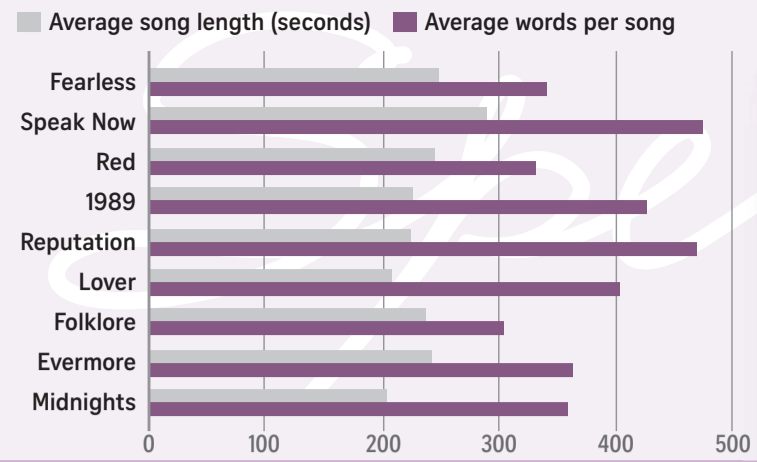


**AVERAGE SONG LENGTH AND WORD COUNT**



In this second instalment of The Straits Times' nine-part daily Taylor Swift infographic series, correspondent **Yamini Chinnuswamy** and executive artist **Billy Ker** explore the 34-year-old American pop star's third album. This is ahead of The Eras Tour in Singapore from March 2 to 9, named for the different musical "eras" of her career

# Speak Now (2010)

**AT A GLANCE**



- 3rd** album, released in October 2010
- 5 million** copies sold worldwide up till September 2011
- 2** Grammy Awards won, including Best Country Song for Mean (2011)

**LINER NOTES**

- To date, Speak Now is Swift's only entirely self-written album.
- Tracks such as Long Live and Sparks Fly retain the youthful energy of Fearless (2008). Yet, songs like Back To December showcase Swift's growing maturity as she enters adulthood.
- There are also takedowns of people who have wronged her. For instance, Better Than Revenge goes: "She's not a saint and she's not what you think, she's an actress. She's better known for the things that she does on the mattress."
- A Taylor's Version re-recording of the album drops in July 2023. It changes the mattress line of Better Than Revenge to, "He was a moth to the flame, she was holding the matches".
- Speak Now lacks the mainstream hits of Swift's other albums, leading some fans to call it underrated. Only two Speak Now tracks are performed during the Eras Tour: Enchanted and Long Live.

**TAYLOR'S DIARY**

**2009 to 2010**

♥ American singer-songwriter John Mayer is a key figure of Swift's Speak Now era. Over the course of 2009, the then 32-year-old repeatedly expresses his admiration for the pop star, who turns 20 that year, in public.

He tells fans on Twitter, now called X: "I want to sing (a new song I wrote) with Taylor Swift." The song is called Half Of My Heart and it appears on his fourth album, *Battle Studies*, in November 2009. It features Swift on vocals.

The two are then spotted together on a group date in January 2010. American media reports that the romance ends by February 2010, but they remain on good terms.



They hug on stage (above) during the Songwriters Hall of Fame induction ceremony in June 2010.

But by the time *Speak Now* lands in October 2010, something has gone wrong. The album includes a song called Dear John, featuring the lyrics: "Dear John, I see it all now that you're gone. Don't you think I was too young to be messed with?"

**October to December 2010**

♥ In October, Swift is seen with American actor Jake Gyllenhaal, then 30. They reportedly met during a dinner party hosted by actress Gwyneth Paltrow. Over the next few weeks, the couple are spotted on various dates. Swift spends Thanksgiving with Gyllenhaal's family.

But in January 2011, they call it quits. Both Gyllenhaal and those last autumn months of 2010 will be formative in Swift's evolution as a young woman and songwriter.

**February 2011**

🎤 Swift kicks off her *Speak Now* concert tour in Singapore (below). She performs a one-night sold-out show for more than 8,000 fans at the Singapore Indoor Stadium.



**July to October 2012**

♥ In the run-up to her next album, *Red* (2012), Swift has a summer dalliance with Conor Kennedy. Then 18, he is the grand-nephew of the late American president John F. Kennedy.

**WE NEVER GO OUT OF STYLE**



**1 Fighting dragons**  
The *Speak Now* aesthetic idealises the last days of youth, with its fairy-tale imagery, such as castles and ballgowns.



**2 Kings and queens**  
On the covers of both the original and Taylor's Version albums, Swift wears a frothy purple frock à la a fairy-tale princess.



**3 Going fishing**  
During the *Speak Now* concert tour, Swift uses a guitar with a koi fish design that had been custom-made for her. The instrument is now on display at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, the US.



**4 Taylor-made scent**  
Swift releases her own fragrance, *Wonderstruck*, during this era. The discontinued scent is now a rare and valuable merch item among fans.

**THE STRAITS TIMES**

**2 ASSEMBLE YOUR OWN POSTER**  
This is the second of a nine-part infographic that will be published daily until Feb 25. Combine all nine pages to create your own mosaic poster of Taylor Swift. Or stand a chance to win a limited-edition collectible poster. Find out more: [str.sg/TSwift](http://str.sg/TSwift)