

www.**Breaking News English**.com

Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

The Breaking News English.com Resource Book

“1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers”

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

No hip-hop fashion for basketball players

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0511/051101-basketball-fashion.html>

Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading	7
Discussion	8
Speaking	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

1 November, 2005

THE ARTICLE

No hip-hop fashion for basketball players

A new basketball season starts in America today surrounded by a storm of controversy over the fashion adopted by its players. A new dress code has upset the vast majority of the game's black stars, who say the new rules are shrouded in racist undertones. Several big name players claim the new directive on what players cannot wear when on official NBA duty off the court is an attack on black American culture. The new code bans gaudy jewelry, shorts, sleeveless shirts, oversized T-shirts, overly baggy jeans and jerseys and even baseball caps. Also prohibited is the wearing of sunglasses indoors. Players will receive monetary fines and suspensions for not complying with the new "smart-casual" standard. Repeat offenders will be permanently banned from the game.

NBA all-star Allen Iverson is adamant the new rules are specifically an attack on hip-hop attire. He said: "They're targeting guys who dress like me, guys who dress hip-hop. Put a murderer in a suit and he's still a murderer. It sends a bad message to kids." He said of the new smarter dress: "I don't think it's good for the league - it kind of makes it fake." Boston star Paul Pierce agreed, saying: "When I saw the part about chains, hip-hop and throwback jerseys, I think that's part of our culture. The NBA is young, black males." Some players have suggested the NBA should add a clothing allowance to their multi-million-dollar salaries. NBA commissioner David Stern said everyone was over-reacting and he had a simple message for his players: "Hip-hop doesn't mean sloppy".

WARM-UPS

1. HIP-HOP: In pairs / groups, talk about hip-hop and the fashions, stars and cultures that surround it. Do you like the music? Do you follow the fashion? What are your first memories of hip-hop? What kinds of hip-hop are there?

2. BASKETBALL FASHION: America's National Basketball Association (NBA) has banned the following items of dress from being worn by players while they are on official NBA business, including travelling by air between games. What do you think of these items and their being banned? Do you wear them?

- Gaudy jewelry
- Do-rags (head scarves)
- Indoor sunglasses
- Baseball caps
- Sleeveless shirts
- Work boots
- Oversized T-shirts and jerseys
- Overly baggy jeans and pants

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Basketball / America / controversy / dress codes / racism / black American culture / NBA / necklace chains and medallions / baseball caps / hip-hop / young black males

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. BLACK AMERICAN CULTURE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with black American culture. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. DRESS CODES: Do you think different sports stars or other stars need to follow dress codes? Discuss this with your partner(s). What (if any) fashion rules should apply to these people?

Basketball players Golf players Actors Singers Politicians English teachers

6. ARTICLE OPINIONS: Discuss what you think of these opinions:

- a. Basketball players should be able to express themselves in their fashion.
- b. Basketball players should wear suits to give the sport a professional image.
- c. The NBA should give players a salary increase to buy "smarter" clothes.
- d. The NBA has taken advantage of hip-hop to increase the sport's popularity. It is hypocritical for it to tell players to refrain from hip-hop fashion.
- e. Gangsta fashion has no place in basketball. Stars must set a good example to kids.
- f. Hip-hop fashion is smart.
- g. The NBA has just put another nail in the coffin for the image of hip-hop.
- h. Many business people and politicians wear suits and commit huge crimes.
- i. Today's NBA players look like members of criminal gangs.
- j. A guy with a do-rag and baggy jeans could also have a PhD.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. A survey said American basketball players have no fashion sense. | T / F |
| b. Basketball players are saying a new dress code in the sport is racist. | T / F |
| c. Flashy jewelry, baseball caps and indoor sunglasses are out. | T / F |
| d. Players who repeatedly ignore the dress code will get a one-week ban. | T / F |
| e. A top basketball star said the new rules attack hip-hop fashion. | T / F |
| f. The player said NBA players loved wearing fake brands. | T / F |
| g. Some players said they should get an allowance for nicer clothes. | T / F |
| h. The NBA's commissioner said hip-hop fashion is sloppy fashion. | T / F |

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

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. controversy | obeying |
| b. shrouded | subsidy |
| c. gaudy | dress |
| d. complying | ostentatious |
| e. offenders | phony |
| f. adamant | dispute |
| g. attire | messy |
| h. fake | violators |
| i. allowance | insistent |
| j. sloppy | cloaked |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| a. surrounded by a storm | banned from the game |
| b. the new rules are shrouded | their multi-million-dollar salaries |
| c. the new directive on | and suspensions for not complying |
| d. Players will receive monetary fines | message to kids |
| e. Repeat offenders will be permanently | an attack on hip-hop attire |
| f. ...the new rules are specifically | of controversy |
| g. They're targeting guys | what players cannot wear |
| h. It sends a bad | everyone was over-reacting |
| i. add a clothing allowance to | in racist undertones |
| j. commissioner David Stern said | who dress like me |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

