



Hip-Hop Planet

1 Hip-hop started in New York City in the 1970s. Today many countries have their own local hip-hop scenes.¹ Artists from different **backgrounds** rap about everything from cars and designer clothes to social **issues**. Here are two examples.

5 **Dakar, Senegal**



Assane N'Diaye, 19, loves hip-hop music. He grew up in a small fishing village in Senegal. For a time, he was popular as a D.J. in **clubs** in Dakar, the capital city of Senegal.

10 Today, Assane lives in his village again. He has formed a rap group with other family members. They rap about their lives as village fishermen, and about working long, hard days and earning almost no money. Many people in their **audience** can understand these things. “Rap,” Assane says, “doesn’t **belong** to American culture. It belongs here. It has
15 always existed here, because of our pain and our hardships...”

Assane dreams of making a CD and having a better life. **Despite** his hardships, the music gives Assane hope.

The Czech Republic



20 Europe is home to 8–12 million Roma—a group of people often called “gypsies.” Many Roma are poor. In some places, they also **face** discrimination.²

Now some Roma teenagers are using hip-hop to teach tolerance.³ In the Czech Republic, Roma teens meet for a hip-hop class called “Rap for **Peace** Hip-Hop.” Their instructor
25 is Shameema Williams. She is a member of the all-**female** rap group Godessa, from South Africa.

In the lessons, the teens learn to write rap music and use it to teach others about Roma culture. These teens, Shameema believes, can use the music to change their lives and other
30 people’s **attitudes**. “Use your creative energy and see what the possibilities⁴ are,” she says.

¹ You can refer to an area of activity as a **scene**, for example, an art or music scene.

² **Discrimination** means treating a person or group of people less fairly or less well than others.

³ **Tolerance** means accepting different people, religions, beliefs, etc.

⁴ **Possibilities** are choices, things you can do.

