



BANDSLAM

- EXTRA

Level 2

This level is suitable for students who have been learning English for at least two years and up to three years. It corresponds with the Common European Framework level A2. Suitable for users of CROWN/TEAM magazines.

SYNOPSIS

Music-loving teenager Will is bullied at his school in Cincinnati, and is relieved when his mother suggests moving to New Jersey. In his new school, Will becomes friends with two girls. Sam is a quiet loner, while former cheerleader Charlotte is very cool. Charlotte sings in a band and Will is amazed when she asks him to be the manager. They plan to take part in a popular music competition for local bands, Bandslam.

However, Charlotte quits the band just before Bandslam when her father dies. She breaks friends with Will saying that she was only friends with him to please her dad. When Will's secret from Cincinnati is revealed – his father killed a high school student in a drink-driving accident – the bullying starts again. Nonetheless, the band plays Bandslam with Sam taking over as the lead singer.

The band do not win the competition, but their performance is posted online. Will's life takes a turn for the better when he is reconciled with Charlotte, and Sam becomes his girlfriend. His happiness is complete when Will's hero – British singer David Bowie – sees the band online and contacts him to discuss a record deal.

THE BACK STORY

Bandslam (2009) was co-written by the director, Todd Graff. Although the story is set in New Jersey, the film-makers shot

most of it in Austin, Texas because of the city's strong links with music. (Austin is sometimes called the Live Music Capital of the World, and there are major music festivals there every year.)

Vanessa Hudgens (Sam) and Aly Michalka (Charlotte) were already well-known before the film. Vanessa starred in the hugely successful *High School Musical* films and Aly is already a successful recording star. Actor Gaelan Connell was less well-known than his co-stars. He originally auditioned for the role of the cellist because he himself plays the cello. However, Todd Graff thought he was just right for the main part of Will instead.

All of the actors sing their own parts in the film, and most of them play their own instruments too. The director insisted that the actors rehearse together as a real band for two weeks.

Will's eclectic taste in music is vital to the film, and so the soundtrack was very important. Director Todd Graff said, 'I always thought if it only sent one kid to listen to a Velvet Underground record, it would be worth it to me.'

MEDIA LINKS

DVD: The film *Bandslam* is available on DVD.

CD: A recording of *Bandslam* is available to accompany the Scholastic Reader.

Internet: You can find more information at the official website: www.bandslam-movie.com

HOW TO USE YOUR SCHOLASTIC READER

Choosing and motivating

Is this the right story for your class? Do they like romantic comedies? Are they interested in popular music? Motivate them with background information (see The Back Story above) and by reading aloud the first page of the story with dramatic atmosphere.

Organising

Plan a class reading schedule. Decide how many pages to set for reading each week. Select exercises from the Self-Study activities at the back of the reader and extra activities from this resource sheet to go with each chunk of reading. (All answers on page 4 of this resource sheet.)

Using the CD

Students can listen and follow in their books. They can listen and then read. They can read and then listen. All these activities will improve their reading speeds and skills.

Using the DVD

Select the English language option on the DVD. The film is 111 minutes. You could show it in chunks of around 20 minutes in parallel with the class reading schedule. Alternatively, show it as a reward when the class have finished the book.

Glossary

Go to 'New Words' at the back of the reader. Translate the words with the class or get students to find meanings at home. The Vocabulary Builder on page 3 of this resource sheet practises the new words in a different context.

Casual language

Introduce the informal expressions used in *Bandslam*. (See Vocabulary Builder on page 3 of this resource sheet.) Put them into context. Ask students to look out for them as they read.

Fact Files

Set these as self-study or use for whole class work. These provide background information about the actors, music featured in the film and how singers and bands become famous.

What did they think?

Get everyone to do a written or spoken review of *Bandslam*. Compare opinions. Will they go and see the film? Did you like it? Let us know at readers@link2english.com.

COMPETITIONS AND UPDATES

Check www.scholasticelreaders.com for competitions and other activities related to the Scholastic Readers.

RESOURCE SHEET STUDENT ACTIVITIES



People and places

Who ...

- a) ... writes her name with '5' in it? Sam
- b) ... is Will's mum?
- c) ... knows everything about music?
- d) ... wants to win Bandslam?
- e) ... wants to be Will's friend?

What ...

- f) ... is a punk rock club in New York?
- g) ... is on the east coast of the USA?
- h) ... is a big music competition?

Prologue–Chapter 2

1 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false sentences.

- a) Will hates music.
F. Will loves music.
- b) Will has many friends in Cincinnati.
.....
- c) Will is Sam's partner in Social Studies.
.....
- d) Charlotte's band practises in her bedroom.
.....
- e) Omar plays the piano.
.....
- f) Omar and Bug are in Ben Wheatly's band.
.....
- g) Charlotte was a cheerleader.
.....

