

## **Taking us back to the paradise city reading passage**

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The hard rock band Guns and Roses was founded in 1985 by Axl Rose and Tracii Guns and took its name from its two founding members, who served as the group's main guitarists at the time. Few could have anticipated the band's level of popularity at the time. The band, which became a symbol of the hedonistic rebelliousness of the 1980s and 1990s punk-rock era, has, after much rumor, resurrected itself for another assault on the music charts. The band has sold more than 100 million albums worldwide, including 46 million in the United States alone, to date. A new world tour has officially started for GNR, as the group is now known. And as it begins a new chapter of its journey, we look back at the band's colorful and frequently contentious past.

#### **1985 - 1986**

In the beginning, the band lineup saw a lot of changes. Tracii Gun, a founding member, was replaced as the lead guitarist by Slash since he missed the rehearsals. Slash also added his close friend Steven Adler to the lineup after the band's former drummer Rob Gardner left for personal reasons. Axl Rose (vocals), Izzy Stradlin (rhythm guitar), Duff McKagan (bass), Slash (lead guitar), and Steven Adler (drums) entered their first tour, known as the "Hell Tour," after settling into their positions and completing the line-up. The band found its chemistry while touring, and even though it was only able to put out one four-track EP, *Like a Suicide*, during this time, the foundation for future success was laid. This was because the group quickly developed a reputation for giving energetic live performances.

#### **1987 - 1989**

The group's debut album, *Appetite for Destruction*, was released on July 21st, 1987. The album remained at the bottom of the charts for over a year before the band's representative was able to persuade MTV execs to play *Welcome to the Jungle*, the album's lead single, during their afternoon rotations. However, success wasn't by any means instantaneous. Rock and punk fans soon noticed and started clamoring for the video in droves. The album's second US hit, "Sweet Child of Mine," the song and its accompanying music video received regular airplay and quickly rose to the top of the US charts, in large part due to strong grassroots support. After receiving invites to participate at significant international rock festivals, a world tour began. The band was currently well on its way to becoming famous and wealthy.

#### **1990 - 1993**

All of the band members led extreme lives, but drummer Adler's lifestyle ultimately got the best of him. He could no longer perform with the band due to the severity of his drug use and was sacked in July 1990. Matt Sorum took his place. The group also gained a sixth member when Dizzy Reed joined as the group's keyboardist. The band then began working on its most ambitious project to date, releasing two albums, *Use Your Illusion 1* and *Use Your Illusion 2*, at the same time. The risk paid off brilliantly as the albums shot to numbers one and two in the

charts, the first time a band had ever accomplished such a feat. However, despite being on top of a wave, the band members were constantly dogged by controversy, especially singer Rose, who was among other things charged with assault and accused of inciting a riot that claimed many lives. Nevertheless, the Use Your Illusion Tour ended with a bang, drawing record crowds and lasting an amazing 28 months.

### **1994-2008**

But just when it seemed like the band could not fail, everything started to slowly fall apart. Prior to Slash's official departure in 1996, the band took a break during which time they did not record or tour. Rose and Slash both experienced personal problems. Rose replaced most of the other band members who left after Slash did, but it took a full nine years until a highly anticipated reunion performance was given in Las Vegas. The band's anticipated new album, Chinese Democracy, never appeared, and tour plans were frequently postponed or scrapped entirely. Chinese Democracy wasn't actually released until 2008 when Rose was the last survivor of the original band.

### **2009-present**

Following the release of Chinese Democracy, the band embarked on a new global tour, which got generally favorable reviews but was marred by controversy due to Rose's penchant for being late for shows and his stage presence, both of which have drawn much ire. After all is said and done, though, GNR's ongoing appeal cannot be disputed. Just as they did before when the band first became popular, devoted fans continue to queue up in the thousands to get tickets for every new tour stop. The only difference is that they are more anticipating than hoping for a fantastic performance today, but that's rock and roll, baby!

## **Taking us back to the paradise city reading questions**

### **Questions 1 - 6**

*Look at the following statements (Questions 1-6) and the lists of periods of time below.*

*Match each statement to the correct period A-D.*

*Write the correct letter, A-D 1-6 on your answer sheet.*

**NB You may use any letter more than once.**

- A. From 1985 to 1986
  - B. From 1987 to 1989
  - C. From 1990 to 1993
  - D. From 1994 to 2008
1. During the band's lengthy absence, several members opted to quit.
  2. Prior to the release of the band's upcoming record, there was a very significant delay.
  3. During the band's tour, the friendship between its members improved.
  4. One member of the band was fired due to his inability to perform due to a destructive addiction.

5. A new member joined the band playing an instrument that none of the previous members had played.
6. The band achieved their first number-one single.

### Questions 7 - 10

*Complete the sentences below.*

**Write NO MORE THAN ONE WORD for each answer.**

Between 1985 and 1986, one of the band's original members was unable to attend 7 \_\_\_\_\_, forcing the band to replace him.

During their first tour, they were able to develop good 8 \_\_\_\_\_ and play well together.

The album Sweet Child of Mine received a consistent 9 \_\_\_\_\_ and topped the charts.

Nobody can dispute that they have not experienced long-lasting 10 \_\_\_\_\_.

### Questions 11 - 13

*Complete each sentence with the correct ending, A-G, below.*

**You may use each letter only ONCE.**

11. Gun and Roses

12. The band has enjoyed

13. The band became

- A. takes its name from two former members.
- B. was named after its founding members.
- C. success in the States alone.
- D. was never a predictable band musically.
- E. considerable success in America.
- F. a symbol of success in the 1980s.

representative of a certain attitude in music in the 80s and 90s.