

# VALUING CREATIVITY

## VALUE AT WHAT PRICE: EXTENSION TASK

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((3) Read these extracts from recent news reports about how digital technology is changing how we value creativity then discuss the questions that follow.

*The larger question is that if free or cheap streaming becomes the way we consume all (recorded) music and indeed a huge percentage of other creative content ... then perhaps we might stop for a moment and consider the effect these services and this technology will have, before “selling off” all our cultural assets the way the big record companies did.*

*David Byrne, The Guardian, 11.10.13*

*This pirating business is something that I, a refugee from the vinyl/CD generation, will never quite get used to. Sure, we used to copy records on to cassette when I was a boy – but usually these were records we’d already paid for. We felt perfectly comfortable with the idea that, in return for the pleasure of listening to music, we should pay the artist a fair cut... To the iPod generation, the idea of paying even a few pennies to buy music through iTunes is anathema. I mentioned an obscure hip-hop track by someone called RJD2 to a 12-year-old the other day, and, within seconds, he’d first downloaded the music for free, then the artwork. The boy’s dextrousness and ingenuity were a joy to behold, but they also saddened me: who’s going to pay for RJD2’s mortgage?*

*James Delingpole, Daily Telegraph, 1.10.11*

*The question of whether Spotify is good for artists is considerably more vexed. The service has been dogged by accusations that it doesn’t value musicians highly enough... In July, Taylor Swift wrote in a Wall Street Journal editorial, “In my opinion, the value of an album is, and will continue to be, based on the amount of heart and soul an artist has bled into a body of work.” For Swift, streaming is not much different from piracy. “Piracy, file sharing and streaming have shrunk the numbers of paid album sales drastically, and every artist has handled this blow differently,” she wrote.*

*John Seabrook, The New Yorker, 24.11.14*

- In your own words summarise the main point made in each of these articles.
- What do you understand by the term ‘piracy’?
- Do you agree with Taylor Swift that digital streaming is ‘not much different from piracy’? Give reasons for your answers.