Joni Mitchell becomes a US citizen

LEVEL A2/B1


Photo: Tim Mossholder / Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. What musicians from your country are famous abroad?
2. Have you ever watched a ceremony on TV or online?
3. Which social media apps do you use most, and why?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

citizen
A person who legally belongs to a country and has its rights.

ceremony
A formal event with special actions and words.

caption
Short text with a photo or video that explains it.

vote
To choose a leader or make a decision in an election.

folk
A traditional style of music with simple songs and guitars.

album
A set of songs released together.

recovery
The time needed to get better after an illness or injury.

festival
A large event with music or other performances.

III. READING

Joni Mitchell, the Canada-born singer-songwriter, has become a US citizen at age 82. She shared video of the ceremony on Instagram, next to an American flag, with a caption saying her journey began 62 years ago. The new status means she can vote in US elections.

Mitchell moved to the US in 1965 after marrying US folk singer Chuck Mitchell. She released her debut album in 1968 and later recorded Ladies of the Canyon in Los Angeles. She has lived in California for many years and now lives in Santa Barbara.

In 2015, Mitchell had a brain aneurysm and needed a long recovery, but she returned to live performance in 2022 at the Newport folk festival. Since then, she has played special "Joni Jam" shows. A film about her life is being prepared by director Cameron Crowe, and reports say actress Meryl Streep will play her.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "Joni Mitchell becomes US citizen: 'A...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What change happened in Joni Mitchell's life?
2. Where did she share video of the ceremony?
3. What can she do now that she is a US citizen?
4. When did she release her debut album?
5. When and where did she return to live performance?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Why might someone become a citizen of another country?
2. Does social media help artists connect with fans? How?
3. Which Joni Mitchell fact was most interesting to you? Why?
4. Would you like to see a music festival? Why or why not?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Uncountable nouns

Some nouns (music, information, advice, water) are uncountable: no a/an and no plural -s. Use a singular verb, and use words like some, a lot of, a little (and much in questions and negatives), or "a piece of" (a piece of advice) to count them.

*"Joni makes **music** that fans love."*
*"She shared **information** online."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Choose the correct option in each sentence.

1. How (much music / many musics) did she release? _____
2. Music festivals are a lot of (funs / fun). _____
3. How (many equipment / much equipment) does a film crew need? _____
4. In quiet weeks, there is (fewer news / less news) on the film. _____
5. An election official gave (advice / an advice) to voters. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 8–10 minutes vocabulary, 10–12 minutes reading, 8–10 minutes comprehension, 10 minutes discussion. You may combine grammar into reading/comprehension time if needed.
- Pre-teach names and places (Joni Mitchell, Chuck Mitchell, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Newport) and check students know Instagram and election.
- Run the reading as a jigsaw: in pairs, students underline dates, places, and life events, then compare with another pair. Sensitive note: the text mentions a serious medical event; allow students to discuss the timeline without sharing personal health stories.
- Differentiation: stronger students add one more life event from memory or prior knowledge after reading; others use only the timeline in the text.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Board a few reasons first (family, work), then ask for a short example from each student.
2. Elicit simple actions (post, live, reply); push for one benefit and one risk from each pair.
3. Have students choose one detail (date, place, event) and explain why it stood out.
4. Take a quick show of hands, then pair a yes with a no to exchange reasons and experiences.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: Write a 50–60 word Instagram caption for Joni's ceremony video, using two vocabulary words.

Role-play: In pairs, act out a 2-minute interview where a reporter asks Joni about becoming a citizen and her next plans.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Uncountable nouns

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What change happened in Joni Mitchell's life?
   She became a US citizen at age 82.
2. Where did she share video of the ceremony?
   On Instagram.
3. What can she do now that she is a US citizen?
   She can vote in US elections.
4. When did she release her debut album?
   In 1968.
5. When and where did she return to live performance?
   In 2022 at the Newport folk festival.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Choose the correct option in each sentence.

1. How (much music / many musics) did she release? **much music**
2. Music festivals are a lot of (funs / fun). **fun**
3. How (many equipment / much equipment) does a film crew need? **much equipment**
4. In quiet weeks, there is (fewer news / less news) on the film. **less news**
5. An election official gave (advice / an advice) to voters. **advice**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Some nouns (music, information, advice, water) are uncountable: no a/an and no plural -s. Use a singular verb, and use words like some, a lot of, a little (and much in questions and negatives), or "a piece of" (a piece of advice) to count them. (Examples constructed.)

> *"Joni makes* **music** *that fans love."*
> *"She shared* **information** *online."*