2 Circle the correct words in *italics*.

- a) Karen wants Will to go to a *bigger* / (different) school.
- b) Charlotte is *cool* / *not pretty*.

- c) Charlotte's dad is *ill* / *away*.
- d) Will's *good* / *bad* in groups.
- e) Charlotte sings *well* / *badly*.
- f) Omar and Bug play *quietly* / *loudly*.
- g) Charlotte is *friendly* / *not friendly* to Ben.

3 Talk to a partner. What do you think?

- a) Is Charlotte a nice person? Why or why not?
- b) Why is Charlotte friends with Will?

Chapters 3–5

1 Match the people with their jobs in the band.

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|-------------------|
| a) Charlotte | | i) manager |
| b) Basher Martin | | ii) guitar player |
| c) Bug | | iii) drummer |
| d) Omar | | iv) singer |
| e) Will | | v) bass player |

2 Who says this? Choose the correct person for each sentence.

Basher Bug Charlotte Sam Will
--

- a) 'I like older girls.' Basher
- b) 'It's not even a name!'
- c) 'We were a joke before Will came.'
- d) 'So this is my favourite place.'
- e) 'This is just a lesson.'
- f) 'Do you like scary films?'
- g) 'This is what Will is like. He's a mirror for you.'
- h) 'I'm so5rry, Sa5m.'

3 Talk to a partner. What do you think? What is Sam's favourite place? What is your favourite place?

Chapters 6–Epilogue

1 Put these events in the right order.

- a) Charlotte leaves the band.
- b) Charlotte's dad dies.
- c) Ben calls Will 'Dewey'. 1
- d) Sam becomes the singer in the band.
- e) Charlotte plays 'Phil's Song' to Will.
- f) Will goes to see Charlotte at her house.
- g) Will's band plays at Bandslam.

RESOURCE SHEET STUDENT ACTIVITIES

2 Choose the correct answer.

- a) What did Charlotte's dad hate?
- i) She wasn't nice to kids who weren't popular.
- ii) She was Ben's girlfriend.
- iii) She was different from other teenagers.
- b) Why did Will's dad leave home?
- i) Will was in a car accident.
- ii) Will's dad killed someone in a car accident.
- iii) Will's dad plays in a band.
- c) Why doesn't the band sing 'Phil's Song' at Bandslam?
- i) Sam forgets the words.
- ii) Charlotte doesn't want them to sing it.
- iii) Ben Wheatly sings the song first.
- d) Why does David Bowie email Will?
- i) Will's band wins Bandslam.
- ii) He sees Will's band on the Internet.
- iii) He is writing an answer to Will's email.

3 Imagine you are at Bandslam. Write a text message to a friend. Tell your friend what is happening.

4 Talk to a partner. What did you like best about the story? What did you not like? Why/Why not?

FINAL TASKS

Writing

Each chapter starts with part of an email from Will to his hero, David Bowie. Choose one and write the full email.

Write a diary

Work in pairs. It is the night of Bandslam. Choose one of these characters: Charlotte, Sam, Ben, Karen. Write a page in your diary for that night. Compare what you have written with another pair.

Speaking

Will writes emails to his hero, David Bowie. Who would you write to? Tell your partner about someone you admire and why he or she is your hero.

Role-play

Work with a partner.

Student A: You are a journalist for the local newspaper. You know Will has a record deal with David Bowie. Find out more about it and about the band's plans for the future. Prepare some questions.

Student B: You are Will. Imagine you now have a record deal with David Bowie. What are the band's plans for the future. Prepare some information to tell the journalist.

Role-play the interview.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

1 Pick three of your favourite bands. Which of these can you usually hear in their music?

bass brass cello drums guitar piano

2 Complete the sentences with words from the list of 'New Words' at the back of Bandslam.

Use the correct form of the verbs.

- They..... kissed..... for the first time after the dance.
- No one spoke. The room was
- When I saw her, I not to lie again.
- Put your coat on! It's raining and I don't want you to
- My is the Brazilian footballer Pele.
- The band was very excited when they got their new
- You can see a play in a
- He won a new car in a
- There was a of people at the airport. They were all waiting to see the film star.
- My sister is a at football games.
- What do you like studying at school?
- My dad wants me to be the of his business when I'm older.

Casual language

- **'hang out'** (p.4 and p.49). When people 'hang out' with their friends, they spend time with them and have fun.
- **'kids'** (e.g. p.6). 'Kids' is a word for children or teenagers.
- **'No way!'** (p.14 and p.33). When they hear something surprising, people sometimes say 'No way!' It can also mean that you will definitely not do something. (See p.17.)
- **'right?'** (p.9, p.16, p.18 and p.33). If they want to check that they are correct, people sometimes use 'right?' at the end of a sentence.
- **'you guys'** (p.16, p.18 and p.42). If you are talking to a group of people, you can say 'you guys'.

