

Jay Z receives top songwriting honor

19th June, 2017



The rapper Jay Z has been recognized for his prolific and influential songwriting career by being inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. He becomes the first hip-hop artist to be inducted into the Hall. The Hall's mission is to, "preserve, honor and celebrate the legacy of the great songwriters

whose work has enriched the world's culture". Jay Z's real name is Shawn Carter. He grew up in a poor area of New York and was involved with dealing drugs. He got into hip-hop and became one of the best-selling musicians of all time. He has sold more than 100 million albums worldwide. He is also a successful businessman and owns a sports bar in New York and the music streaming service Tidal.

Former U.S. President Barack Obama inducted Jay Z into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. Obama expressed his admiration for Jay Z, saying: "Like all of you, I am a fan, and I've been listening to Jay Z since I was a young and hungry state senator. I'm pretty sure I'm still the only president to listen to Jay Z's music in the [White House]." Mr Obama said Jay Z should also be considered a "true American original" for his contribution to rap and American culture. He called Jay Z the "greatest rapper of all time". Jay Z's music publisher Jon Platt accepted the award on his behalf. He said: "[Jay Z] would tell up-and-coming hip-hop artists today that there can be no mistake or question that you are indeed songwriters."

Sources: nbcnews.com / npr.org / billboard.com

Writing

Rap is the most important form of songwriting today. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

rapper / prolific / influential / celebrate / legacy / songwriters / poor / musicians / admiration / fan / listening / original / contribution / award / up-and-coming / mistake

True / False

- Jay Z is the first hip-hop artist to be in the Songwriters Hall of Fame. T / F
- Jay Z went to school with two men who also became rappers. T / F
- Jay Z has sold over 100 million albums. T / F
- Jay Z owns a sports bar in Los Angeles. T / F
- Barack Obama started listening to Jay Z a few years ago. T / F
- Mr Obama said a few presidents listened to Jay Z in the White House. T / F
- Mr Obama considered Jay Z to be the best rapper ever. T / F
- A music publisher told rappers to ask questions and make no mistakes. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. recognized | a. improved |
| 2. prolific | b. deemed |
| 3. inducted into | c. productive |
| 4. enriched | d. respect |
| 5. musicians | e. emerging |
| 6. admiration | f. acknowledged |
| 7. considered | g. performers |
| 8. original | h. certainly |
| 9. up-and-coming | i. admitted to |
| 10. indeed | j. free spirit |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about Jay Z?
- Why hasn't a rapper been honored in this way before?
- Who is your favourite songwriter and why?
- How has Jay Z enriched the world's culture?
- How is rap different from other forms of music?
- How much of a role model is Jay Z?
- What advice would you give to Jay Z?
- How important is rap?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. recognized for his prolific and influential | a. for Jay Z |
| 2. celebrate the legacy of | b. service |
| 3. enriched the world's | c. and American culture |
| 4. one of the best-selling | d. coming hip-hop artists |
| 5. music streaming | e. the great songwriters |
| 6. Obama expressed his admiration | f. be no mistake |
| 7. his contribution to rap | g. songwriting career |
| 8. Platt accepted the award on his | h. culture |
| 9. up-and- | i. musicians of all time |
| 10. there can | j. behalf |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What music does your country's leader like?
- Who is your favourite singer, and why?
- What do you think of a U.S. President listening to rap?
- Who is the greatest rapper of all time?
- Why do people question whether rappers are songwriters?
- Will a rapper ever win the Nobel Prize for Literature?
- What questions would you like to ask Jay Z?

Spelling

- prolific and lunnletfiia
- songwriting ecrrae
- celebrate the gacyle
- cdhieren the world's culture
- one of the best-selling inmiuascs
- an areputkm sports bar
- Obama expressed his onimadairt for Jay Z
- state nsaoret
- a true American girnaoli
- his iotcnnriobtu to rap
- accepted the award on his afeblh
- you are indeed rnewrgtioss

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. c	3. i	4. a	5. g
6. d	7. b	8. j	9. e	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Hip-Hop

You think hip-hop is the best musical genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): classical, rock or techno.

Role B – Classical

You think classical is the best musical genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): hip-hop, rock or techno.

Role C – Rock

You think rock is the best musical genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): classical, hip-hop or techno.

Role D – Techno

You think techno is the best musical genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): classical, rock or hip-hop.

Speaking – Music Genres

Rank these with your partner. Put the best music genres at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| • Techno | • Hip-Hop |
| • Jazz | • Country |
| • Heavy metal | • Rock |
| • Punk | • Latin |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	a
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.