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## **Rapper fights Yemen terror with hip-hop**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

### **Contents**

The Article	2
Warm ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Student Survey	8
Discussion	9
Language Work	10
Writing	11
Homework	12
Answers	13

# THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

A Yemeni-American rapper is using music to help fight terrorism in his country. Rapper Hagage 'AJ' Masaed believes he can help in the fight against terrorism and slow down the number of Yemenis joining Al Qaeda training camps. He says his music and the messages in his raps show young people there is an alternative to fighting. He told reporters his raps work better in Yemen because people there listen to the words: "In Yemen, people listen to the message. In the US they listen to the beat and a hook line. Here they go into the words and discuss them," he says. Masaed raps in a mixture of Arabic and English. His latest rap combines traditional Arab instruments with hip-hop beats and is called 'No Terrorists Please'.

AJ recently did a [radio interview](#) on America's NPR network. In it, he described himself as The Snoop Dogg of Yemen. He understands he will probably never achieve the same level of popularity. The biggest reason is the lack of technology available in Yemen. Most people have no access to a CD player and computers are even more rare. He was realistic in telling NPR that his message will have a hard time getting out of the capital Sana'a. AJ explained why he thought Al Qaeda was becoming more popular: "Most of the people in Yemen are good people. The lack of jobs, lack of money, lack of understanding about, I don't know, arts, music and all of that - people are being pushed to go to the other side."

*The transcript to the NPR interview is [here](#).*

# WARM-UPS

**1. RAP AND HIP-HOP:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about rap and hip-hop. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*rapper / Yemen / fighting terrorism / Al Qaeda / listening to song words / instruments / radio interviews / radio stations / popularity / technology / realistic / lack of jobs*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. FIGHTING TERRORISM:** How might these help? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share your ideas. Change and share again.

	How it would work	Drawbacks
Song		
Education		
War		
Occupation		
Movies		
Financial Aid		

**4. RAPS:** Students A **strongly** believe raps can help keep people away from terrorism; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. MUSIC:** What's your favourite kind? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner – best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- rap
- soul
- rock
- classical
- folk
- world music
- movie soundtracks
- romantic

**6. RADIO:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'radio'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. A rap artist is using his raps to stop people becoming terrorists.  | T / F |
| b. The rapper believes Yemenis listen to words more than Americans.    | T / F |
| c. The rapper says Yemenis rarely discuss what they hear in his raps.  | T / F |
| d. The rapper's most recent rap combines Arab instruments and hip-hop. | T / F |
| e. Rapper Snoop Dogg described himself as the American AJ Masaed.      | T / F |
| f. There are fewer computers in Yemen than CD players.                 | T / F |
| g. The rapper believes his message will spread quickly across Yemen.   | T / F |
| h. The rapper believes a lack of musical understanding is a problem.   | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. fight         | a. meaning     |
| 2. messages      | b. forced      |
| 3. alternative   | c. mixes       |
| 4. mixture       | d. reach       |
| 5. combines      | e. combat      |
| 6. achieve       | f. uncommon    |
| 7. lack          | g. substitute  |
| 8. rare          | h. knowledge   |
| 9. understanding | i. absence     |
| 10. pushed       | j. combination |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. using music to help         | a. camps                 |
| 2. Al Qaeda training           | b. time getting out      |
| 3. there is an alternative to  | c. of Arabic and English |
| 4. listen to                   | d. radio interview       |
| 5. Masaed raps in a mixture    | e. access to a CD        |
| 6. AJ recently did a           | f. fight terrorism       |
| 7. achieve the same level      | g. fighting              |
| 8. Most people have no         | h. go to the other side  |
| 9. have a hard                 | i. the beat              |
| 10. people are being pushed to | j. of popularity         |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A Yemeni-American rapper is using music to \_\_\_\_\_ fight terrorism in his country. Rapper Hagage 'AJ' Masaed believes he can help in the fight against terrorism and \_\_\_\_\_ down the number of Yemenis joining Al Qaeda \_\_\_\_\_ camps. He says his music and the \_\_\_\_\_ in his raps show young people there is an alternative to fighting. He told reporters his raps work \_\_\_\_\_ in Yemen because people there listen to the words: "In Yemen, people listen to the message. In the US they listen to the \_\_\_\_\_ and a hook line. Here they go into the words and \_\_\_\_\_ them," he says. Masaed raps in a mixture of Arabic and English. His latest rap \_\_\_\_\_ traditional Arab instruments with hip-hop beats and is called 'No Terrorists Please'.

