



## TAYLOR SWIFT: SUPERSTAR SONGWRITER

Taylor Swift is an international superstar who has sold millions of albums, filled arenas and stadiums, and won numerous awards. She has become such a celebrity that it's easy to forget that her success grows out of her talent as a songwriter.

Swift hasn't forgotten. "Songwriting is my favorite part of my job," she said. "I would not be a singer if I wasn't a songwriter. I wouldn't want to stand on a stage and sing something someone else wrote."

Born in 1989 in Wyomissing, Pennsylvania, Swift enjoyed writing at an early age, recording her thoughts in journals and discovering a love for poetry as she tried "to figure out the perfect combination of words, with the perfect amount of syllables, and the perfect rhyme to make it completely pop off the page."

Swift wanted to become a country singer, and at age eleven, she talked her parents into bringing her to Nashville, where she tried to get noticed by producers. She was unsuccessful, however, and returned home. But she learned a valuable lesson. "I need to figure out a way to be different," she realized. So, she learned to play the guitar and turned her poems into songs.

Her family moved to the Nashville area when Swift was fourteen years old, and she soon became the youngest songwriter at Nashville's Sony/ATV Publishing Company, where she worked with top songwriters.



In 2005, Swift signed a recording contract with Big Machine, and a year later, she released her first of nine multi-platinum studio albums. At first, Swift recorded pop-country music, but she focused more on her pop sound with her fifth album, *1989*.

In 2019, Swift's master recordings were sold, along with the record company she was signed to. The following year, she began re-recording her first six

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### LISTEN

"Love Story," "Our Song," "Shake It Off," "You Belong with Me," "New Romantics," "Sweet Nothing"

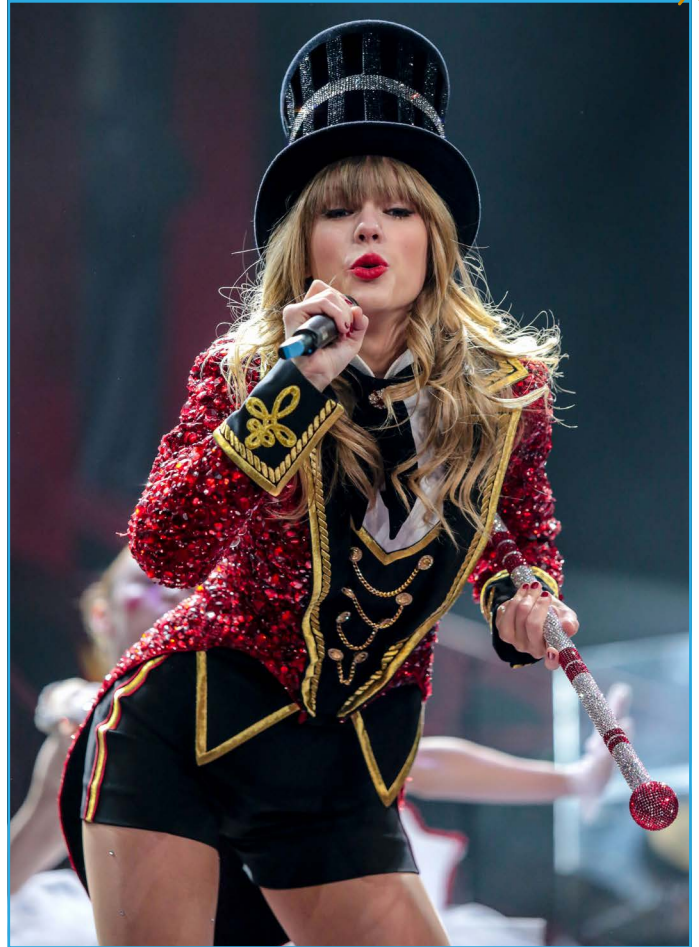


## TAYLOR SWIFT: SUPERSTAR SONGWRITER (CONTINUED)

albums, giving her ownership of the new versions of her songs and the power to decide how her music is shared with the world. Swift has also pursued other projects, including acting in movies and directing a short film.

Swift writes deeply personal lyrics—mostly about love, found and lost. “The number one priority in my life,” she said, “is figuring out how to process what I’m feeling and translate it into musical form.”

Swift has reached the height of popularity, but she knows superstardom rarely lasts forever. She’s not worried. “When I’m forty, and nobody wants to see me in a sparkly dress anymore, I’ll be, like, ‘Cool, I’ll just go in the studio and write songs for kids.’”



### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. How old was Taylor when she first went to Nashville to become a songwriter? What did she learn from this experience?

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2. Circle the phrase “height of popularity” in the last paragraph. Underline the clue words and phrases that help you understand the meaning of the phrase.

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3. What do you think Taylor means when she says she “translates [her feelings] into musical form”?

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