

### Mysterious Slovak words in Yellow Submarine

**Warning: Some vulgar words!!!!**

Now, you have all heard the song Yellow Submarine by the Beatles. We must all have sung it at some point in our lives. But how many of you actually knew that mysterious Slovak words exist in the song? Not many of you I guess. One has to listen very carefully to find them but as I discovered they are indeed hidden in the depths of the submarine song! Only a few people in Slovakia know this carefully guarded secret. I discovered about it in a pub thanks to a friend who later sent me a link, as I didn't believe him. Here in Slovakia the words have become a kind of myth. One has to listen to the song carefully then after about 1 min 40 secs is a single sentence in the Slovak language. Miss it and you have to listen again but then it gets harder to spot as I discovered. The actual words are "Mozte mi vylizat." The sentence though is not part of the "official" lyrics.

The message though is quite clear and is fully understandable in Slovak. It is however not very polite! In British English slang this can be translated simply as "Piss off!" I am lead to believe in the Slovak language this is much ruder as well as in a funnier form. So what does this sentence actually mean? (\*\*) Various theories have emerged over time. Is it a John Lennon/Paul McCartney political message to the then communist regime? Is it a message of an emigrant to his forbidden country? Or is it just a coincidence? The most likely is that someone of Slovak origin was at the recording studio during the actual recording of Yellow Submarine. One likely person it could be is Slovakian born Dezo Hoffman who was a famous Beatles dedicated photographer. The words "Mozte mi vylizat" could actually have an alternative meaning. The sentence might not be rude at all. It could be just a slang sentence meaning "You can take off". In the film the submarine does just this. Interestingly during the 1920's and 30's Bratislava tram conductors used to shout this phrase between tram stops. Watch out - there's a yellow submarine about. Full steam ahead Captain. Look out for those Blue Meanies! (\*\*see p3)

**Category: Music / Beatles / Mystery**  
**Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate**

## THE EXERCISES

**1. Yellow submarine:** What famous music group sang the movie *Yellow Submarine*? Can you name the other famous fictional group that was in it? Can you think of any of the songs that were in the movie?

**2. Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page two - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten are acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - we need to do some work!

**3. Reading:** Get students to read the passage aloud. Swap readers every paragraph.

**4. Vocabulary:** Students look through the article. Underline/highlight any vocabulary you do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through & explain any words or phrases you do not understand.

**5. The article:** Students look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) Are you offended by the sentence?
- c) How come the Slovak words aren't 'official'?
- d) What do you think of this sentence?

**6. Songs with colour:** With your partner think of and discuss six songs with colour in their title. Which is the most famous? Which of these songs do you like?

1	4
2	5
3	6

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**7. Artists with a colour in their name:** With your partner think of and discuss six music artists that have a colour in their name i.e. James Brown. Discuss together. Who was the biggest artist? What type of music did/do these artists play?

1	4
2	5
3	6

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**8. Dezo Hoffman:** Who was Dezo Hoffman? What do you know about him? How famous was he? What did he do? What nationality was he? (You might need to use the internet on this) (See also You Tube - Dezo Hoffman/Beatles)

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9. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

**Student A**

- 1) Name the photographer.
- 2) Name the songwriters mentioned.
- 3) What is the Slovak phrase?
- 4) Who used to shout this phrase?
- 5) What is the meaning in English of the Slovak phrase?

**Student B**

- 1) Name the city.
- 2) What do you have to look out for?
- 3) Finish this sentence - Watch out - there \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Is the Slovak sentence part of the official lyrics?
- 5) How many people know this closely guarded secret?

10. Let's think! Swap partners. With your new partner on the board write as many words to do with **Yellow Submarine** as you can. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

11. Let's write: Choose six/nine of the words from No 10. Write two/three sentences using two/three words in each. Underline your chosen words. The teacher will if necessary correct your work. Students might be asked to read their sentences aloud.

12. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) The Beatles \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Yellow Submarine \_\_\_\_\_
- c) The song \_\_\_\_\_
- d) The words \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Sergeant Pepper \_\_\_\_\_

13. Famous Beatles songs: With your partner think of and discuss four famous Beatles songs. Which is the most famous? Which of these songs do you like?

1	3
2	4

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

**Note: \*\* The rude/vulgar meaning of 'Mozte mi vylizat' translates several ways: 'You can lick me out'. 'You can lick my arse out'. 'You are stupid and fuck you'. 'You can suck me'.**

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**LISTEN & WATCH**

Either listen to a CD of the song or look on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). Type in 'Yellow Submarine'. One link is <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCsYDZ2M04M> or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMd8dntfgAg&NR=1> Watch the song. Listen to the words. Discuss the song together in class.

