

James Vickery: R'n'B artist with one deaf ear

- 1 Behind James Vickery's left ear is a tiny tattoo, barely noticeable until he turns to point it out. The inking is of a mute icon, a small speaker with a cross next to it, as you would see on a computer or a phone when switching the volume off; a simple image that neatly symbolises the 27-year-old's story.
- 2 In and out of hospital with ear infections as a child, he was eventually, at the age of eight, diagnosed with a growth of abnormal skin cells called a cholesteatoma. His case was severe, doctors said, and his eardrum had to be removed. Surgery went well, but inevitably left Vickery completely deaf in that ear. Unable to distinguish the volume and pitch of his voice, he struggled with his speech and a vocal coach was brought in to help. It was through these sessions he found his voice; not just in conversation, but the distinctive, soulful singing voice that has now seen him hailed as a new face of UK R'n'B.
- 3 "My parents took me to a vocal coach and they wanted me to learn how to basically speak again," he tells Sky News. "A good way is actually by singing because it engages your diaphragm. So we did that and my singing teacher was like, 'you can sing, you can actually sing well'. I was really unconfident because no one could ever hear me speak and so credit to my vocal coach, she really taught me how to not only speak louder, but become a bigger person, you know, really fill the room with your voice. That's something I try and have now in my songs. All the singers I looked up to as a kid had big voices so I always wished I had one."
- 4 His debut album, *Songs That Made Me Feel*, aims to do just what its title says. "The way that people consume music is so passive now," he says. "It's so easily accessible but I think not enough people just sit down and let the music take over. I feel like, as a man growing up, men are taught not to show how they feel, I think. You're taught 'man up'." Men don't talk about their feelings enough, he says. "I managed to be able to do that through song, luckily, by bringing out this soulful album."
- 5 ...



adapted from news.sky.com, 2021

Tekst 8 James Vickery: ...

- 1p 33 'Behind James Vickery's left ear is a tiny tattoo' (paragraph 1)
What is Vickery's tattoo meant to make clear, judging from the text?
A that he believes his hearing difficulties have shaped him
B that he has chosen not to wear a hearing aid all the time
C that he thinks his music should be played at a loud volume
- 1p 34 Which of the following best summarises paragraph 2?
Paragraph 2 describes
A how a health problem eventually led to Vickery becoming a singer.
B how a medical misfortune almost ended Vickery's singing career.
C how singing comforted Vickery when he was recovering from surgery.
D how Vickery discovered his hearing problem through singing classes.
- 1p 35 What did Vickery's vocal coach teach him, according to paragraph 3?
A to articulate both the words he sang and he spoke
B to copy the style and sound of famous artists
C to get over his stage fright and perform in public
D to increase his volume with a singing technique
- 1p 36 What is the point Vickery makes in paragraph 4?
A He is convinced that music can help people live a healthier life.
B He finds that sharing his experiences makes him stronger.
C He hopes his songs will prevent others from making his mistakes.
D He thinks men should be more open about their emotions.
- 1p 37 De zinnen van alinea 5 staan hieronder, maar niet in de juiste volgorde.
→ Schrijf de letters van de zinnen in de juiste volgorde op in de uitwerkbijlage.

[a] "There's plenty of people like Jorja Smith and Mahalia who are really, really flying the flag for UK R'n'B, and I think that's going to change hopefully in the future." With Vickery too, that change is surely closer. That tattoo behind his ear is just a small reminder of how much he can achieve.

[b] "The thing is the UK R'n'B scene is so, so good," he says. "But when you turn on a radio you will never find an R'n'B song on in the daytime," he explains.

[c] Vickery says he hopes he adds another voice to highlight the UK's new resurging R'n'B scene, which he feels is overlooked.

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift.