



# REBEL MUSIC

## SENEGAL

TEACHER'S GUIDE, CONTEXT LESSON PLAN AND  
EPISODE DISCUSSION GUIDE

### ABOUT THE EPISODE

**Rebel Music: Senegal** is one episode of a six-part documentary film series that explores the lives of young people who are using their art and music to ignite social and political change around the world. Rebel Music: Senegal highlights Senegalese musicians who are using their art to inspire and transform their communities and politics in their country. This powerful story follows the Senegalese rappers **Thiat** and **Kilifeu** from the hip-hop crew: **Keur Gui**. In this episode, Thiat and Kilifeu demand political change for their country, using the power of music to escalate awareness and activate their community. Thiat and Kilifeu are well aware that the future of democracy in Senegal is at risk and that their music has the power to overturn corruption and inspire their people.

### GOALS OF THE LESSON PLANS

**Rebel Music: Senegal** invites participants to ask: *"What is the power of hip-hop in political change?"* and *"Can hip-hop be a form of civic engagement?"* The lessons will help students build a deeper understanding of political issues related to Senegal, by examining the powerful narratives of youth, analyzing various texts, and making connections to their personal experiences. Critical thinking questions and inquiry-based activities encourage participants to consider the complexities of democracy and political change in Senegal.

### TARGETED AUDIENCE

These lesson plans were designed for English Language Arts/Literacy in History and Social Studies Common Core State Standards, grades 9-10 and 11-12. We encourage educators and facilitators to use these lesson plans with instructional flexibility, modifying, adapting, and simplifying as necessary. All Rebel Music episodes are free and online at [www.rebelmusic.com/edu](http://www.rebelmusic.com/edu).

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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### FORMAT OF THE LESSON PLANS:

#### THE CURRICULUM INCLUDES

- About Senegal
- Teacher's Guides
- Context Lesson Plans
- Episode Discussion Guides  
(with Extended Learning Opportunities)

All lessons are approximately one hour, although some may require follow-up lessons to complete the activities. Context lesson plans should be used before viewing the episode and are meant to prepare students for the topics visited in the episode. These plans contextualize the narratives and topics in Rebel Music: Senegal by providing an overview of the themes within the episode. The context lesson plans are not intended to give a detailed history of the country. Episode discussion guides include discussion questions, and classroom activities for deeper understanding. The guides are student handouts that ask students to analyze and deconstruct messages and narratives in the episode. Classroom activities help students summarize the central themes of the episode. Extended learning opportunities encourage students to use their knowledge in a way that is personally meaningful, and engages them with their "community."

#### TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

There are some subtitles in this episode. This may be a distraction or obstacle for some students. Some ideas for watching the episode are:

1. Pause the video
2. Watch the episode twice
3. Preview the questions
4. Split up the questions
5. Have students pick the questions which interest them



Rebel Music's rapper and activist Kilifeu of the Senegalese band, Keur Gui.

Riot policemen stand guard as they bar access to a street during a demonstration.

Photo credit: Mamadou Toure BEHAN/AFP/Getty Images

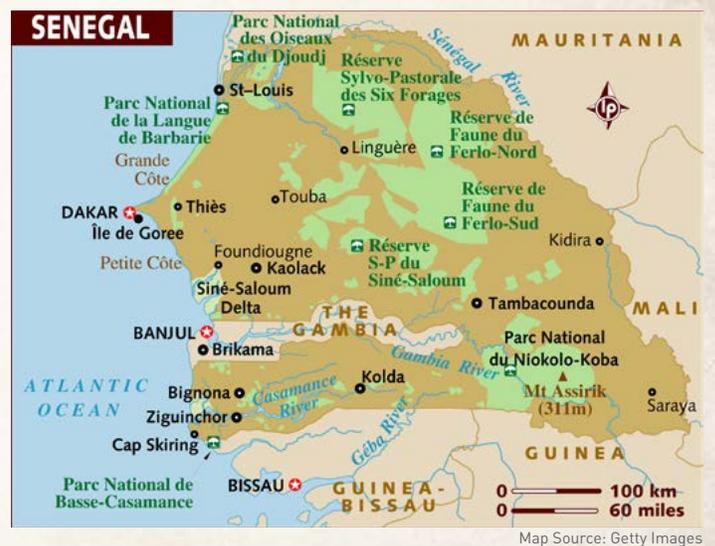
# REBEL MUSIC

## SENEGAL

## ABOUT SENEGAL

The Republic of Senegal is often referred to as “one of Africa’s model democracies.”<sup>1</sup> In 2013, President Obama, in a press conference with Senegalese President Sall, praised Senegal as a model democracy by saying, “Senegal is one of the most stable democracies in Africa and one of the strongest partners that we have in the region...It is moving in the right direction, with reforms to deepen democratic institutions. I believe Senegal can be a great example.”<sup>2</sup> Some may agree with Obama’s sentiments since Macky Sall won elections in 2012, and removed former president Abdoulaye Wade, who had illegally run for a third term. However, with a history of young rappers and civil society movements mobilizing against the government, coupled with discontent over years of high unemployment, economic stagnation, and poverty, others may argue that Senegal’s democracy is still in jeopardy.<sup>3</sup>

