Amber: Hello, I’m Amber, and you’re listening to bbclearningenglish.com.
Today, we listen to an interview with a famous pop star, actor and author – and she’s only 24 years old!
Billie Piper first shot to fame at the age of 15 when she signed a million pound record deal. She went on to have 3 number 1 singles. More recently, she’s won an award for her role as Rose in the long-running BBC television series ‘Dr Who’. And now, she’s just published her autobiography – the story of her life so far! It’s called ‘Growing Pains’.
Here is Billie Piper talking about what it was like growing up in the public eye and finding fame so young. As you listen, try to catch the 3 adjectives she uses to describe the more difficult times when she was growing up.

Billie Piper
‘You know, there was a period in my life (like 4 or 5 years) where I found growing up in the world that I was living in quite stressful, quite painful, quite hysterical. But you know there were great times as well and I think that’s very important – and that’s in the book as well as some of the bigger revelations.’

Amber: So Billie Piper says that being a teenage star was difficult and demanding – it hurt! She says it was ‘quite stressful, quite painful, quite hysterical’, although there are ‘great times’ in the book too. And there are ‘revelations’ - new and surprising pieces of information – about her life.
Next, Billie Piper talked about her pop music career. She listened to her hit song ‘Because we want to’ and she couldn’t stop laughing! Here she is explaining why.

As you listen, try to catch the expression she uses to describe her hit records – they’re for teenagers, so she calls them ‘teen something’.

**Billie Piper**

‘Ummm! Because they’re quite funny! And well, also – yeah – they’re quite funny - they’re ‘teen anthems’ and at the time, I felt really kind of strange about singing them because I was a bit of a music snob when I was younger. That’s changed! But, yeah, I was very into Motown and Soul and all of those things and I thought I was going to have a crack at that myself, when in fact, we produced songs such as ‘Because we want to’ which obviously was a huge success and loads of kids loved it and I suppose that’s all that matters!’

**Amber:**  Billie Piper says her early records were ‘teen anthems’ – an anthem is a song of loyalty towards something, a country or cause, for example. She also says she was ‘a bit of a music snob’ when she was young – she looked down on people who didn’t like the music she liked.

Listen again, and notice that Billie Piper uses the expression ‘To have a crack at …’ ‘To have a crack’ at something means to try it.

**Billie Piper**

‘Ummm! Because they’re quite funny! And well, also – yeah – they’re quite funny - they’re ‘teen anthems’ and at the time, I felt really kind of strange about singing them because I was a bit of a music snob when I was younger. That’s changed! But, yeah, I was very into Motown and Soul and all of those things and I thought I was going to have a crack at that myself, when in fact, we produced songs such as ‘Because we want to’ which obviously was a huge success and loads of kids loved it and I suppose that’s all that matters!’
Amber: When Billie Piper was 18 she married a high-profile DJ called Chris Evans in a high-profile wedding in Las Vegas. 3 years later, they had a very public divorce although the pair are still good friends. Billie Piper talks now about her feelings. She says she wants to achieve things ‘on my own ‘merit’ – through her own abilities.

Billie Piper
‘I’ve come away from that marriage with so many wonderful things and I know how to handle myself a bit more. I know how to be domestic which I had no idea about when I was 17, and just how to get on in life and try and be good and try and work hard. So I’ve come away with all of those fantastic lessons. I don’t really want any of his money, I really don’t, I don’t care for it at all, it’s not in my interest. I wanted to do things on my own – you know – on my own merit and work hard to achieve good things.’

Amber: So Billie Piper thinks she learned a lot from her marriage – she learned ‘fantastic lessons’. Now here again is some of the language we focussed on in today’s programme.

Stressful
Painful
Hysterical
Revelations
Teen anthems
A music snob
To have a crack at something
On my own merit

More news stories and language explanations next time at bbclearningenglish.com