

...it seems to be a topic that has come up every year since I have been in the NBA.

The question that has been raised, mostly by middle aged white men, is whether their perceived connection between Hip Hop and the NBA is a bad thing. (No one ever seems to ask if it's a good thing).

I have heard the question in NBA meetings. I have heard it in discussions with the media. I have never heard it in discussions with customers or with fans at games.

In any event, the answer came while watching [Arthur](#) with my daughter. Turns out it was episode #608. [Arthur #608](#)

"Rhyme for Your Life"

While struggling to write a poem for his mom, Binky falls asleep and gets trapped in Verseberg ...where it's a crime not to rhyme! After tangling with the big purple orange and meeting poet William Carlos Williams, Binky finally escapes this curse but will he be able to stop speaking in verse?? **related activity:kids rap some colorful rhymes of their own**

My daughter loves the show. My daughter loved the rhymes. My daughter loved it when two 10 year old kids came on in the interstitial and talked about how their 5th grade teacher taught them how cool poetry was by using rap. Like they said, "Poetry with beats."

Arthur wasn't the first show I have seen with my daughter that included rap in one form or another and it won't be the last.

Every kid today. Your young sons. Your young daughters. Your nieces. Your nephews. They are all part of the Hip Hop Generation. They don't have to like all Hip Hop music. They could like Alt rock, punk, R&B, Opera, Musicals, whatever. But somewhere along the line, they sang along with a rap song. That's just the way it is. Hip hop songs were 4 of the top 5 titles on BillBoards 2004 charts. It's today's pop music. Talking about kids and talking about the Hip Hop Generation are interchangeable.

The NBA? we always have, and always will appeal to kids. Whatever music kids like, that is the generation the NBA will be attached to. If classical music makes a comeback in 20 years, today's 25 year olds, then 45, will condemn the NBA as being too closely associated with the classical music generation. We will read condemnations about how our latest stars hang out with Ozzy Bach and Eminem's grandson, Marilyn Mozart (who of course puts a stuffed bat, whose head he bit off at a concert on top of his violin case while playing).

Columnists will write how music without words is just plain wrong because no one knows what kids are thinking about while they are listening. Old time rappers will complain of the lost art of social discourse that rap brought to the country. Only Eminem will be proud of his grandson.

Thank goodness for the Hip Hop generation today, and the classical generation of the future. They make and will make their parents take them to games. They do and will understand and relate to our players far better than the commentators and even some of their employers do. Our kids will keep the NBA fresh and relevant while their parents play chicken little.

It says it all when Arthur, the animated rodent, is inclusive and has a better understanding of today's culture than media commentators who get paid to pretend to know.