

Unit 14 - THE BATTLE

14A Introduction

Rap battles are an important part of hip-hop. It's not a violence thing. It's a competition thing: Who's got the better rhymes? Who's got the punch lines that hit harder? Who's got the funnier metaphors? Well, Trajik and B pick up their mics to throw down on this track. Who do you think wins?

14B Song Lyrics

I'm the best class, I'm **elite**,
From Shakespeare to Snoop Dogg, they rhyme with me.
I've got a **glut** of tight rhymes, an oversupply,
You're over easy, man, you're going to get fried.
And when the battle's done, you'll feel a **pang** of regret,
A sudden feeling, you can't hang with me yet.
You're too **disgruntled**, fed up with life,
I'm like laundry that shrinks, yes, I'm that tight.

You can attack and **assail** me with your words,
But I have a force field for nouns and verbs.
I did this rap first, I'm the **pioneer**,
Call me chopping onion, I'll make you cry a tear.
I don't decay, I'm **durable**, I will last long,
You're sad like when my pet gerbil passed on.
Your style is Wal-Mart, I know where you bought it,
My flow is unusual, it's so **exotic**.

You get honey-glazed, slow-roasted like chicken,
I rule here, I have the **jurisdiction**.
I have skills, man, I'm **proficient**.
If you can't handle the heat, get out of the kitchen.
Is you Dr. Seuss? Your rhymes are simple, kid.
My lines are complex and, yes, **intricate**.
You can't understand, I'm far too deep,
I'm filet mignon, you're Chef-Boy-R-Dee, you see?

Your logic is **porous**, it has holes in it,
You smell like a skunk died with mold in it.
If you thought you'd win, well, something's gone **awry**,
Gone off course, you keep asking why.
This is not small talk, it's not **banter**,
My style is felt from Canada to Atlanta.
I'll diss you in a jiffy, keep it brief and make it **pithy**,
Your whole wardrobe probably cost a dollar-fifty.



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14C Words Defined

assail / awry / banter / disgruntled / durable / elite / exotic / glut / intricate / jurisdiction / pang / pioneer / pithy / porous / proficient

Below you'll find each vocabulary word that was used in the song. Each word is followed by the part of speech, a simple definition and a meaningful sentence. Some words will also have synonyms, antonyms and other forms of the word listed.

1. **assail** (verb) to violently attack or assault

In fourth grade, a bully used to *assail* Jorge for being short until he grew five inches over the summer. Other forms: An *assailant* (noun) is a person who attacks someone.

2. **awry** (adverb) or (adj) turned or twisted; gone wrong

The wedding plans went *awry* when the bride did not show up at the chapel.

3. **banter** (noun) light talk; witty remarks

She was pretty, but her constant *banter* was driving me crazy; I need some real conversation.

4. **disgruntled** (adj) grumpy; dissatisfied and sulky

The *disgruntled* baseball player screamed and kicked dirt on the umpire.
Synonyms: unhappy, annoyed, irritable
Other forms: You can *disgruntle* (verb) someone if you make him unhappy.

5. **durable** (adj) able to stand up to wear and tear; lasting a while

Farmer Jenkins installed *durable* fencing around the pigs to replace the wood posts they had chewed up.
Synonyms: sturdy, reliable
Antonyms: fragile, flimsy, cheap

6. **elite** (adj) best or first class

The *elite* members of American society often attend Ivy League schools.
Synonyms: aristocratic
Other forms: *Elite* can also be a noun meaning a person who is of a high class.

7. **exotic** (adj) strange or foreign in character

Stacie always wears the most *exotic* clothing; she even owns a burka.

8. **glut** (noun) an excessive amount; too much

Due to the small number of people at the birthday party, there was a *glut* of cake leftover.
Antonyms: shortage

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9. **intricate**  (adj) complex

Every Halloween, there is an *intricate* corn maze that is fun for us to walk through at night.
Antonyms: simple

10. **jurisdiction**  (noun) power, authority or territory

Although the murder case was out of Officer Brazelton's *jurisdiction*, he continued to investigate.

