

Music contests

Music contests are popular all around the world. They are exciting shows that people enjoy watching with friends and family and that give popularity to new artists who sometimes become real music stars.

X Factor > Do you know what the term “X factor” means? It means extraordinary talent or quality. In 2004, a famous British producer,



Simon Cowell, used that term for a new TV music competition he invented. He wanted to find the X factor in new artists that had to perform onstage in front of cameras and an audience. The prize of the competition was a recording contract and, above all, incredible popularity on TV. The *X Factor* show was such a great success that the format became popular in many countries. The show launched the careers of British artists such as One Direction and Adele; also, Leona Lewis emerged as the most successful contestant to appear on *X Factor* having sold over 30 million records worldwide as well as being the only former contestant to be nominated for a Grammy.



The Eurovision Song Contest >

The *Eurovision Song Contest* is an annual contest that started in 1956. The only

year in which it didn't take place was 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants come from any European country and, to take part in the contest, must be at least 16. Each participant country submits an original song that is performed live on TV and radio. The country with the winning song is the host country for the following year's event. In 2021 the Italian rock band Måneskin won the competition and Turin was the host city of the 2022 event. Many world-famous music artists desire to appear on the Eurovision stage. In the past, stars like Madonna,

Abba, and Céline Dion were at the contest as participants or guests. Ireland holds the record for the most victories. The American adaptation of the Eurovision is the *American Song Contest*, launched in March 2022.

1 READING WRITING Answer the questions.

- 1 What does “X factor” mean?
- 2 Who is Simon Cowell?
- 3 What was the prize of the original *X Factor* competition?
- 4 Why is Leona Lewis special?
- 5 Why didn't the *Eurovision Song Contest* take place in 2020?
- 6 What happens to the country with the winning song?
- 7 Which country holds the record for the most victories?

2 READING VOCABULARY Complete the text with the missing words.

winner • chairs • button • reality • contract • performances

The Voice

The Voice is an American singing

1. competition. It started on April 26, 2011. It is based on the original *The Voice* of Holland and aims to find new singing talents, age 13 or older. The 2. is chosen by television viewers who can vote by telephone, Internet, or text. The artist who wins the competition receives \$100,000 and a recording 3. with Universal Music Group. The show consists of a group of four coaches who judge the artists' 4. and guide their teams of artists in the episodes of the show. Each season begins with the “Blind Auditions”: the coaches' 5. are faced towards the audience during the performances; those interested in an artist press their 6., which turns their chair towards the artist and illuminates the chair to read “I want you”. At the end of the performance, an artist chooses his or her coach if more than one coach pressed the button.

3 SPEAKING GROUP WORK Do you know any well-known singers or bands who are now famous thanks to one of these shows? Tell your classmates and then find some information about another international music contest. Prepare a text similar to the one in the previous activity.

glossary.....

contest: *concorso*