

# Cancel Culture

Upper-Intermediate level

## Task 1 - Warm-up

# What is cancel culture?

Look at the picture and try to guess the meaning.



# Task 1 - Check your guess

## **CANCEL CULTURE:**

***a way of behaving in a society or group, especially on social media, in which it is common to completely reject and stop supporting someone because they have said or done something that offends you***

# Task 2 - Lead-in

## Answer the questions.

1. Have you ever heard this notion before? If yes, provide an example.
2. Do you prefer to be tolerant and not to express your opinion or you always say what you think about this or that social aspect?
3. Have you or anyone you know ever been a victim of cancel culture? Share your experience



# Task 3 - Reading

Read the [article](#) and answer the following questions.

1. Why did the celebrities, mentioned in the first paragraph, become victims of cancel culture?
2. Is cancel culture a new phenomenon?
3. Why is it impossible for celebrities to conceal their secrets nowadays?
4. What is the psychological effect of collective cancelling?
5. How does cancel culture influence business?
6. What does “cancelling cancel culture” movement mean and who promotes it?



# Task 4 - Speaking

## Discuss the questions.

1. Do you find the facts described in the article to be shocking?
2. Do you support the idea that each person can express their opinion, otherwise it's not a democracy any more?
3. Do you agree that we live in the era of totalitarian tolerance and you have to think twice before saying something?
4. Would you join collective cancelling if some celebrity expressed a view opposing to yours?



# Task 5a - Vocabulary

**Find the given words/word-combinations in the article, explain their meaning.**

- 1 to get the RIP treatment
- 2.the set of norms
- 3.bullheadedness
- 4.to experience backlash
- 5.intolerance of opposing views
- 6.public shaming
- 7.ostracism
- 8.bigotry

**Use these words/word-combinations to make up sentences of your own.**

# Task 5b - Vocabulary practice

## **Answer the questions using new vocabulary.**

1. Have you ever experienced a backlash?
2. Can we explain cancel culture by bullheadedness of people who radically support the philosophy of tolerance?
3. Do you feel intolerance of opposing views in such areas as politics, religion, sex? Have you ever argued about these issues?
4. How should the set of norms be introduced in society?
5. What is your attitude towards public shaming and ostracism?
6. Do you think that bigotry can lead to huge conflicts in society?

### *New vocabulary:*

*to get the RIP treatment   the set of norms   bullheadedness   to experience backlash  
intolerance of opposing views   public shaming   ostracism   bigotry*

# Task 6 - Watching a video

Watch the [video](#) and answer the questions.

1. What is the purpose of the open letter?
2. How can cancel culture affect people's lives?
3. What does signing the open letter mean?
4. What is the attitude of the speaker towards those who signed this letter?
5. How has public argument changed?



# Task 7 - Speaking

**Do you agree with the speaker's opinion as for the following:**

1. Cancel culture can ruin person's life.
2. No matter what you say, you have the right to express your opinion.
3. People who support tolerance are aggressively intolerant.



# Task 8 - Discussion

**Express your opinion about the following cancel culture cases.**

J.K.Rowling made anti-trans comments.

1. Russian player, Valery Saramotin, was suspended by his club, Austin Bold, a USL football club, after he refused to kneel on his knee to support the “Black Lives Matter” movement.
2. Johnny Depp filed a libel suit against The Sun newspaper, after they allegedly ran an article calling him a ‘wife beater’.
3. Russian TV presenter Regina Todenko commented on home violence saying it was woman’s fault.

**Who do you support? Why?**

# Homework

**For additional information read the following articles:**

<http://www.thecourieronline.co.uk/the-complications-of-cancel-culture/>

<https://theprint.in/opinion/pov/obama-chomsky-called-out-the-cancel-culture-are-they-baiting-us-to-yell-ok-boomer/463398/>

<https://www.hitc.com/en-gb/2020/07/08/noam-chomsky-cancel-culture/>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/09/cancel-culture-is-real-problem-not-people-warning-about-it/>

<https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/.premium-from-atwood-to-chomsky-intellectuals-come-out-against-cancel-culture-1.8979336>

# Keys

## Task 5a

- 1 to get the RIP treatment - to get negative feedback by society after expressing an opinion that doesn't seem to be tolerant;
- 2.the set of norms - accepted standards or ways of behaving that most people agree with;
- 3.bullheadedness - determination to do what you want to do, especially without considering other people's feelings;
- 4.to experience backlash - to live through a radical negative reaction by a group of people concerning an opinion expressed by you;
- 5.intolerance of opposing views - the fact of refusing to accept ideas, beliefs, or behaviour that are different from your own;
- 6.public shaming - the act of publicly criticizing and drawing attention to someone, especially on the internet;

# Keys

## Task 5a

7. ostracism - the action of intentionally not including someone in a social group or activity;

8. bigotry - the fact of having and expressing strong, unreasonable beliefs and disliking other people who have different beliefs or a different way of life.

## Task 4

1. Because they expressed their opinion as for very delicate issues.

2. The roots of cancel culture have been present throughout human history. Societies have punished people for behaving outside of perceived social norms for centuries, she said, and this is just another variation.

3. Celebrities are supposed to be put under the microscope. Twitter's users are often known for their FBI-like investigative skills — digging up past dirt, old secrets and discovering people's identities — and are now being utilized in the resurgence of cancel culture.

# Keys

4. The collective canceling of someone, even on the internet, creates a sense of solidarity and reinforces the feeling of togetherness, that “we are a group...and we don’t tolerate that kind of behavior.”
5. It causes rebranding.
6. More than 150 public figures, including Margaret Atwood, 80, and Rowling, 54 have signed an open letter against cancel culture.

## **Task 6.**

1. To cancel “cancel culture” and warn people about threat to democracy.
2. People who are publicly shamed lose their jobs, livelihoods, normal life.
3. It means that you agree with the objective of the letter, but not with people’s opinion, who signed this letter.
4. He rarely agreed with these people, but he agrees with the context of the letter.
5. People have become more aggressive, today we observe a battle between good and bad people.