11. **pang**  (noun) a sudden sharp feeling

A *pang* of hunger took hold of me in the middle of my math test, so I couldn't concentrate on my calculations.
Synonyms: ache, twinge

12. **pioneer**  (noun) someone who settles in a land first or who opens up new areas of research

Dr. E was a *pioneer* in the scientific community as the first doctor to seriously study pimples.

13. **pithy**  (adj) brief but full of meaning; to the point

Marvin was famous for his *pithy* responses in history class because he hated the sound of his own voice.
Antonyms: long-winded

14. **porous**  (adj) full of holes or pores

Our tent was so cheap that its *porous* fabric meant we got soaking wet from the rain.
Antonyms: watertight
Other forms: *Pores* (noun) are little holes: You sweat out of the *pores* in your skin.

15. **proficient**  (adj) skilled

Nick was a *proficient* swimmer and had no problem passing the swim test.
Synonyms: accomplished, competent

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14D Fix the Mistake

assail / awry / banter / disgruntled / durable / elite / exotic / glut / intricate / jurisdiction / pang / pioneer / pithy / porous / proficient

Each of the sentences below has a mistake. The wrong vocabulary words have been used, so the sentences don't make sense. Rewrite each sentence using the correct vocabulary word from this unit.

1. The mugger **bantered** the old lady and ran away with her purse.

2. Some **durable** customers complained to the restaurant manager and refused to pay their bill.

3. The plans to get to the ballgame all went **proficiently** when the bridge collapsed due to the mudslide.

4. Some celebrities think they are so **intricate** that they have chauffeurs take them everywhere.

5. After the holidays, there is always a(n) **pang** of new coffee mugs in the teachers' lounge.

6. Grandma's stories were never **porous**; each one lasted over an hour.

7. Lewis and Clark were famous **glut**, exploring land for the government that hadn't been explored before.

8. I had felt normal all day, but the moment I saw Jenny in the hall, I felt a sharp **jurisdiction** of love.

9. My new raincoat was so **pithy** that I took it back to the store and asked for a refund.

10. There aren't usually heavy conversations at parties; it's mostly just **pioneer**.

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11. One of the most **elite** types of rainforest birds is on display at the zoo's entrance.
- _____
12. Jennifer was such a(n) **exotic** writer that, despite her young age, many of her short stories were published in the local magazine.
- _____
13. At the museum, the ancient mummy was encased in a very **disgruntled** glass box to protect it.
- _____
14. The spider's web was so **awry** that it must have taken a week to build.
- _____
15. The crooked cop was giving tickets and citing people out of his **glut**.
- _____

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14E Pick the Winner

assail / awry / banter / disgruntled / durable / elite / exotic / glut / intricate / jurisdiction / pang / pioneer / pithy / porous / proficient

Circle the word that best fits into the sentence. Then write a sentence below that uses the word you didn't pick in a meaningful way.

1. The burglary went **(awry OR assail)** when the robbers passed through an invisible laser and sounded the alarms.

2. The **(disgruntled OR porous)** weatherman gave an incorrect forecast for the week because he was angry at losing his job.

3. Mark's **(porous OR pithy)** class presentation on caring for pets made all of us walk our dogs more.

4. At the parent-teacher conference, my mom was pleased when the teacher told her I was more than **(proficient OR intricate)** at reading and writing.

5. Everyone in the library knew I was experiencing **(pangs OR jurisdictions)** of hunger because my stomach was growling so loudly.

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14F Draw the Relationships

assail / awry / banter / disgruntled / durable / elite / exotic / glut / intricate / jurisdiction / pang / pioneer / pithy / porous / proficient

In each grouping of eight words below, draw straight lines between the synonyms (words that mean similar things) and squiggly lines between any antonyms (words that mean nearly opposite things). Every word should have at least one line connected to it. Some may have more.

