

NAME:

COURSE:

DEATH OF THE SINGLE

ONCE they were the passion of millions of teenagers, the first thing they spent their pocket money or tiny pay packets on. Everyone wanted the latest single, and programmes such as Top Of The Pops succeeded on them. But not any more. The single may have had its day, killed off by the internet, MTV and mobile phones. Last week the music industry suffered its worst slump in singles sales since records began.

To many the crash marks their foreseen death for the market, which has struggled to survive since CDs arrived in the late 1980s. Just 400,000 singles were bought across the UK in the week ending January 25 - the worst performance in 35 years and just half of those sold in the same week four years ago. A mere 10 singles managed to sell more than 10,000 copies, compared to three times that amount five years earlier. Dance act Boogie Pimps became the lowest seller to enter the top three, selling an embarrassing 16,000 copies of Somebody To Love. In the past few decades the pop music world has become hugely more competitive, and the drop in singles sales is the first casualty of a bitter battle for supremacy.

TODAY there are so many more ways of getting hold of a song than just buying the single. Pop fans can download tracks from the internet, buy them as a ringtone for their mobile phone, or record them from MTV. Another cause of the slump is that radio stations now play songs for up to two months before they are released, boring customers to death before the single is even in the shops. Dr Fox, who hosts the Hit 40 UK chart show on Sunday nights, which has 2.6million listeners, claims the increase in numbers of radio and TV stations playing music has also hit single sales.

He says: "When I was a kid all we had was Top Of The Pops and Radio One. If you loved something, you had to buy it. You couldn't get it anywhere else, but now there are so many places you can hear your favourite music. "Twenty years ago you didn't have 10 different music channels or 300 radio stations playing pop music. "And he also blamed the endless supply of compilation albums. He says: "The record companies have only themselves to blame. Just about every single released will be on a compilation album the same week. "Would you want to spend three pounds on one song or get 40 tracks for a few quid more? "With CD albums costing as little as £8.50, compared to £3-£5 for singles, it is not surprising people are shunning singles. Another nail in the single's coffin is the speed at which artists release a new album after their single hits the charts.

QUESTIONS

1. Answer the following questions using your own words. (2 points)

a. Are singles about to disappear? Why?

b. What date were singles least sold?

2. Are the following statements True or False? (1 point)

a. Nowadays it is difficult to get a song. _____

b. Radio stations never play songs before they are in the market. _____

3. Find a word or phrase in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to: (1 point)

a. Dollar: _____

b. Fought: _____