Choose an expression to complete the sentences.

1. What are doing?
2. At weekends I usually with Alex.
3. The film starts at eight o'clock,
4. A: It's my sixteenth birthday today!
B:
5. There are no sports centres in my town and nothing for to do.

THE STARS OF BANDSLAM (pages 48–9)**Research**

Ask students to work in small groups. They choose one of the three stars in the Fact File and find out more about his or her involvement with music. They write a list of facts they have found out about the actor and read them to the class. The class guesses which actor the group is talking about.

Interview

Work in groups of three. Each student role-plays one of the three stars in the Fact File. Each student reads the interview about their star. If they want, they can take notes on the most important information in the interview. The students then take turns to interview each other, using the same questions that are in the Fact File. Students answer the questions, remembering as much information as they can. Students should not worry if they are not using the exact words that the actor used.

THE MUSIC OF BANDSLAM (pages 50–1)**Write a Fact File**

Students choose one of the names from pages 50 and 51, e.g. Blondie, Lou Reed, The Specials. They research information about the singers or bands on the Internet and write the information into a Fact File. Display the Fact Files in class.

Music discussion

Ask students to make a list of the three pop bands or singers they consider to be the most important in popular music today. The students come together in groups. They explain their list to the rest of the group, giving reasons for their choices. After the discussion, ask students whether anyone has changed their mind about their choices.

BECOMING A STAR (pages 52–3)**Plans for the future**

Put students into groups. Each group forms an imaginary band and appoints a manager. Each band decides on a name and a song which they would like to do a cover version of. The bands now discuss their plans to become famous, eg Will they enter a TV competition? Or put songs on a website? Or do they have another idea? The bands present themselves and their plans for fame to the rest of the class. The class votes on which band will become famous.

Music Survey

In pairs, students conduct a survey about an aspect of music, e.g. how students buy music or how students listen to music. Students choose an appropriate way to present their findings. Display the survey findings in class.

FILM/CD FOLLOW-UP**Observation (DVD)**

Choose a scene before class and prepare questions on it. Tell students to watch very carefully and remember as much detail as they can. Play the scene a couple of times. Then ask your questions. Play the scene again and check answers.

What happens next? (CD)

Read a chapter with the students and play the relevant part of the CD at the same time. Stop at some dramatic moments and ask what has just happened and what is about to happen.

Put it in context (CD)

Play short sections of the story on CD. After each one, ask students to give the context, i.e. explain who the speakers are, where they are and what they are talking about. This could be a written quiz with students writing down the answers.

ANSWER KEY**Self-Study Activities (pages 54–6)**

- 1 a) silent b) competition c) project d) manager e) stage f) hero
- 2 a) musician b) Social Studies c) bass d) drums e) cheerleaders
- 3 a) Sa5m b) Glory Dogs c) Charlotte d) music e) a competition for bands
- 4 a) F. David Bowie is Will's hero. b) T c) F. Will has to find out more about his partner. d) T e) F. Will thinks that they need a real drummer. f) T.
- 7 a) theatre b) crowd c) promise d) get ill e) kiss
- 8 The correct order is: c, f, b, e, a, h, g, d.
- 9 a) Basher b) Karen c) Will d) Charlotte e) Sam f) Will
- 12 a) father b) dad c) dies d) don't play e) singer
- 13 a) Ben to Will b) Will to Charlotte c) Karen to Charlotte d) Charlotte to Will e) Charlotte to the band f) Will to the crowd at Bandslam
- 14 a) Charlotte b) Ben c) The Daze d) a teenager from the crowd e) David Bowie

Resource Sheet Activities**People and places**

- b) Karen c) Will d) Ben Wheatly and Glory Dogs e) Charlotte f) CBGB g) New Jersey h) Bandslam

Prologue–Chapter 2

- 1 b) F. Will has no friends in Cincinnati. c) T d) F. Charlotte's band practises in her garage. e) F. Omar plays the guitar. f) F. Omar and Bug were in Ben Wheatly's band. g) T
- 2 b) cool c) ill d) bad e) well f) loudly g) not friendly

Chapters 3–5

- 1 b) iii c) v d) ii e) i
- 2 b) Bug c) Charlotte d) Will e) Charlotte f) Sam g) Sam h) Will

Chapters 6–Epilogue

- 1 The correct order is: c, e, b, a, f, d, g.
- 2 b) ii c) iii d) ii

Vocabulary Builder

2. silent 3. promised 4. get ill 5. hero 6. record deal
7. theatre 8. competition 9. crowd 10. cheerleader
11. Social Studies 12. manager

Casual language

1. you guys 2. hang out 3. right? 4. No way! 5. kids