Walk On The Wild Side – Lou Reed - Notes

- **Activity types:** listening for information, gap fill.
- **Grammar:** Past Simple.
- **Level:** Elementary / Pre-Intermediate
- **Note:** The content of this song is not suitable for all learners. Lou Reed wrote it about the drag queens and transvestites that he met at Andy Warhol's Factory studio in the 1960's. The lyrics also refer to oral sex. Taken from his second solo album Transformer (1972), and produced by David Bowie, this is perhaps Reed's best known song.

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1) Give each student a copy of the worksheet and ask them to fold it so they cannot see the lyrics. In pairs ask them to complete the first exercise.

2) Feedback, then ask students to look at the next exercise. Play the song.
   Key:
   2. Candy Darling – lose her head
   1. Holly Woodlawn – hitch-hike – shave her legs
   5. Jackie Curtis – James Dean - Valium
   4. Joe Campbell ("Sugar Plum Fairy") – The Apollo
   3. Joe Dallesandro – New York City

3) Ask them to write the Past Simple forms. The numbers in brackets refer to the number of times it appears in the song.
   Key:

to be (4) – was / were	to have to (2) – had to	to pluck - plucked
to come (3) - came	to hit - hit	to say (8) - said
to give - gave	to hitch-hike – hitch-hiked	to shave - shaved
to go - went	to lose - lost	to think - thought

4) Ask students how many of these verbs are regular? (**Key:** 3) Irregular? (**Key:** 9)

5) Ask them to unfold the page to see the lyrics. They can complete these with the verbs - they should be able to much of this without listening to the song, using context and their previous listening.

6) Play the song. Students check and correct if necessary.

7) Sing the song together.

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Walk On The Wild Side – Lou Reed

1. Look at the pictures and match them to the words:

Valium – to hitch-hike – New York City – to lose your head (*to get angry*) – to shave your legs - James Dean – The Apollo Theater










2. Each of the five verses of the song is about a character Lou Reed knew in the 1960's. Listen to the song - in what order does he sing about them? Which of the pictures above is associated with each character?

Candy Darling
Holly Woodlawn
Jackie Curtis
Joe Campbell ("Sugar Plum Fairy")
Joe Dallesandro

3. Write the Past Simple form of each of these verbs.

to be (4)	to have to (2)	to pluck
to come (3)	to hit	to say (8)
to give	to hitch-hike	to shave
to go	to lose	to think

FOLD

4. Complete the lyrics with the verbs in the Past Simple.

Holly _____ from Miami, F.L.A.
_____ her way across the U.S.A.
_____ her eyebrows on the way
_____ her legs and then he was a she
She says, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
He said, "Hey honey, take a walk on the wild side"

Candy _____ from out on the island
In the backroom she _____ everybody's darlin'
But she never _____ her head
Even when she _____ giving head
She says, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
He said, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"

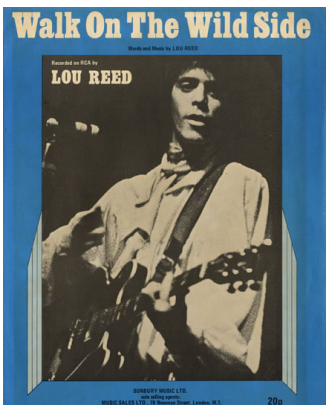
And the coloured girls go
Doo do doo, doo do doo, doo do doo

Little Joe never once _____ it away
Everybody _____ pay and pay
A hustle here and a hustle there
New York City's the place where they _____
"Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
I _____, "Hey Joe, take a walk on the wild side"

Sugar Plum Fairy _____ and _____ the streets
Lookin' for soul food and a place to eat
_____ to the Apollo, you should've seen 'em go go go
They _____, "Hey sugar, take a walk on the wild side"
I _____, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
Alright, huh

Jackie is just speeding away
_____ she _____ James Dean for a day
Then I guess she _____ crash
Valium would have helped that bash
She said, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
I said, "Hey honey, take a walk on the wild side"

And the coloured girls say
Doo do doo, doo do doo, doo do doo



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Walk On The Wild Side – Lou Reed – Complete

Holly came from Miami, F.L.A.
Hitch-hiked her way across the U.S.A.
Plucked her eyebrows on the way
Shaved her legs and then he was a she
She says, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
He said, "Hey honey, take a walk on the wild side"

Candy came from out on the island
In the backroom she was everybody's darlin'
But she never lost her head
Even when she was giving head
She says, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
He said, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"

And the coloured girls go
Doo do doo, doo do doo, doo do doo

Little Joe never once gave it away
Everybody had to pay and pay
A hustle here and a hustle there
New York City's the place where they said
"Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
I said, "Hey Joe, take a walk on the wild side"

Sugar Plum Fairy came and hit the streets
Lookin' for soul food and a place to eat
Went to the Apollo, you should've seen 'em go go go
They said, "Hey sugar, take a walk on the wild side"
I said, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
Alright, huh

Jackie is just speeding away
Thought she was James Dean for a day
Then I guess she had to crash
Valium would have helped that bash
She said, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
I said, "Hey honey, take a walk on the wild side"

And the coloured girls say
Doo do doo, doo do doo, doo do doo

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