

## Words and Their Stories: Like a Rolling Stone



**AP**

The Rolling Stones perform during a 2006 concert in Saitama, Japan, north of Tokyo

Now, the VOA Special English program WORDS AND THEIR STORIES.

Today we explain a very old saying that has had a big influence on rock and roll music. That saying is a rolling stone gathers no moss. It has several meanings. One meaning is that a person who never settles down in one place will not be successful. Another is that someone who is always moving, with no roots in one place, avoids responsibilities.

This proverb was said to be first used in the fifteen hundreds. But in the nineteen sixties, the expression rolling stone became famous in the world of rock-and-roll music. It became the name of a rock group, a song and a magazine.

Experts say it all started with a song by the American singer and guitarist Muddy Waters. He was one of the country's top blues musicians until his death in nineteen eighty-three. His music influenced singers like Elvis Presley and Bob Dylan. In nineteen-fifty, Muddy Waters recorded a song called "Rollin' Stone."

(MUSIC)

A British rock group is said to have taken its name from Muddy Waters' song. The Rolling Stones performed for the first time in nineteen sixty-two. The group's members called themselves "the world's greatest rock and roll band."

In nineteen sixty-five, Bob Dylan released his song "Like a Rolling Stone." It is one of his best known and most influential works.

It is an angry song about a woman who was once rich and successful. But now she is on her own, "with no direction home, like a complete unknown, like a rolling stone."

(MUSIC)

In nineteen sixty-seven, a young man named Jann Wenner started a magazine he named "Rolling Stone." The magazine reported on rock music and the popular culture that the music created. By nineteen seventy-one, "Rolling Stone" had become the leading rock music and counterculture publication. It is still popular today.

(MUSIC)

This VOA Special English program was written by Shelley Gollust. I'm Faith Lapidus. You can find more WORDS AND THEIR STORIES at our website, [voaspecialenglish.com](http://voaspecialenglish.com).