

C1-C2 English Worksheet

Why Are Vinyl Records, DVDs and CDs Making a Comeback?

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Article

The supposed resurgence of physical media is easy to exaggerate. Streaming remains ubiquitous, and DVDs are still a niche market rather than a mass-market revival. Yet the direction of travel is interesting. On 22 September, The Guardian asked readers whether they were moving away from algorithmically curated entertainment and returning to vinyl and discs. Official UK figures also show genuine growth in physical music: BPI says physical music revenue rose 12.8 per cent in 2025, with vinyl revenue up 19.9 per cent and CD revenue also growing.

Part of the appeal is ownership. A digital library can feel transient: titles disappear, subscriptions change and some subscription deals can lock people into continuing payments. A record or DVD is tactile, can be lent or resold, and lets people hold on to something they have paid for. Others deliberately opt out of recommendation systems because they want to choose for themselves rather than let an algorithm filter out unfamiliar material. Some record shops now double down on the social side of collecting, offering events and face-to-face recommendations that streaming cannot reproduce. That slower experience may come at a cost, but supporters argue that the friction is precisely what makes it meaningful.

This does not boil down to simple nostalgia. Many younger buyers never experienced the supposed golden age of vinyl or video rental, yet they still buy into the idea of physical ownership. For them, collecting can express taste, preserve favourite works and create a more deliberate relationship with entertainment. The apparent contradiction is that many still use streaming as well. Rather than turn their backs on digital media, they combine convenience with selective ownership. Whether today's revival will stand the test of time is uncertain, but it suggests that unlimited access does not automatically satisfy every cultural need.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

No.	Statement	T / F
1	The article argues that DVDs have already returned to being a mass-market form of entertainment.	
2	UK physical music revenue grew in 2025, according to BPI figures cited in the article.	
3	Physical media can offer possibilities such as lending or reselling an item.	
4	The article says recommendation algorithms always expose users to unfamiliar material.	
5	Some record shops try to compete by offering social experiences and personal recommendations.	
6	Supporters of physical media believe that any inconvenience automatically makes the experience worse.	
7	The article says most younger physical-media buyers remember the original golden age of vinyl and video rental.	
8	The article presents physical and digital media as things that many consumers can use together rather than as complete opposites.	

Phrase Match

Match the phrases (1-10) to the correct definitions (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. lock people into	A. involve a disadvantage, sacrifice or price
2. hold on to	B. choose not to participate in or use something
3. opt out of	C. reject or abandon something previously accepted
4. filter out	D. make people remain in an arrangement or system
5. double down on	E. accept an idea as convincing or valid
6. come at a cost	F. become more committed to a strategy
7. boil down to	G. remain effective or valued over a long period
8. buy into	H. keep possession of something
9. turn their backs on	I. have one essential point or cause when simplified
10. stand the test of time	J. remove certain items before they reach or remain in a group

Synonym Match

Match the words (1-10) to the correct synonyms (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. resurgence	A. temporary
2. ubiquitous	B. replicate
3. curated	C. pervasive
4. transient	D. protect
5. niche	E. authentic
6. genuine	F. inconsistency
7. reproduce	G. revival
8. meaningful	H. specialised
9. preserve	I. selected
10. contradiction	J. significant

Use the New Language

Choose 5 words or phrases from the worksheet and write your own sentences.

No.	Your sentence
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Discussion Questions

Student A	Student B
1. Which physical formats have you used regularly, and which do you still own?	1. Why can people feel nostalgic for technology from before they were born?
2. Is there an album, film, game or book you would prefer to own permanently rather than access online?	2. Does unlimited choice improve entertainment, or can scarcity make choices more satisfying?
3. Do you enjoy browsing in record, book or video shops, or do you prefer to know exactly what you want before entering?	3. Is paying for a digital licence meaningfully different from owning a physical copy?
4. Have you ever discovered something excellent because a person recommended it rather than an algorithm?	4. Do recommendation algorithms expand our tastes or gradually narrow them?
5. Do you tend to hold on to old devices after newer ones replace them? Why?	5. Can inconvenience have cultural value because it creates rituals, attention and anticipation?
6. Do you think displaying a collection says something meaningful about a person's identity?	6. Are record shops and video shops cultural spaces worth preserving even when online services are cheaper?
7. Which form of older technology would you be curious to try for a week?	7. Could physical media survive mainly as premium or collector products rather than returning to the mass market?
8. Would a physical gift feel more personal to you than a digital subscription?	8. Which digital products or habits today might become objects of nostalgia in 20 years?

Answer Key

True/False	1=F, 2=T, 3=T, 4=F, 5=T, 6=F, 7=F, 8=T
Phrase Match	1=D, 2=H, 3=B, 4=J, 5=F, 6=A, 7=I, 8=E, 9=C, 10=G
Synonym Match	1=G, 2=C, 3=I, 4=A, 5=H, 6=E, 7=B, 8=J, 9=D, 10=F

Example Sentences With the Phrases

No.	Example sentence
1	Subscription packages can lock people into monthly payments they no longer value.
2	Collectors hold on to favourite editions because they are difficult to replace.
3	Some listeners opt out of algorithmic recommendations and browse independently.
4	Recommendation systems may filter out material that does not match previous habits.
5	Independent shops often double down on events and expert advice to attract customers.
6	Owning hundreds of records can come at a cost when storage space is limited.
7	The appeal does not boil down to nostalgia alone.
8	Younger buyers may buy into the idea that physical ownership feels more secure.
9	Few people completely turn their backs on streaming just because they buy vinyl.
10	A well-made physical edition may stand the test of time better than a temporary licence.