

intermediate

R A I N B O W S

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U2



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Paul Hewson (Bono)



Paul Hewson (Bono Vox) was born in Dublin, Ireland, on 10th May 1960. As a young boy Paul was very eccentric. He refused convention or rules of any kind and often spent most of his early educational years skipping school¹ and walking the streets of Dublin.

Born from a Protestant mother and a Catholic father (which is a much scorned² pairing, even now, in Ireland), Paul often felt out of place and awkward³. When he got to Mount Temple he finally felt at home and became quite popular and well-known, even to the school's teachers.

It was Larry Mullen's invitations to Bono to meet at his home and then to join the band that got things moving at the start in 1976. He could write poetry and he had the gift of speech. Both of which made him very suitable to be the lead singer songwriter in the band. But he did not have a great singing voice at first. His gift of talk, communication and playacting with the audience was in fact recognised from the earliest U2 gigs⁴ and Bono worked hard on that with stagecraft⁵ courses as he did with his voice taking lessons to increase his singing.

Bono's religious beliefs were at the basis of his humanitarian ideas. When he became famous, he used his fame to draw people's attention to important socio-political issues by at first publicly supporting organisations, such as Amnesty International and Greenpeace. He then threw international light on the 3rd World Debt, AIDS in Africa and the war in Bosnia. He had always been attracted by great historic and vision-led⁶ leaders such as Jesus, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and, as soon as he realized that rock music could be a very powerful medium, he decided to employ it for something positive, to get fans involved in urgent current events, or to contribute money to charitable organizations.

Bono gave a fundamental contribution to all U2's changes in music and style throughout the years, and re-invented his public image many times. But in his private life he has been quite constant. In fact in 1982 he married his first love, Ali (Alison) Stewart, and they have been together ever since. They now have four children.

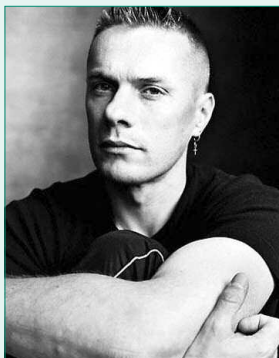
1. *skipping school*: staying away from school without permission.
2. *scorned*: not respected.
3. *awkward*: embarrassed, not at ease.

4. *gig*: live music performance.
5. *stagecraft*: skill in acting.
6. *vision-led*: guided by deep religious or civil thoughts.

Lawrence Joseph Mullen (Larry)

Lawrence Joseph Mullen was born on Halloween (31st October) 1961 in Artane, Dublin, Ireland. Larry was a good-looking young boy with an air of self-confidence and was very popular at school.

As a small child, Larry had gone to see a band play with his parents and his older sister. When he saw the drummer, he told his mother that that was what he wanted to do with his life. His older sister Cecilia bought him his first drum kit⁷ for seventeen



pounds when he was eleven. He even took lessons from a legendary Irish drummer, Joe Bonnie, but he stopped almost immediately as he could not stand⁸ the man or his teaching method. As a result, he taught himself how to play. Soon his father enrolled him in a marching band and at one point Larry even played in the well-known and respected Artane Boys Band, which plays in the St. Patrick's Day Parade every year. Larry was forced to quit⁹ that band when they ordered him to cut his hair. It seemed Larry was quite obstinate even from the start.

Larry wanted his own band so he placed a note on the notice-board of his school Mount Temple Comprehensive High School, inviting musicians to join him in forming a band. At first, no one replied to Larry's notice on the board, suspecting it was a school-sponsored¹⁰ event, but when Adam Charles Clayton expressed interest in joining the band, word began to get around and finally things got started when David Evans (The Edge) and Paul Hewson (Bono) joined the group. They started to practise at Larry's house.

Many things about U2 have changed but Larry has always remained constant and true to himself. Not prone to show off¹¹, Larry remains in the background but also in the backbone of the band.

Larry is a serious and private person but also has a wildly hilarious side that shines through in the few interviews he does. He is passionate in his undertakings and responsible in his actions. As the drummer, Larry holds the beat of the band in the palm of his hands.

7. *drum kit*: a set of drums and cymbals.

8. *stand*: accept, tolerate.

9. *quit*: leave.

10. *school sponsored*: supported by the school.

11. *show off*: attract attention.

David Evans (The Edge)



David Evans (The Edge) was born on 8th August 1961 in London. A year later his family moved to Malahide, near Dublin, and he received primary education there.

Mount Temple Comprehensive High School was also Dave's secondary school and it was difficult for him at the start. He was naturally shy and reserved and yet highly intelligent. He enjoyed studies and wanted to become a doctor, but piano and guitar playing lessons in the school caught his attention also at this time. He began playing these instruments regularly.

Dave was the first to respond to Larry's ad to form a band which was placed on the school notice-board. With the encouragement of his music teacher, Albert Bradshaw, and accompanied by his brother Dick and their common friend Adam Clayton, he attended the audition in Larry Mullen's home. He played rock guitar revealing influences of the big rock bands of the time like *Led Zeppelin* and the *Rolling Stones*. Accepted as a member of the group that came to be called *Feedback*, Dave began to hang around¹² with the other members both in and out of school and was nicknamed "Dave Edge" by Bono: partly because of his tendency to be on the edge¹³ of things, that is, not completely involved in what is going on around him, and partly because of the sharp shape of his chin.

