

Hip-Hop and Rap

"You gotta fight for your right to party."

—Beastie Boys

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What words do you think of when you hear the word "hip-hop?"
2. What is the difference between rap and hip-hop?
3. Do you enjoy hip-hop music? Why or why not?
4. What is the role of a DJ?
5. Why might a reading about hip-hop mention Barack Obama?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. genre | a) something that inspires something else |
| _____ 2. influence | b) a way of doing something |
| _____ 3. technique | c) to cause something to last longer |
| _____ 4. prolong | d) to promote a person or thing that you approve of |
| _____ 5. solo | e) to name something new |
| _____ 6. coin | f) a category or style of art |
| _____ 7. converse | g) alone |
| _____ 8. lyrics | h) to communicate |
| _____ 9. issue | i) words in a song |
| _____ 10. endorse | j) to suddenly join or become noticeable |
| _____ 11. burst onto | k) a subject, topic, or problem |

Reading

1. Hip-hop is a music **genre** and culture. It involves rapping, beatboxing, DJing, and dancing. **Influences** of hip-hop include African American and Latino music, street dancing, spoken word poetry, and DJ block parties.
2. Clive Campbell is often called the “Father of Hip-Hop.” He was born in Jamaica and moved to the US at the age of 11. His school friends called him Hercules because of his size. Clive Campbell grew up listening to Jamaican DJ battles. When he became a DJ in the ‘70s, Clive Campbell named himself Kool Herc.
3. Kool Herc’s special **technique** of mixing records became very popular. DJs learned to buy two copies of an album. They remixed the tracks to **prolong** the drum **solos** or “breakbeats.” Rhyming, scratching, break dancing and emcee battling became part of the new hip-hop culture. Hip-hop dancers were called b-boys or b-girls. The “b” stood for break, breaker, or break dancer.
4. The term “rap music” was **coined** in 1978. The word “rap” was an African American English word meaning “to say” or “to **converse**.” Rap music refers to speaking in rhymes to a musical beat. Rap crews began to form in the late ‘70s, and rap singles hit the music charts soon after. The world famous Beastie Boys formed in 1981. By 1983, Ice T had introduced a new kind of hip-hop called gangsta rap. Gangsta rap **lyrics** reflected the violent lives of inner-city youths.
5. Early rap music was often about street life. In the late ‘80s and ‘90s, hip-hop artists often rapped about political **issues**. Prior to the 2008 presidential election, many hip-hop rappers began **endorsing** Barack Obama. They did this by using his name in lyrics, such as “Critics say we can’t, but Barack says we can.”
6. Eminem is sometimes referred to as the “King of Hip-Hop.” This rapper from Detroit **burst onto** the scene in 1999. Eminem’s real name is Marshall Bruce Mathers III. Eminem also goes by the name Slim Shady. In 2000, Eminem’s second album sold 1.76 million copies in its first week. Eminem set many world records, including fastest-selling album and most liked “living” person on Facebook.

Comprehension

A. True, False, or Not Mentioned?

Write T if the statement is true. If the statement is false, write F and correct the information in your notebook. Write NM if the statement is not mentioned in the reading.

- _____ 1. Spoken word poetry was one influence of hip-hop music.
- _____ 2. Clive Campbell is often called the "Father of Pop."
- _____ 3. The Beastie Boys were the first gangsta rappers.
- _____ 4. Barack Obama was a rapper before he became a politician.
- _____ 5. Eminem's real name is Slim Shady.

B. Timeline

Place the following item in chronological order (1–6). One of the items is not mentioned in the reading. Place a star beside this item and try to decide where it would belong.

- _____ Eminem burst onto the scene.
- _____ Barack Obama became the president of the US.
- _____ Clive Campbell moved to the US.
- _____ Gangsta rap was created.
- _____ Clive Campbell named himself Kool Herc.
- _____ Marshall Bruce Mathers III sold a record amount of albums.

Pronunciation Practice

Practice saying these words with a partner. Circle the words that sound exactly the same but have different meanings.

- 1. rap / wrap
- 2. rapper / wrapper
- 3. genre / general
- 4. technique / technical
- 5. scene / seen

Vocabulary Review

A. Synonyms or Antonyms?

Look at the word pairs. Are they synonyms or antonyms?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|
| 1. prolong / reduce | _____ | 6. solo / duo | _____ |
| 2. technique / method | _____ | 7. genre / category | _____ |
| 3. converse / say | _____ | 8. lyrics / beats | _____ |
| 4. rapper / hip-hop artist | _____ | 9. coined / names | _____ |
| 5. endorse / criticize | _____ | 10. influence / play a part | _____ |

B. Choose the Closest Meaning

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined words in the following sentences.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The term "rap music" was <u>coined</u> in 1978.
a) published
b) paid for
c) devised | 4. Hip-hop artists <u>converse</u> with their listeners through rhymes and rhythms.
a) educate
b) entertain
c) speak | 7. Hip-hop is both a music <u>genre</u> and a culture.
a) dance
b) category
c) award | 9. People were surprised when a white rapper <u>burst onto</u> the hip-hop scene.
a) suddenly appeared on
b) took over
c) questioned |
| 2. "Scratching" is a special <u>technique</u> that most hip-hop DJs use.
a) dance
b) method
c) note | 5. The DJ used a special technique to <u>prolong</u> the drum solo.
a) extend
b) erase
c) mix | 8. Politicians need to understand the <u>issues</u> that matter to youth.
a) concerns
b) music
c) cultures | 10. Latino music had an early <u>influence on</u> hip-hop music.
a) difficulty with
b) similarity to
c) effect on |
| 3. Many rappers <u>endorsed</u> Barack Obama prior to the election.
a) criticized
b) voted for
c) publicly supported | 6. It is difficult to understand the <u>lyrics</u> unless you read them.
a) words
b) musicians
c) beats | | |

Discussion

1. Do you enjoy hip-hop music? Why or why not?
2. How do you feel about nicknames?
Which of your friends have one and how did they get it?
3. Do you think rapping requires a special kind of talent?
What skills are required?
4. Do you enjoy listening to music about political issues?
Why or why not?
5. How do you feel about music that has violent language in it?
Do lyrics with swearwords prevent you from listening?

Class Rap

Rap music can be as simple as putting rhymes or poetry to a musical beat. Work together in small groups or as a class to create a rap song about your class or school.

1. Go online and search “free hip-hop beats.” Download a beat to use.
2. Write some lines that fit with the beats.
3. Write a second verse if you can!
4. Share your rap with the class or upload it to a site like YouTube.