



Drill Music; A Scapegoat for London's Knife Crime?

Discussion > Advanced 8



Exercise 1 – Vocabulary

surpass	To be greater than something; exceed.
[verb]	<i>Ex: Our sales this quarter surpass those of any period during the last five years.</i>

menacing	Seeming likely to cause evil, harm, etc.
[adjective]	<i>Ex: His menacing look made me shiver.</i>

lyrics	The words of a song.
[noun]	<i>Ex: The rapper's lyrics have been criticized for frequently referencing gun violence.</i>

rivalry	Competition or fighting between people or groups.
[noun]	<i>Ex: So rivalry settled between the tribes.</i>



impoverished	Living in poverty; poor.
[adjective]	<i>Ex: One aspect that sets this holiday apart from others is that we give money to impoverished people.</i>

assert	To state something firmly; to claim.
[verb]	<i>Ex: The lawyer asserted that his client was innocent.</i>

scapegoat	A person or thing that is unfairly blamed for something.
[noun]	<i>Ex: The president has been accused of using violent video games as a scapegoat for the nation's gun problems.</i>



Exercise 2 – Reading

Read the text aloud with your tutor and discuss the key points.

Drill Music; A Scapegoat for London's Knife Crime?

Increasingly, London's drill music scene, and the way it's exploded across social media, has become a focus of criticism and blame for the surge in gang-related knife crime among teens in the UK capital.

This year alone, London has been the site of an estimated 60 murders. As has now been widely reported, its murder rate recently surpassed New York's.

Freddie Trye is a youth worker in charge of music production at a London-based charity. He says that UK drill has evolved into more than just music.

"Drill is not just something you see and hear and dance to. It's something that some of them live," Trye says. "That creates a problem, because some of the younger ones are listening to it, and seeing it not just as music, but as almost a packet of directions."



Drill music is an aggressive form of trap-rap that originated in Chicago. The UK version has evolved into a rap subgenre and distinctly London sound with menacing lyrics describing gang rivalries and violence. Most drill artists are teenagers who live in impoverished pockets of London where, for many, violence is a way of life.

Driven in particular by those reports that London's murder rate has surpassed New York's, articles relating to drill in the UK have increased in terms of number and scope. Many articles assert that drill "fuels" or is the "soundtrack" to London's murders.

And what do drill listeners think of the music, especially younger ones, who may be more vulnerable to its lyrical content?

Back at the youth center in south London, WikiTribune asked several kids between the ages of 11 to 13 why they listen to drill. Many said they're aware of the violent lyrics, some think it's a problem, others don't care.

Yet most say the music isn't necessarily what makes them more violent.

"I like the flow of it, the rhythm and the beats. For me, it's just the music," 11-year-old Shaun stated.



Exercise 3 – Discussion

Discuss the following questions with your tutor.

1. What are your thoughts on drill music? Had you heard of it prior to reading this article?
2. In your opinion, does listening to music with violent lyrics lead to violent behavior? Why do you think so?
3. Does it surprise you that London's murder rate has surpassed that of New York? Why? Why not?
4. How would you react if your child started listening to drill music? Please explain your answer.
5. Do you like hip-hop or rap music? If so, who are some of your favorite artists? If not, why not?
6. What is your favorite genre of music? What do you like most about it?
7. Do you think that lyrics are the most important part of a song? Why? Why not?
8. In what ways has your taste in music changed over the years? Please explain your answer.