No hip-hop fashion for basketball players

A new basketball season starts in America today _____ by a storm of controversy over the fashion _____ by its players. A new dress code has upset the vast majority of the game's black stars, who say the new rules are shrouded in racist _____. Several big name players claim the new _____ on what players cannot wear when on official NBA duty off the court is an _____ on black American culture. The new code bans _____ jewelry, shorts, sleeveless shirts, oversized T-shirts, overly baggy jeans and jerseys and even baseball caps. Also prohibited is the wearing of sunglasses indoors. Players will receive _____ fines and suspensions for not complying with the new "smart-casual" standard. _____ offenders will be permanently banned from the game.

attack
directive
adopted
repeat
surrounded
gaudy
undertones
monetary

NBA all-star Allen Iverson is _____ the new rules are specifically an attack on hip-hop attire. He said: "They're _____ guys who dress like me, guys who dress hip-hop. Put a _____ in a suit and he's still a murderer. It sends a bad message to kids." He said of the new smarter dress: "I don't think it's good for the league - it kind of makes it _____." Boston star Paul Pierce agreed, saying: "When I saw the part about _____, hip-hop and throwback jerseys, I think that's part of our culture. The NBA is young, black males." Some players have suggested the NBA should add a clothing _____ to their multi-million-dollar salaries. NBA commissioner David Stern said everyone was _____ and he had a simple message for his players: "Hip-hop doesn't mean _____".

over-reacting
fake
targeting
allowance
sloppy
adamant
murderer
chains

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

No hip-hop fashion for basketball players

A new basketball season starts in America today _____ by a storm of controversy over the fashion _____ its players. A new dress code has upset the vast majority of the game's black stars, who say the new rules are _____ racist undertones. Several big name players claim the new directive on what players cannot wear when on official NBA duty off the court is an _____ black American culture. The new code bans gaudy jewelry, shorts, sleeveless shirts, oversized T-shirts, _____ jeans and jerseys and even baseball caps. Also prohibited is the wearing of sunglasses indoors. Players will receive monetary fines and suspensions for not _____ the new "smart-casual" standard. Repeat offenders will be permanently _____ the game.

NBA all-star Allen Iverson is _____ the new rules are specifically an attack on hip-hop _____. He said: "They're targeting guys who dress like me, guys who dress hip-hop. Put a murderer in a suit and he's still a murderer. It sends a bad _____ kids." He said of the new smarter dress: "I don't think it's good for the league - it kind of makes it fake." Boston star Paul Pierce agreed, saying: "When I saw _____ chains, hip-hop and throwback jerseys, I think that's part of our culture. The NBA is young, black males." Some players have suggested the NBA should add a clothing _____ to their multi-million-dollar salaries. NBA commissioner David Stern said everyone was _____ and he had a simple message for his players: "Hip-hop doesn't mean _____".

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'dress' and 'code'.

- 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 gap fill. 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. STUDENT "HIP-HOP FASHION" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about hip-hop fashion and whether NBA basketball players should be allowed to wear it.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • storm | • adamant |
| • code | • murderer |
| • undertones | • fake |
| • gaudy | • part |
| • overly | • allowance |
| • repeat | • sloppy |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you think of hip-hop fashion?
- c. Do you think sports bodies should insist on dress codes for players?
- d. Should dress codes in sports reflect the culture of its stars?
- e. Do you think the new NBA dress code is racist?
- f. Do you think it's strange that the NBA chief has specifically banned many fashion items commonly worn by young black people?
- g. What do you think of Allen Iverson's comment that people in suits also commit crimes?
- h. Do you think NBA players in suits give a fake image of the sport?
- i. Should players be banned for life for not adhering to the dress code?
- j. Do you think this controversy is a storm in a teacup?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you like basketball?
- d. What image do you have of young men who wear hip-hop fashion?
- e. Is the rule against hip-hop fashion just another attack that always takes place on different generations of youth fashion?
- f. Do basketball players who wear hip-hop fashion look smart?
- g. Do you think the NBA commissioner has tarnished the image of hip-hop fashion?
- h. Who decides whether jewelry is "gaudy" or clothes are "sloppy"?
- i. Do you think NBA players should receive an allowance for smarter clothes, on top of their average \$5.3 million salaries?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

BASKETBALL FASHION ROLE PLAY: Should NBA basketball players have to follow a dress code that outlaws hip-hop fashion?

