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Rap music



Let's Think

1. Do you enjoy listening to rap music?
2. Can you tell the difference between rap and hip-hop?

You are Michael. You are reading an article about rap music in a magazine.

MUSIC FOR PASSION

Mason Yim

Origin and Features of Rap

Rap as a music genre began in New York in the early 1970s, when DJs looped instrumental beats at parties to keep the crowd excited, and MCs interacted with the crowd with jokes and rhymed speech that were in sync with the repetitive rhythmic beats. As time went by, rap became a part of the hip-hop culture.

The first rapper was signed by a major record company in 1979. The records he released hit the Billboard charts instantly. In the 1980s, more MCs made their lyrics a reflection of their personal experiences or a form of protest; the most common topics were about the dark side of human society: social injustice, political unsettlement, and more controversial subjects like crime and alcohol were often mentioned. Outsiders often jumped to the conclusion that rappers were blunt, violent, obscene or boastful individuals simply because of the coarse language in the songs they rapped.



Rise to Popularity

Rappers gained widespread recognition from the 2000s onwards, thanks to social media. A typical example is MC Jin, who is acclaimed for his freestyle rap. He received the title 'world champion' in battle rapping (a kind of competition between two or more rappers live on the air) in the US in 2002. 15 years later, he competed in the Chinese rap contest 'The Rap of China' using the stage name 'Hip-Hop Man'. By participating in the contest, he made a big leap of fame in mainland China. Due to social media and live streaming, more collaborations between rappers and artists of other genres have been made possible and become much commoner. As they featured one another in their own albums, rap became the most popular music genre together with R&B in 2017, and its popularity has never declined ever since.



Women Power in Rap

Traditionally, men dominated the world of rap and hip-hop. But now, more and more women are able to achieve mainstream success. Some notable female rappers include Nicki Minaj, Missy Elliott, Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion, with Nicki Minaj being the wealthiest among them. Her net worth is about 100 million dollars.



(340 words)

Part A

Answer the following questions using the information from the article. Choose the **BEST** answer and blacken **ONE** circle only.

1. What is the main idea of the first paragraph?
 A. the difference between rap and hip-hop
 B. how hip-hop transformed into rap
 C. when rap began and what it is
 D. why rap is popular
2. The word 'outsiders' in line 12 most likely refers to _____.
 A. people who do not know much about rap
 B. rappers who have never written about controversial topics
 C. small record companies
 D. people who speak against social injustice
3. MC Jin has been mentioned in paragraph 3 to show that _____.
 A. rappers began to seek career opportunities in China
 B. battle rapping is the only way rappers gain fame
 C. a successful rapper must know how to do freestyle rap
 D. more rappers become popular because of social media
4. Nicki Minaj _____.
 A. is one of the most successful female rappers
 B. is more experienced than Missy Elliott, Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion
 C. was the first female rapper to achieve mainstream success
 D. collaborated with a lot of other rappers and artists of other music genres

Grammar Corner

A **non-defining relative clause** is used to give extra information about the subject or object of a sentence when we already know who or what is being referred to. The relative pronoun '**which**' or '**who**' is used, with one or two commas added to the clause.

e.g. A typical example is MC Jin, who is acclaimed for his freestyle rap. (Lines 17-18)

Part B

Answer the following questions using the information from the article. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. Who made rap a part of the hip-hop culture?

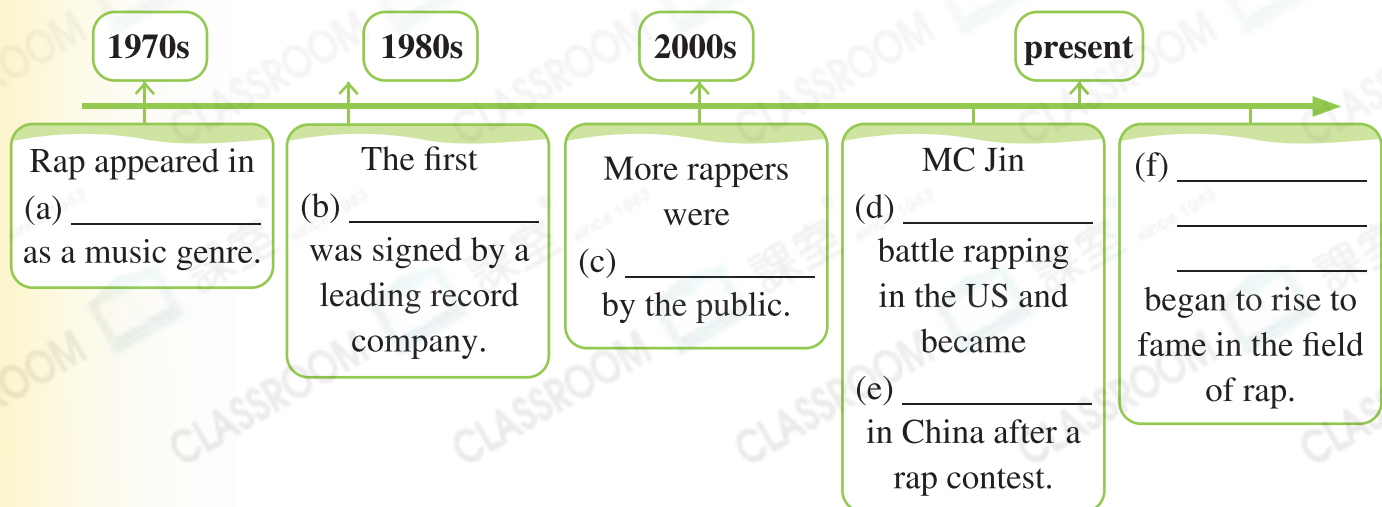
2. Why may rappers be misunderstood? Explain your answer based on the article.

3. Look for words or phrases in the article which are similar in meaning to the following:

- (a) _____ (para. 1) (*idm.*) in the same time and at the same speed
(b) _____ (para. 2) (*adj.*) causing disagreement or discussion
(c) _____ (para. 3) (*v.*) gone down gradually
(d) _____ (para. 4) (*adj.*) accepted by most people
(e) _____ (para. 4) (*adj.*) outstanding



4. Fill in the blanks to complete the timeline about the development of rap as a music genre. Use no more than three words for each blank.



Vocabulary Bank

The following are some musical instruments. Match them with the correct pictures. One of the words is not used.

accordion keyboard acoustic guitar ukulele
 harp flute xylophone saxophone double bass



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



Let's Discuss

1. Do you think that rap may not be suitable for teenagers and children?
2. Do you think that rap has become more popular because people are too disappointed with life?