**Yellow Submarine** (Lennon/McCartney)

In the town where I was born,  
Lived a man who sailed to sea,  
And he told us of his life,  
In the land of submarines,

So we sailed on to the sun,  
Till we found the sea of green,  
And we lived beneath the waves,  
In our yellow submarine,

We all live in a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine,  
We all live in a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine.

And our friends are all aboard,  
Many more of them live next door,  
And the band begins to play.  
(Trumpets play)

We all live in a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine,  
We all live a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine.

(Full speed ahead, Mr. Parker, full speed ahead!  
Full speed over here, sir!  
Action station! Action station!  
Aye, aye, sir, fire!  
Captin! Captin!)

As we live a life of ease  
Every one of us is all we need,(is all we need)  
Sky of blue, and sea of green,(sky of blue and sea of green)  
in our yellow(in our yellow) submarine.(submarine) ( Hahaha! )

We all live in a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine,  
We all live in a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine.  
(fading)

We all live in a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine,  
We all live in a yellow submarine,  
yellow submarine, yellow submarine.

**Note:** *Yellow Submarine* was recorded on 26<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June 1966 at Abbey Road Studios, London. *Yellow Submarine* (the song) was released by The Beatles in 1966. It first featured on the album *Revolver*. *Yellow Submarine* (the single) was also released in 1966. *Yellow Submarine* (the movie) was released by United Artists in 1968. *Yellow Submarine* (the album) was released in 1969.

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**GAP FILL: READING**

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Now, you have all heard the song Yellow (1)\_\_\_\_\_ by the Beatles. We must all have sung it at some point in our lives. But how many of you actually knew that (2)\_\_\_\_\_ Slovak words exist in the song? Not many of you I guess. One has to listen very carefully to find them but as I discovered they are indeed hidden in the depths of the submarine (3)\_\_\_\_\_. Only a few people in Slovakia know this carefully guarded secret. I discovered about it in a pub thanks to a friend who later sent me a link, as I didn't believe him. Here in (4)\_\_\_\_\_ the words have become a kind of (5)\_\_\_\_\_. One has to listen to the song (6)\_\_\_\_\_ then after about 1 min 40 secs is a single sentence in the Slovak language. Miss it and you have to listen again but then it gets harder to spot as I discovered. The actual words are "Mozte mi vylizat." The sentence though is not part of the "(7)\_\_\_\_\_" lyrics.

*mysterious*

*official*

*carefully*

*song*

*myth*

*Slovakia*

*submarine*

The message though is quite clear and is fully understandable in Slovak. It is however not very polite! In British English (1)\_\_\_\_\_ this can be translated simply as "Piss off!" I am lead to believe in the Slovak language this is much ruder as well as in a funnier form. So what does this sentence actually mean? Various theories have emerged over time. Is it a John Lennon/Paul McCartney political message to the then communist (2)\_\_\_\_\_? Is it a message of an (3)\_\_\_\_\_ to his forbidden country? Or is it just a coincidence? The most likely is that someone of Slovak origin was at the recording (4)\_\_\_\_\_ during the actual recording of Yellow Submarine. One likely person it could be is Slovakian born Dezo Hoffman who was a famous (5)\_\_\_\_\_ dedicated photographer. The words "Mozte mi vylizat" could actually have an (6)\_\_\_\_\_ meaning. The sentence might not be rude at all. It could be just a slang sentence meaning "You can take off". In the film the submarine does just this. Interestingly during the 1920's and 30's Bratislava tram conductors used to shout this phrase between tram stops. Watch out - there's a (7)\_\_\_\_\_ submarine about. Full steam ahead (8)\_\_\_\_\_. Look out for those Blue Meanies!

*studio*

*Captain*

*regime*

*slang*

*Beatles*

*alternative*

*yellow*

*emigrant*

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**GAP FILL: LISTENING**

*Listen and fill in the spaces.*

## Mysterious Slovak words in Yellow Submarine

Now, \_\_\_\_\_ the song Yellow Submarine by the Beatles. We must \_\_\_\_\_ some point in our lives. \_\_\_\_\_ actually knew that mysterious Slovak words exist in the song? \_\_\_\_\_ guess. One has to listen very carefully to find them but as I discovered they are indeed hidden in the depths of the submarine song! Only a few people in Slovakia know this carefully guarded secret. I discovered about it in a pub thanks to a friend \_\_\_\_\_ link, as I didn't believe him. Here in Slovakia the words have become a kind of myth. One has to listen to the song carefully then after about 1 min 40 secs is a single sentence in the Slovak language. \_\_\_\_\_ to listen again but then it gets harder to spot as I discovered. The actual words are "Mozte mi vylizat." The sentence though is not part of the "official" lyrics.