*messages*

*slow*

*combines*

*discuss*

*help*

*beat*

*training*

*better*

AJ \_\_\_\_\_ did a radio interview on America's NPR network. In it, he described himself as The Snoop Dogg of Yemen. He understands he will \_\_\_\_\_ never achieve the same level of popularity. The biggest reason is the \_\_\_\_\_ of technology available in Yemen. Most people have no \_\_\_\_\_ to a CD player and computers are even more rare. He was \_\_\_\_\_ in telling NPR that his message will have a hard \_\_\_\_\_ getting out of the capital Sana'a. AJ explained why he thought Al Qaeda was becoming more \_\_\_\_\_: "Most of the people in Yemen are good people. The lack of jobs, lack of money, lack of understanding about, I don't know, arts, music and all of that - people are being \_\_\_\_\_ to go to the other side."

*time*

*access*

*probably*

*pushed*

*recently*

*realistic*

*popular*

*lack*

## LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

A Yemeni-American rapper is using \_\_\_\_\_ terrorism in his country. Rapper Hagage 'AJ' Masaed believes he can help in the fight against terrorism \_\_\_\_\_ number of Yemenis joining Al Qaeda training camps. He says his music and the messages in his raps show young people there \_\_\_\_\_ fighting. He told reporters his raps work better in Yemen because people there listen to the words: "In Yemen, people listen to the message. In the US \_\_\_\_\_ beat and a hook line. Here \_\_\_\_\_ and discuss them," he says. Masaed raps in a mixture of Arabic and English. His latest \_\_\_\_\_ Arab instruments with hip-hop beats and is called 'No Terrorists Please'.

AJ \_\_\_\_\_ interview on America's NPR network. In it, he described himself as The Snoop Dogg of Yemen. He understands he will probably never \_\_\_\_\_ of popularity. The biggest reason is the lack of technology available in Yemen. Most people \_\_\_\_\_ CD player and computers are even more rare. He was realistic in telling NPR that his message will have \_\_\_\_\_ out of the capital Sana'a. AJ explained why he thought Al Qaeda was becoming more popular: "Most of the people in Yemen are good people. \_\_\_\_\_, lack of money, lack of understanding about, I don't know, arts, music and all of that - people are being pushed to \_\_\_\_\_."

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'hip' and 'hop'.

<b>hip</b>	<b>hop</b>
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- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• help</li><li>• slow</li><li>• show</li><li>• reporters</li><li>• mixture</li><li>• combines</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• described</li><li>• achieve</li><li>• access</li><li>• rare</li><li>• popular</li><li>• pushed</li></ul>
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# STUDENT RAP AND HIP-HOP SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

Write five GOOD questions about rap and hip-hop in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# RAP AND HIP-HOP DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'rap'?
- c) What did you think of this article?
- d) Do you think AJ will do any good in Yemen?
- e) What do you think of the idea of using rap to fight terrorism?
- f) What do you think of rap?
- g) Do you prefer to listen to the music or the words?
- h) Do you like music that combines sounds from different cultures?
- i) What do you know about Yemen?
- j) What do you think of the title 'No Terrorists Please' for a rap?

*Rapper fights Yemen terror with hip-hop – 17th January, 2010*  
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# RAP AND HIP-HOP DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What message would you like to give to AJ?
- c) Do you think he can change anything in Yemen even though he's American?
- d) Why is Al Qaeda growing in Yemen?
- e) Do you think the US Army should consider using rap to fight terror?
- f) How important is rap and hip-hop in your culture?
- g) Do you think a lack of understanding about music and arts leads to people joining terrorist groups?
- h) What would you rap about?
- i) What is it about rap music that makes it popular all over the world?
- j) What questions would you like to ask AJ?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

A Yemeni-American (1) \_\_\_\_ is using music to help fight terrorism in his country. Rapper Hagage 'AJ' Masaed believes he can help in the fight against terrorism and (2) \_\_\_\_ down the number of Yemenis joining Al Qaeda training camps. He says his music and the messages in his raps show young people there is an alternative (3) \_\_\_\_ fighting. He told reporters his raps work better in Yemen because people there listen to the (4) \_\_\_\_: "In Yemen, people listen to the message. In the US they listen to the beat and a hook (5) \_\_\_\_\_. Here they go into the words and discuss them," he says. Masaed raps in a mixture of Arabic and English. His latest rap combines traditional Arab instruments (6) \_\_\_\_ hip-hop beats and is called 'No Terrorists Please'.

