

Read the text and answer the questions that follow.

RAP IS COOL, IT'S BEING USED IN SCHOOL ...

- I When rap, or hip-hop, music, with its rhyming lyrics emerged thirty years ago in New York City, nobody knew that it would become a respected teaching aid. But that's what's happening now throughout the United States, especially in poorer, inner-city neighbourhoods. While some parents and educators disapprove of this trend – mainly because of the violent lyrics – it's hard for them to argue with the results.
- II For example, when a teacher in Springfield, Illinois, used rap lyrics to teach grammar to underachievers, exam marks and class participation rose significantly. And similar results have occurred in literature classes where rap lyrics are used as a starting point for learning how to analyse poems, novels and plays.
- III One secondary-school English teacher in California won the state's 2003 Literacy Teacher of the Year award for the dramatic rise in his students' achievements. He "hooked" the kids on poetry – beginning with that of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas – by showing them similarities in the themes and types of rhymes used by Thomas and the late African-American rapper Tupac Shakur. There's occasionally a more direct link between rap and required reading: some teachers now introduce George Orwell's classic book *Animal Farm* by using the song *Animals in Man*, which the rappers Dead Prez based on the Orwell novel.
- IV Rap is also being used to teach sociology. There, the focus is on analysing how the messages promoted by rap criticise or comment on those promoted by society. And, surprisingly, rap has even been used in chemistry classes. A CD of school-related songs by The Funkamentals, an Arizona-based band, contains one naming all the chemicals that chemistry students have to memorise.
- V According to two education professors, rap can function "as a bridge linking the streets and the world of academics." And besides, it must be fun to be able to say, "I have to listen to this CD for homework!"

1 Choose the correct answer.

- Rap in the classroom is being used increasingly in
 - New York City.
 - Illinois.
 - low-income urban areas.
- Dylan Thomas
 - was an African-American poet.
 - was a poet from Wales.
 - wrote *Animal Farm*.

2 Find words or phrases in the text that mean:

- ending with the same sound (paragraph I)
- appeared and became known (paragraph I)
- below-average students (paragraph II)
- got someone very interested in something (paragraph III)
- deceased (paragraph III)

3 Are the following statements T (true) or F (false)? Find evidence in the text to support your answers.

- 1. Everyone agrees that it is appropriate to use rap in the classroom.
.....
- 2. Rap has been shown to be a helpful method for low-achieving students.
.....

4 Complete the sentences using the information given in the text. Use your own words as far as possible.

1. The works of Dylan Thomas and Tupac Shakur contain
2. A song by The Funkamentals can be used to

5 Write a composition of about 100-120 words. Choose one option.

1. Describe an unusual teaching method or aid that has been used in one of your lessons. Explain why you liked or didn't like it.
2. Write an e-mail to a friend about a song you like. Give a few examples of the lyrics, and explain what you think they mean and why you like them.