The Edge worked on in school while practising with the band in the school gymnasium, influenced by the big groups of the 1970's. In the early gigs they only played covers of well-known bands. It was only with the final changing of the band name that the writing and composing started for real. The Edge became interested in the spiritual world along with Bono and Larry, together they joined the Shalom Charismatic Christian group and started moving toward becoming born again Christians. This created big upsets and problems for The Edge. One of these regarded the moral dilemma about being a Christian and a rock'n'roll player. In 1982 The Edge told Bono that he was going to take two weeks leave from U2 in order to¹⁴ understand whether he wanted to stay in the band or not. After a few days, he made up his mind¹⁵ after listening to Bono's advice to follow his heart: he would stay committed¹⁶ to U2.

12. *hang around*: to spend time in a place waiting or doing nothing.

13. *edge*: border.

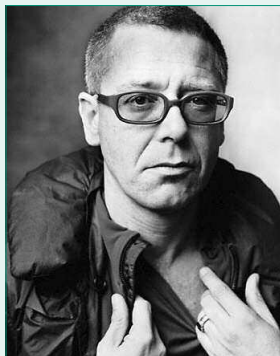
14. *in order to*: with the aim of.

15. *made up his mind*: decided.

16. *committed*: loyal and willing to give your time and energy.

Adam Clayton (Sparky)

Adam Clayton U2's bass player was born on 13th March, 1960 in the English village of Chinnor in Oxfordshire. His father was an RAF pilot, a job which involved a lot of travelling. The family moved to Ireland in 1965, to a suburb of Dublin. There he attended his first school, St. Andrew's Primary, where he met and made friends with David Evans (The Edge). For a short time after primary school he was sent to a boarding school in south Dublin, St. Columba's, where he became rebellious. At the age of 13 he got a bass guitar in a deal negotiated with his mother to work harder in school. The guitar arrived but he never delivered on¹⁷ working harder.



In 1976 he came to Mount Temple Comprehensive School and back to his friend David again. He enjoyed the effects of behaving outrageously, he streaked¹⁸ in school and when he wore clothes, they were the brightest and wildest in design. He taught himself to play the bass guitar and meeting up with Larry and joining the band as bass guitarist and manager at first gave him the means to channel his rebellious spirit into something highly creative.

Like Bono he was not recognisably gifted in music skills at first, but he really worked on his playing with great determination. His bass playing today rates with¹⁹ the best in the world.

Adam Clayton has always received special attention from the world press. Maybe it all started in 1989 when he was arrested for possession of cannabis. Then in 1993, when he became engaged²⁰ to super-model Naomi Campbell, he was never out of the headlines²¹: more a celebrity than a musician. In this period he also had some problems with the band because of his alcohol dependency. He even missed playing in a concert because he had drunk too much alcohol at a party. 'Sparky', as his closest friends call him, possibly has had the roughest and most individual journey: in fact, unlike the other three, with their strong religious beliefs, he had to find his own. And it looks and sounds now as if he has achieved that.

17. *delivered on*: did what he has promised to do.

18. *streaked*: ran naked.

19. *rates with*: is esteemed among.

20. *engaged*: having someone as a girlfriend or boyfriend.

21. *headline*: title of a newspaper.



BEFORE READING

1 Answer the following questions.

- What kind of music do you like?
- Do you play any instruments?
- Underline the most common musical instruments used in rock music choosing from the following: double bass, electric bass, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, piano, organ, violin, drums, oboe, saxophone, synthesizer, clarinet.
- If you were in a band, what music would you like to play?
- Do you know any of the following Irish musicians: Van Morrison, Clannad, Sinéad O'Connor, Bob Geldof, Cranberries, Boyzone, The Corrs?
- If so, which ones?

2 Which words from the box would you use to describe each member of the U2? Write the adjectives next to each name.

*trouble-making – amusing – energetic – obstinate – good-looking
determined – reserved – shy – diligent – respectful – relaxed
rebellious – determined – thoughtful – wise – inventive – nervous
loyal – self-confident*

Bono

Larry

The Edge

Adam

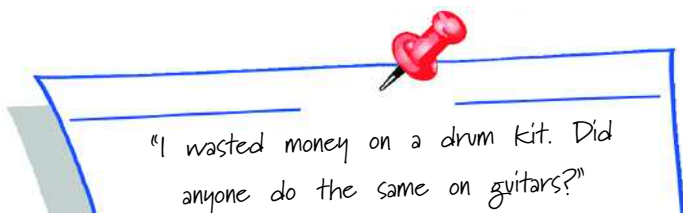
3 Choose/guess the correct alternative.

- Larry plays the guitar. the drums. the bass.
- David was nicknamed 'The Edge' because of
 - his tendency to isolate himself, to keep distant from things.
 - the sharp shape of his chin.
 - both the above-mentioned reasons.
- Paul was called 'Bono' because he was
 - a handsome boy. good-tempered. a bad singer.
- The musician who gave the start to the group by putting a notice on the school board was
 - Larry Mullen David Evans Adam Clayton

U2

The beginning

Lawrence Joseph Mullen was fourteen in 1976 when he placed a notice on the school message board asking for people to join the pop group he was starting. It said in these precise words:



With that small note, Larry Mullen started what would become one of the most respected, popular, creative, groundbreaking¹ and well-known bands in the history of rock. At first the group was called *Feedback*, then *The Hype* and finally **U2**.

MTCS was a revolutionary establishment in Ireland when it opened in 1971, because it was not tied² to the teachings of either the Roman Catholic or the Protestant church, and as a

1. *groundbreaking*: innovative.

2. *tied*: linked.



Mount Temple Comprehensive School (Dublin, Ireland), the secondary school attended by all four members of U2 in the mid-1970s.