1

assail	chit-chat	awry	disgruntled
assault	annoyed	banter	gone wrong

2

durable	bizarre	exotic	glut
best	elite	flimsy	a small portion

3

intricate	jurisdiction	ache	pang
complex	latecomer	power	pioneer

4

pithy	porous	able	assail
attack	waterproof	proficient	long-winded

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14G Understanding What You Read

assail / awry / banter / disgruntled / durable / elite / exotic / glut / intricate / jurisdiction / pang / pioneer / pithy / porous / proficient

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

There is music from all over the world, and much of it uses drums. The drum adds rhythm. It keeps the beat. It even makes music easier to dance to. But the drum has an extra special place in Pueblo culture. They say that the beat of the drum is tied to the beat of the heart.

One of the holidays for Taos Pueblo Indians is a special feast day on January 6. On this day, the village gathers for a buffalo dance, as they have done for hundreds of years.

The day starts with a delicious meal. There isn't a glut of food, but there's enough for everyone. During the meal, there is much banter, just as there is at any other meal. After the meal, however, the women clear the table and the men bring out the family drum. While one member of the family beats the drum, others sing songs. The songs they sing are Taos Pueblo and Apache round dance songs. These songs date back to the 1800s and have been passed down orally from generation to generation.

Between songs, the drummer pauses and closes his eyes. This isn't a sign that something has gone awry. He is thinking of which song they should sing next, and he closes his eyes to concentrate. In his mind, he travels back through his life to all of the people he has met and the songs he has learned. Songs come to his memory as if carried on a breeze.

While the people in the room wait for him to choose, no one looks disgruntled. In fact, the pause between songs becomes a part of the rhythm of the celebration. The songs they sing are a little more exotic than the tunes you hear on the radio, but they are beautiful melodies. The songs and the people are what make the holiday so special for the Pueblo people.

1. When in time does the passage seem to take place?

- (A) recently
- (B) long, long ago
- (C) in the early 1800s
- (D) around 1492

2. Which of the following sentences best describes the actions of the Pueblo people during the meal?

- (A) They remain silent.
- (B) They eat very quickly.
- (C) They sing songs.
- (D) They chat with each other.

3. Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the text to describe drums?

- (A) Drums are one of the loudest instruments.
- (B) Drums are used in all kinds of world music.
- (C) Drums add rhythm to music.
- (D) Drums make music easier to dance to.

4. The phrase "songs come to his memory as if carried on a breeze" probably means that the songs

- (A) make him feel cold
- (B) are hard to remember
- (C) come easily
- (D) make him feel good

5. The people in the room hear the pauses between songs and react by

- (A) booing
- (B) waiting patiently
- (C) cheering
- (D) eating more food

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14H Thinking Creatively

assail / awry / banter / disgruntled / durable / elite / exotic / glut / intricate / jurisdiction / pang / pioneer / pithy / porous / proficient

Answer each question below. Don't be afraid to think creatively.

1. Describe why you would rather be considered a **pioneer** or **elite**.

2. How might you creatively but legally acquire a **glut** of money?

3. Write a **pithy** statement about friendship.

4. Describe a TV show named *Something's Gone Awry!*

5. As a future parent, what **jurisdiction** will you have over your own children?

Word Breakdown

The word *disgruntle* kind of sounds like what it means. When you feel *disgruntled* you might grunt – make the sound that a hog makes. In fact, that is where the word comes from. The word combines *dis* (which in this case means “very,” but usually means “not”) and *gruntle* (which means to grunt). The word *grunt* probably comes from people trying to imitate the sound of a hog, just like the verbs to bark, to caw and to moo.

The word *grumble* means to complain in a low voice or under your breath. If you're *disgruntled*, you might *grumble*. The underground rapper Arecee hasn't gotten rich off the game yet. He raps that he's “becoming disgruntled ‘cause life is such a struggle.”