## **YouTube videos**

[Don't Stand So Close so Close to Me \(The Police\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNIZofPB8ZM)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNIZofPB8ZM>

[Roxanne \(The Police\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3T1c7GkzRQQ)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3T1c7GkzRQQ>

[Sting If I Ever Lose My Faith in You](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cye8eT_eoqU)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cye8eT\\_eoqU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cye8eT_eoqU)

[Sting - Englishman in New York](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d27gTrPPAyk)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d27gTrPPAyk>

[Sting - Fields of Gold](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLVq0IAzh1A)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLVq0IAzh1A>

[Sting - Shape of My Heart \(Official Music Video\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlwIDxCjL-8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlwIDxCjL-8>

## **Article Research Sources**

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