AJ recently (7) \_\_\_\_ a radio interview on America's NPR network. In it, he described himself as The Snoop Dogg of Yemen. He understands he will probably never achieve the same level (8) \_\_\_\_ popularity. The biggest reason is the lack of technology available in Yemen. Most people have (9) \_\_\_\_ access to a CD player and computers are even more rare. He was (10) \_\_\_\_ in telling NPR that his message will have a hard time getting out of the capital Sana'a. AJ explained why he thought Al Qaeda was (11) \_\_\_\_ more popular: "Most of the people in Yemen are good people. The lack of jobs, lack of money, lack of understanding about, I don't know, arts, music and all of that - people are being pushed to go to the (12) \_\_\_\_ side."

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |              |               |               |               |
|-----|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1.  | (a) wrapper  | (b) whopper   | (c) ripper    | (d) rapper    |
| 2.  | (a) slow     | (b) slowly    | (c) slowed    | (d) slowish   |
| 3.  | (a) at       | (b) by        | (c) to        | (d) on        |
| 4.  | (a) lyric    | (b) words     | (c) word      | (d) letters   |
| 5.  | (a) sentence | (b) line      | (c) paragraph | (d) phrase    |
| 6.  | (a) on       | (b) at        | (c) with      | (d) to        |
| 7.  | (a) did      | (b) done      | (c) doing     | (d) do        |
| 8.  | (a) to       | (b) from      | (c) for       | (d) of        |
| 9.  | (a) none     | (b) not       | (c) no-no     | (d) no        |
| 10. | (a) realism  | (b) realistic | (c) really    | (d) reality   |
| 11. | (a) becoming | (b) became    | (c) becomes   | (d) become    |
| 12. | (a) another  | (b) others    | (c) other     | (d) the other |

Rapper fights Yemen terror with hip-hop – 17th January, 2010

# WRITING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1001/100117-yemen.html>

Write about **rap and hip-hop** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

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# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about Yemen. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. RAP AND HIP-HOP:** Make a poster about rap and hip-hop. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. SEALING:** Write a magazine article about how AJ helped stop someone joining Al Qaeda. Include imaginary interviews with AJ and the person he helped.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to AJ. Ask him three questions about rap and hip-hop. Give him three pieces of advice on how he can help his people in Yemen. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. T      g. F      h. T

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. fight         | a. combat      |
| 2. messages      | b. meaning     |
| 3. alternative   | c. substitute  |
| 4. mixture       | d. combination |
| 5. combines      | e. mixes       |
| 6. achieve       | f. reach       |
| 7. lack          | g. absence     |
| 8. rare          | h. uncommon    |
| 9. understanding | i. knowledge   |
| 10. pushed       | j. forced      |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. using music to help         | a. fight terrorism       |
| 2. Al Qaeda training           | b. camps                 |
| 3. there is an alternative to  | c. fighting              |
| 4. listen to                   | d. the beat              |
| 5. Masaed raps in a mixture    | e. of Arabic and English |
| 6. AJ recently did a           | f. radio interview       |
| 7. achieve the same level      | g. of popularity         |
| 8. Most people have no         | h. access to a CD        |
| 9. have a hard                 | i. time getting out      |
| 10. people are being pushed to | j. go to the other side  |

## GAP FILL:

### Rapper fights Yemen terror with hip-hop

A Yemeni-American rapper is using music to **help** fight terrorism in his country. Rapper Hagage 'AJ' Masaed believes he can help in the fight against terrorism and **slow** down the number of Yemenis joining Al Qaeda **training** camps. He says his music and the **messages** in his raps show young people there is an alternative to fighting. He told reporters his raps work **better** in Yemen because people there listen to the words: "In Yemen, people listen to the message. In the US they listen to the **beat** and a hook line. Here they go into the words and **discuss** them," he says. Masaed raps in a mixture of Arabic and English. His latest rap **combines** traditional Arab instruments with hip-hop beats and is called 'No Terrorists Please'.

AJ **recently** did a radio interview on America's NPR network. In it, he described himself as The Snoop Dogg of Yemen. He understands he will **probably** never achieve the same level of popularity. The biggest reason is the **lack** of technology available in Yemen. Most people have no **access** to a CD player and computers are even more rare. He was **realistic** in telling NPR that his message will have a hard **time** getting out of the capital Sana'a. AJ explained why he thought Al Qaeda was becoming more **popular**: "Most of the people in Yemen are good people. The lack of jobs, lack of money, lack of understanding about, I don't know, arts, music and all of that - people are being **pushed** to go to the other side."

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d    2 - a    3 - c    4 - b    5 - b    6 - c    7 - a    8 - d    9 - d    10 - b    11 - a    12 - c