

Choose your favourite singer. I am sure that you can imagine them turning the journey out of the fruit bowl, or the colours in the hat, into a “grape” song. Which bits did you like best?

And that’s perhaps a better answer to Big Grapefruit’s original question. The big record – the Long Player or LP – gives the musician more time to develop their ideas. The listener will also have more opportunity to escape into the world that the singer or band was trying to create. Sometimes that “world” is like a full book, that tells a whole story, and other times it’s just a collection of songs that the musicians recorded at around the same time, thinking about things that were important to them at that point in their lives. An LP is also known as “an album”. If a “single” is one photo (or “snapshot”) then an album shows you lots of carefully chosen photos. These photos may have been taken at an event (for example a wedding) or they might capture a longer period (for example photos of Little Grapefruit growing up). Either way, they tell a bigger story than a single photo, and that can be more satisfying.

That evening Little Grapefruit realised that she had an hour to spare. Little Grapefruit asked Big Grapefruit if they could listen to their favourite Christmas record: A Grapefruit Pink Christmas by the Vince Guaraldi Trio (1965). They turned on the Christmas Tree lights, sat down and listened carefully. Big Grapefruit explained that if you don’t have a record player you can still listen to a whole “album” on CD, a computer or Spotify. They agreed not to get distracted when they were listening to the LP.

Big Grapefruit picked up the cover and together they looked at the pictures chosen to accompany the music. Little Grapefruit laughed at the Grapefruit dressed in their winter clothes, the skiers and the snowmen they had made. As she

listened to each song she could see new details on the cover, and understood a little bit more.

She was so entranced by the experience that she didn’t notice that the songs on the first side were finished and the needle was clicking in the run-out groove. Little Grapefruit watched as Big Grapefruit turned the record over carefully and they listened through to the end. This time, when the final song was over, Little Grapefruit was allowed to lift the arm from the record and after moving it to the edge she clipped it into place, safe for another day.

As they looked out of the window before drawing the curtains that night Little Grapefruit squeaked with pleasure. The newly fallen snow was dappled with the light from the moon, the stars and the Christmas lights. It was so beautiful.

Big Grapefruit pulled up the covers under her chin and Little Grapefruit hummed a tune from her favourite LP before she drifted off to sleep.

The End

A story written by GANTOB, for Little Grapefruit, completed on 17 December 2023

* My original answer to the LP question was: “Distance doesn't exist, in fact, and neither does time”. That was rather pretentious of me. Sometimes adults can be rather silly. The quote goes on: “Vibrations from love or music can be felt everywhere, at all times”. I like that. That quote was written by Yoko Ono Sr, who has no connection with the fictional character Yoko Ono Jr, who is said to have written the original Grapefruit Are Not The Only Bombs (GANTOB) book, mentioned in The JAMs’ book 2023: A trilogy. The original GANTOB probably never existed. My re-enactment of Grapefruit Are Not The Only Bombs does, however, exist (published 2023 by GANTOB Books). Big Grapefruit has a copy for when you’re older.



Little Grapefruit’s Christmas

A pamphlet

by

GANTOB

GANTOB Pamphlet X30

Big Grapefruit wrote to me back in August. He asked me “How can I make my children appreciate the beauty and the value of a well-crafted and thought through long playing record in the age of streaming”. I tried to answer this question* in a book that I sent to Big Grapefruit and 22 other people who had also asked me a question. I have been meaning to send a better answer to Big Grapefruit. What follows is my best effort.

A “record” is like a flat frisbee, but it contains music. Records come in a range of different sizes. Sometimes they have just one song on each side – this is called a single, and from one side to the other it measures about 17 centimetres or 7 inches in old units). And sometimes records are bigger, measuring the size of an ordinary ruler (30 centimetres – or 12 inches). These bigger records usually have several songs on them. Records usually have music on both sides, and come in a paper or clear plastic sleeve, and then a card sleeve with pictures on it. The record is put onto a piece of felt on a plate that spins round like a microwave. A delicate “arm” with a tiny needle on the end is pulled over the record, bringing it down really carefully to make music come out. It’s like magic.

Big Grapefruit was asking about the big records, and how Little Grapefruit can learn to love the music that comes out of them, listening right to the end of the second side.

I have two stories to tell you. Before you start reading the first story, I would like you to find a stopwatch. A wristwatch or mobile phone should do the trick. OK. Start timing and read on.

Story 1: The Tree

It’s Christmas morning. Little Grapefruit wakes up really excited, but then realises that she has forgotten to buy a present for her brother. She pops through to ask Big Grapefruit, but everyone is asleep. She switches on her torch under her covers, grabs her pens, a piece of paper, some safety scissors and a Pritt stick. A few minutes

later, after slotting two triangles together, and sticking on some circles she has coloured in, she has a pretty Christmas tree. She folds over another piece of paper to make a basic envelope and writes her brother’s name followed by a Christmas message. Job done, she pulls open the curtains to see that it has snowed overnight. What a “grape” day this is going to be.

Stop the clock. How long did that take? Write it down in the table below, under “story 1”, recording the number of minutes and seconds. Now, imagine that that is something that you heard on the radio or Spotify – like a song but without music. It takes a single idea (the missed Christmas present).

Story 1	Story 2
__ minutes __ seconds	__ minutes __ seconds

Now, reset your stopwatch and get ready for the second story. Ready, steady, go.

Story 2: The Pom-Pom

It’s Christmas morning. The snow is falling outside. Little Grapefruit decides to go outside and make a snowman. Before she leaves her bowl she opens the small soft package under the Christmas tree. She has already felt all the presents through their wrapping, several times. Sticking her finger in under the festive tape she rips the Christmas Scotty dog wrapping paper off and admires the striped hat inside. Pink, orange and yellow. Her favourite colours. It’s nice and soft and has a pink pom-pom. She loves it. She pops her hat on. Twitching one way and then the other she starts to roll backwards and forwards across the bowl, trying to gather enough speed to launch off from the sloped edges, over the lip and into the outside world. She’s well-practiced in this, but today something is wrong. The pop-pom is pushing her off course and has introduced an annoying bump for every

roll. She pulls the hat off and throws it under the Christmas tree. She sits on it and cries.

When Big Grapefruit and the rest of the family come in to switch on the Christmas tree lights, they find Little Grapefruit looking miserable in a puddle of her yellow tears. Little Grapefruit explains what has gone wrong with her favourite present. She’s not going to be able to go out into the snow.

Big Grapefruit sits looking out of the window with Little Grapefruit for a few minutes. Little Grapefruit has stopped crying. Big Grapefruit is turning the hat around, thinking how to help. Pulling at the pom-pom they both jump a bit at a popping sound. Big is worried that it’s ruined, but Little squeaks out in pleasure. “It’s a popper”, she laughs, spinning around a couple of times. They practice putting the pop-pom on and off the attachment on the hat.

Little Grapefruit rolls through to her bedroom and pulls out a hair band. Back with Big Grapefruit they sew the popper onto the hair band and use it to attach the pop-pom to the top of the Christmas tree. It looks really “grape”. Satisfied, Little Grapefruit pulls on her undecorated hat and she and the rest of the family launch off the side of the bowl to land softly in a pile of snow. She is thrilled to be totally in control of her rolling again. They play outside until it is completely dark. Back home, they hang up their hats on the hooks where their stockings had been the night before. Then, after warming themselves for a couple of minutes they head through to have their Christmas meal.

Stop the clock. How long was that. Write down the answer in the table above.

How many ideas were there in that story? There were seven paragraphs, but some had more than one idea. Some of the points could be developed into songs or stories of their own.