

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 DJ 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.

20 **The Czech Republic**

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



25 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 is Shameema Williams. She is a member of the all-**female** rap group Godessa, from South Africa.

30 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 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.

Brazilian Samba!



Did You Know?

Brazil has the largest number of Japanese people outside Japan. 2008's Rio Carnival included a performance showing the link between Japan and Brazil.

- 1 Samba is one of Brazil's most popular music and dance styles. In many ways, it is a symbol¹ of the country itself. In the words of one of modern samba's main artists, Seu Jorge, "Samba is our truth, our peculiarity² . . . and our flag." When
- 5 people today hear the word *samba*, they often think of the festival of Carnival and the city of Rio de Janeiro. But there are many different types of samba, and these styles **differ** throughout Brazil.

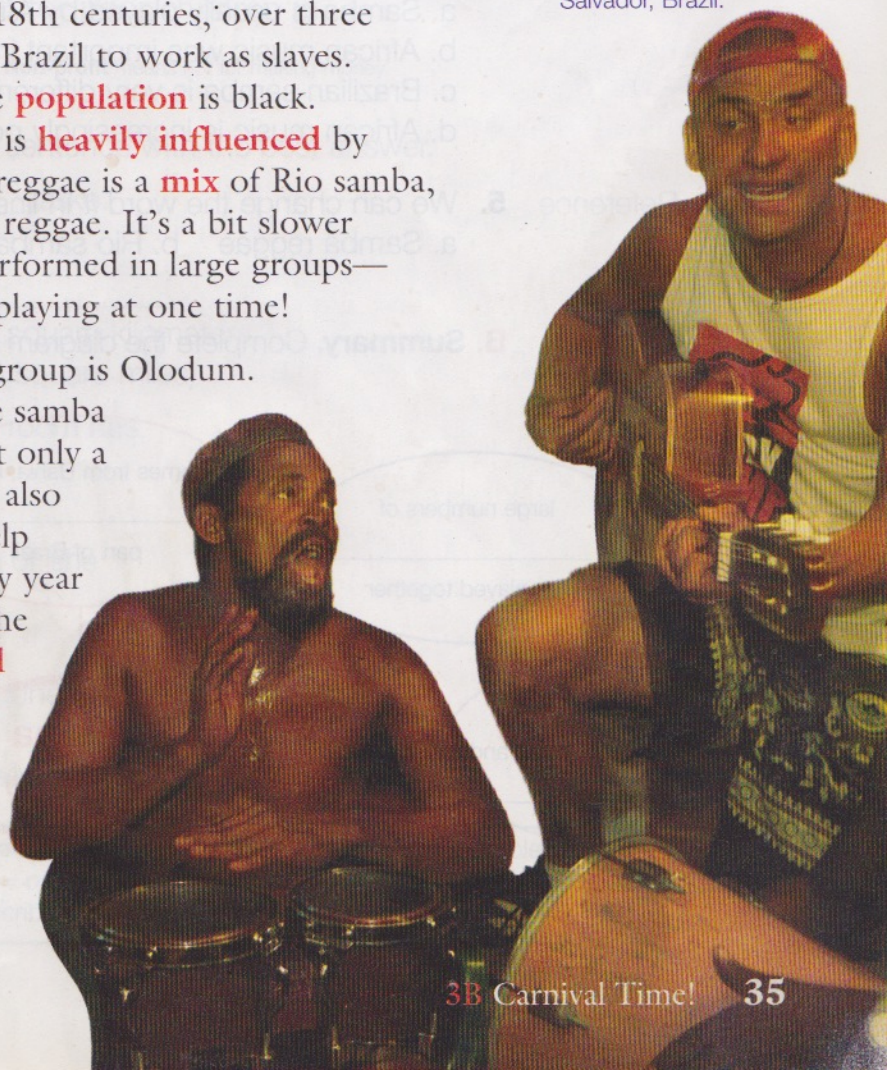
"Samba is our truth, . . . our flag."

Seu Jorge

Samba Reggae

- 10 Today, one of the most popular types of samba comes from Bahia, a state in the eastern part of the country. It's called *samba reggae*. From the 16th to 18th centuries, over three million Africans were brought to Brazil to work as slaves. Today in Bahia, 80 percent of the **population** is black.
- 15 Samba from this **region** of Brazil is **heavily influenced** by African rhythms. Modern samba reggae is a **mix** of Rio samba, African drumbeats, and Jamaican reggae. It's a bit slower than Rio samba, and is usually performed in large groups—sometimes with over 200 drums playing at one time!
- 20 Bahia's most famous drumming group is Olodum. Many say the group **invented** the samba reggae sound. But Olodum is not only a musical group. Its members have also created local **organizations** to help
- 25 young people and the poor. Every year in the city of Salvador in Bahia, the **lively** sounds of samba reggae **fill** the streets during Carnival—one of the world's greatest parties.

▼ A group of Bahian musicians performs in Salvador, Brazil.



¹ A **symbol** is a thing that represents something else.

For example, a flag is a symbol of a country.

² A **peculiarity** is something that belongs to or relates to only one person or thing.