Team up with classmates who have been assigned the same role to develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins. Introduce yourself to the other role players.

Role A – NBA COMMISSIONER

You want your stars to look smart. Hip-hop has a bad image. Smart casual clothes give a clean and positive image to kids. Many people think NBA players look like street gang leaders. You want players to look professional and act professionally. Basketball is about sport, not fashion.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY HIP-HOP FASHION IS UNACCEPTABLE.

Role B – NBA PLAYER

You think the dress code is ridiculous. It is an attack on hip-hop fashion and black culture. No other sport has banned hip-hop fashion. The NBA has used hip-hop to make lots of money. Your fashion is a statement of your personality. The public wants to see the real you, not some fake in a suit.

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY THE NEW DRESS CODE IS UNACCEPTABLE.

Role C – JO PUBLIC (FOR)

Basketball players can wear whatever they like. The most important thing is the way they play, not what they look like on an airplane. The new rules are racist – they ban all of the things many black people wear. It would be strange to see the top stars wearing suits – they’d look more like gangsters!

THINK OF MORE REASONS WHY PLAYERS IN HIP-HOP FASHION IS OK.

Role D – JO PUBLIC (AGAINST)

All sports have dress codes. Basketball should be no exception. Players have a social responsibility to dress and behave well. They should set a good example to kids. They receive huge salaries. Hip-hop fashion has a bad image. It’s gang fashion. That’s bad for basketball. Basketball players need to grow up and stop moaning.

THINK OF REASONS WHY HIP-HOP FASHION FOR NBA PLAYERS IS BAD.

Change roles and repeat the role play. Comment in groups about the differences between the two role plays.

Discuss whether basketball players should accept the new dress code.

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 more information on hip-hop fashion. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. PROS AND CONS: Make a poster outlining the pros and cons of basketball players having to adhere to the new dress code. Is it racist? Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things? Discuss the pros and cons together.

4. LETTER: You are a top, all-star NBA player. Write a letter to the NBA commissioner telling him what you think about the new dress code. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| a. controversy | dispute |
| b. shrouded | cloaked |
| c. gaudy | ostentatious |
| d. complying | obeying |
| e. offenders | violators |
| f. adamant | insistent |
| g. attire | dress |
| h. fake | phony |
| i. allowance | subsidy |
| j. sloppy | messy |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| a. surrounded by a storm | of controversy |
| b. the new rules are shrouded | in racist undertones |
| c. the new directive on | what players cannot wear |
| d. Players will receive monetary fines | and suspensions for not complying |
| e. Repeat offenders will be permanently | banned from the game |
| f. ...the new rules are specifically | an attack on hip-hop attire |
| g. They're targeting guys | who dress like me |
| h. It sends a bad | message to kids |
| i. add a clothing allowance to | their multi-million-dollar salaries |
| j. commissioner David Stern said | everyone was over-reacting |

GAP FILL:

No hip-hop fashion for basketball players

A new basketball season starts in America today **surrounded** by a storm of controversy over the fashion **adopted** by its players. A new dress code has upset the vast majority of the game's black stars, who say the new rules are shrouded in racist **undertones**. Several big name players claim the new **directive** on what players cannot wear when on official NBA duty off the court is an **attack** on black American culture. The new code bans **gaudy** jewelry, shorts, sleeveless shirts, oversized T-shirts, overly baggy jeans and jerseys and even baseball caps. Also prohibited is the wearing of sunglasses indoors. Players will receive **monetary** fines and suspensions for not complying with the new "smart-casual" standard. **Repeat** offenders will be permanently banned from the game.

NBA all-star Allen Iverson is **adamant** the new rules are specifically an attack on hip-hop attire. He said: "They're **targeting** guys who dress like me, guys who dress hip-hop. Put a **murderer** in a suit and he's still a murderer. It sends a bad message to kids." He said of the new smarter dress: "I don't think it's good for the league - it kind of makes it **fake**." Boston star Paul Pierce agreed, saying: "When I saw the part about **chains**, hip-hop and throwback jerseys, I think that's part of our culture. The NBA is young, black males." Some players have suggested the NBA should add a clothing **allowance** to their multi-million-dollar salaries. NBA commissioner David Stern said everyone was **over-reacting** and he had a simple message for his players: "Hip-hop doesn't mean **sloppy**".