The message though \_\_\_\_\_ fully understandable in Slovak. It is however not very polite! In British English slang this can be translated simply as "Piss off!" \_\_\_\_\_ in the Slovak language this is much ruder as well as in a funnier form. So what does this sentence actually mean? Various theories have emerged over time. Is it a John Lennon/Paul McCartney political message to the then communist regime? \_\_\_\_\_ an emigrant to his forbidden country? Or is it just a coincidence? The most likely is that someone of Slovak origin was at the recording studio during the actual recording of Yellow Submarine. One likely person it could be is Slovakian born Dezo Hoffman who was a famous Beatles dedicated photographer. The words "Mozte mi vylizat" could actually have an alternative meaning. The sentence might \_\_\_\_\_. It could be just a slang sentence meaning "\_\_\_\_\_". In the film the submarine does just this. Interestingly during the 1920's and 30's Bratislava tram conductors used to shout this phrase between tram stops. Watch out - there's a yellow submarine about. Full steam ahead Captain. Look out \_\_\_\_\_!

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**GRAMMAR**

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

**Mysterious Slovak words in Yellow Submarine**

Now, you have all heard the song Yellow Submarine by the Beatles. We must all have sung it at some point in (1)\_\_\_ lives. But how many of you actually knew that mysterious Slovak words exist in the song? Not many of you I guess. One has to listen very carefully to find them but as I discovered they are indeed hidden in the depths of the submarine song! Only a few people in Slovakia know this carefully guarded secret. I discovered about it in a pub thanks (2)\_\_\_ a friend who later sent me a link, as (3)\_\_\_ didn't believe (4)\_\_\_. Here in Slovakia the words have become a kind of myth. One has to listen to (5)\_\_\_ song carefully then after about 1 min 40 secs is a single sentence in the Slovak language. Miss it and (6)\_\_\_ have to listen again but then (7)\_\_\_ gets harder to spot as I discovered. The actual words are "Mozte mi vylizat." The sentence though is not part of the "official" lyrics.

The message (1)\_\_\_ is quite clear and is fully understandable in Slovak. It is (2)\_\_\_ not (3)\_\_\_ polite! In British English slang this can be translated simply as "Piss off!" I am lead to believe in the Slovak language (4)\_\_\_ is (5)\_\_\_ ruder as well as in a funnier form. So what does this sentence actually mean? Various theories have emerged over time. Is it a John Lennon/Paul McCartney political message to the then communist regime? Is it a message of an emigrant to his forbidden country? Or is it just a coincidence? The most likely is that someone of Slovak origin was at the recording studio during the actual recording of Yellow Submarine. One likely person it could be is Slovakian born Dezo Hoffman who was a famous Beatles dedicated photographer. The words "Mozte mi vylizat" (6)\_\_\_ actually have an alternative meaning. The sentence (7)\_\_\_ not be rude at all. It could be just a slang sentence meaning "You can take off". In the film the submarine does just this. Interestingly during the 1920's and 30's Bratislava tram conductors used to shout this phrase (8)\_\_\_ tram stops. Watch out - there's a yellow submarine about. Full steam ahead Captain. Look out for those Blue Meanies!

*our*

*you*

*him*

*I*

*the*

*it*

*to*

*however*

*though*

*between*

*could*

*might*

*much*

*this*

*very*



## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Which is your favourite Beatles song?
- 3) Do you know any other slang sentences? Name one.
- 4) What do you talk about in the pub? Why?
- 5) Do you go to the pub often? Why? Why not?
- 6) Have you ever been in a recording studio?
- 7) Would you like to be on a famous song/record? Why? Why not?
- 8) Can you name any other songs that might have a hidden meaning?
- 9) What do you think the sentence 'Mozte mi vylizat' means?
- 10) Do you like cartoons? Which are your favourites?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) What English swear word(s) do you use most? Why?
- 3) What do you think of the Slovak sentence?
- 4) Who do you think uttered the sentence?
- 5) Were The Beatles so great? Why? Why not?
- 6) When did you first hear this sentence? From who?
- 7) Is the sentence 'Mozte mi vylizat' widely used today?
- 8) Do you know many songs with swear words in?
- 9) Which is your favourite Beatles film?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

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