

- a** Listen to the song once, pausing after each verse and chorus, and answering the questions with a partner.

Verse 1

- 1 What kind of lifestyle did the woman use to have?

Chorus 1

- 2 What impression do you get of the woman now?
3 How old does she say she is to the young man? What does he reply?

Verse 2

- 4 Why kind of man did she marry? Why?
5 How did she bring up her children?

Chorus 2

- 6 What has changed in what she says to the young man?

Verse 3

- 7 What happens now when her son visits her?
8 What happened to her daughter?
9 What unpleasant surprise did she get when her husband died?

Chorus 3

- 10 What has changed in what she says to the young man?

- b** Read the glossary, and listen to the song again with the lyrics. With a partner look at the **highlighted** phrases, and decide what you think they mean.

A Lady of a Certain Age

Verse 1

Back in the day you had been part of **the smart set**
You'd holidayed with kings, dined out with starlets
From London to New York, Cap Ferrat to Capri
In perfume by Chanel and clothes by Givenchy
You sipped Camparis with David and Peter
At Noel's parties by Lake Geneva
Scaling the **dizzy heights** of high society
Armed only with a **cheque book and a family tree**

Chorus 1

You chased the sun around the Côte d'Azur
Until **the light of youth became obscured**
And left you on your own and **in the shade**
An English lady of a certain age
And if a nice young man would buy you a drink
You'd say with a **conspiratorial wink**
'You wouldn't think that I was seventy'
And he'd say, 'no, you couldn't be!'

Verse 2

You had to marry someone very very rich
So that you might be kept in the style to which
You had all of your life been accustomed to
But that the socialists had taxed away from you
You gave him children, a girl and a boy
To **keep your sanity** a nanny was employed
And when the time came they were sent away
Oh that was simply what you did in those days

Chorus 2

You chased the sun around the Côte d'Azur
Until the light of youth became obscured
And left you on your own and in the shade
An English lady of a certain age
And if a nice young man would buy you a drink
You'd say with a **conspiratorial wink**
'You wouldn't think that I was sixty-three'
And he'd say, 'no, you couldn't be!'

Verse 3

Your son's in stocks and bonds and lives back in Surrey
Flies down once in a while and leaves in a hurry
Your daughter never finished her finishing school
Married a strange young man of **whom you don't approve**
Your husband's hollow heart gave out one Christmas Day
He left the villa to his mistress in Marseilles
And so you come here to escape your little flat
Hoping someone will fill your glass and let you chat about how

Chorus 3

You chased the sun around the Côte d'Azur
Until the light of youth became obscured
And left you all alone and in the shade
An English lady of a certain age
And if a nice young man would buy you a drink
You'd say with a **conspiratorial wink**
'You wouldn't think that I was fifty-three'
And he'd say, 'no, you couldn't be!'

Song facts

A Lady of a Certain Age was written by Neil Hammond, the lead singer and founding member of the band The Divine Comedy, and was released in 2006 on the album *Victory for the Comic Muse*.

Glossary

Côte d'Azur = an area on the south coast of France, popular with tourists and famous for being glamorous
Campari = a drink
Finishing school = a private school where young women from **rich families are taught** how to behave in fashionable society