

ANSWERS

A. Read the headline of the article below. What do you think it will discuss?

We will probably learn more about Taylor Swift's influence, not only in the music world, but also in politics. The article should show why she was named "person of the year" and whether her popularity has an impact on politics.

A. Before reading the first part of the text (from line 1 to line 13), read the first paragraph only. What do you think this section will be about?

It probably shows how and why politicians use Swift's name and image to attract attention.

B. Read up to line 13 and find out about the author of the article. Explain why he wrote it.

The author is from Kansas City.

He says he is a Swiftie, so he is a fan of Taylor Swift. He follows Taylor Swift's tour and her life on social media.

He is a millennial (so he was born between 1981 and 1996) and he likes pop music.

He is a political scientist. So he wants to understand why politicians use her name to attract attention.

C. In the first part of the text, find three examples of how, where and why "politicians courted Swifties voters". Use your own words to answer.

In New Jersey, there is a famous sandwich called the Taylor ham, egg and cheese sandwich. They changed its name into the "Taylor Swift Ham, Egg, and Cheese" sandwich.

In Pittsburgh, the mayor changed the name of the town to 'Swiftsburgh' (but only while Taylor Swift was in town). Afterwards, the city reverted to its real name.

In Kansas City, a street name was also changed. Swift Street became Swift Street (Taylor's Version) for a while.

The journalist says that "these honors make for great photo opportunities for Swifties," which means that politicians know that Taylor Swift fans will love it. Maybe they want to convince her fans to vote for them

D. Read the second part of the text (from line 14 to line 28). Do politicians have something to gain in appealing to Swift's fans? Find examples in the text to illustrate your answer.

She does not often support politicians in public. But it seems that she generally supports Democrats, for example Joe Biden, Phil Bredesen, who ran for the Senate, and Jim Cooper, who was seeking re-election as a representative.

Her endorsement can definitely help politicians, because when she supported them in public, people did a lot more research on the internet to find out more about them. In addition, quite a lot of voters (almost 12%) said their vote could be influenced by Taylor Swift's stance. But that does not guarantee that the politicians she supports will be elected. The journalist says that it could make a difference when the two candidates are really close.

E. Read the sentence line 29 and 30. Who does it focus on?

It is about the voters who are also Swifties, Taylor Swift's die-hard fans.

F. Concentrate on what characterises them and explain why this is really important.

This passage shows that a lot of Swifties live in territories where they can have a lot of influence on who will win the election.

Gen Zers and millennials represent a growing proportion of the electorate and Taylor Swift is very popular among them. Therefore these voters could play a major role in elections.