Senegal is located in West Africa and is slightly smaller than the state of South Dakota. Once part of the West African empire of Mali, Ghana, and Tekrur, Senegal has a strong identity and cultural heritage. Senegal is bordered by Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania and the Atlantic Ocean. The capital city of Dakar lies on the Cap-Vert peninsula and before independence from France in 1960 (with full independence in 1964), was the capital of French-West Africa. With a population of over 13 million people, Senegal is rich with ethnic and linguistic diversity. The Wolof make up the majority of Senegalese population, however, other ethnic groups in Senegal include Fula, Serer, Jola, Maures, and Mandinka among others. Although French is the official language of business, Wolof is the predominant African language spoken among nearly all Senegalese, in spite of their ethnic affiliation. Government reports show that 94% of Senegalese are Muslim, and most are members of various Sufi brotherhoods (Mouride, Tidjan and Lyan being the most common), each of which has its own *marabout* (spiritual leaders).<sup>4</sup> Senegal also has a small Christian and Catholic population. Larry Nesper, an Anthropology professor from University of Wisconsin-Madison, claims that Senegal is a “model for interfaith peace”<sup>5</sup> as nearly all of the various religious orders in Senegal live in peace.



In 1914, esteemed Senegalese politician Blaise Diagne, fought for African rights under the French values of ‘equality and freedom’. Independence movements gained momentum after World War II. Léopold Sédar Senghor became Senegal’s first president in 1959 when he advocated for independence from France. Senghor later stepped down in 1980 - an act that is rare for a region known for presidents who hold power sometimes for decades. Senghor was succeeded by Abdou Diouf in 1980 who ruled under the Parti Socialiste banner until 2000. In 2000, Mr Diouf’s party lost power to long-time opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade. A constitutional controversy surfaced in 2011 and 2012 when...

ABOUT SENEGAL [continued on back]

### ABOUT SENEGAL [continued]

the Constitutional Court of Senegal ruled that President Abdoulaye Wade was allowed to run for a third term<sup>6</sup> - an act that was deemed by many as illegal. The Senegalese constitution, which written in 2001, had limited a sitting President to two terms. In 2011, Wade exploited a technicality in the constitution to secure the right to run for a third term. In a highly volatile election, Macky Sall replaced President Wade in 2012 after beating him in the second round of the presidential elections.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Obama praises Senegal as model of democracy,"

<http://www.dw.de/obama-praises-senegal-as-model-of-democracy/a-16911559>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14093674>

<sup>2</sup> DW "Obama praises Senegal as model democracy,"

<http://www.dw.de/obama-praises-senegal-as-model-of-democracy/a-16911559>

<sup>3</sup> PR Watch, "Senegal's Democracy in Jeopardy,"

<http://www.prwatch.org/news/2012/03/11334/senegals-democracy-jeopardy-run-off-election-looms>

<sup>4</sup> Islam in Senegal,

<http://www.muslimpopulation.com/africa/Senegal/inislam%20In%20Senegal.php>

<sup>5</sup> Senegal: Model for Interfaith Peace,

<http://insideislam.wisc.edu/regions-and-themes/africa/senegal-model-for-interfaith-peace/>

<sup>6</sup> "Senegalese leader in row over 2012 re-election bid." Reuters,

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E67N0I420100824>

<sup>7</sup> Our Africa,

<http://www.our-africa.org/senegal/history-politics>



A Senegalese demonstrator holds a placard reading in French: "Wade, you're finished" in front of police officers during a protest in Dakar on February 21, 2012.

Photo credit: ISSOUF SANOGO/AFP/Getty Images



## CONTEXT LESSON PLAN: HIP-HOP AS CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

*Overview* – In this context lesson plan, students will research and analyze various forms of civic engagement. During their inquiry, students will consider this essential question, “Can hip-hop be a form of civic engagement?” Following their inquiry and a small-group discussion, students will write a brief paper answering the essential question.

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will read, analyze, and synthesize different informational texts.
- Students will develop an accurate and meaningful definition of “civic engagement.”
- Students will become familiar with the Senegalese rapper-led youth movement (“Y’en a Marre,” Wolof for “We’re Fed Up!”).
- Students will consider, and write about, the relationship between hip-hop, politics, and civic engagement in Senegal.

### COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY & 9-10.9** (Grades 9-10). Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several sources.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 & 11-12.7** (Grades 11-12). Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media in order to address a question.



One of Rebel Music: Senegal’s main characters, Kilifeu.

### KEY TERMS

- **“Civic engagement”**: individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic engagement encompasses a range of specific activities. (Source: American Psychological Association)
- **Hip-hop** (include the 5 elements of hip-hop: DJing, breakdancing, graffiti, MCing, beatboxing)
- **Political**
- **Revolution**
- **Activism**
- **Dissent**
- **Y’en A Marre** (“We’re Fed Up”)

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### CONTEXT LESSON PLAN

#### MATERIALS

- **Rebel Music**  
[www.rebelmusic.com](http://www.rebelmusic.com)
- **The Definition of Civic Engagement: New York Times**  
[http://www.nytimes.com/ref/college/collegespecial2/coll\\_aascu\\_defi.html](http://www.nytimes.com/ref/college/collegespecial2/coll_aascu_defi.html)
- **“Enough is Enough,’ say Senegalese Rappers.” NPR podcast & article**  
<http://www.npr.org/2012/02/19/147113419/enough-is-enough-say-senegalese-rappers>
- **Protest After Senegal Arrests Activist Rapper” NY Times, July 26, 2011, J. Goodman**  
[http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/26/protest-after-senegal-arrests-activist-rapper/?\\_r=0](http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/26/protest-after-senegal-arrests-activist-rapper/?_r=0)
- **“Senegal’s Rappers Drive Protests for Political Change” Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting**
  - Articles and photo gallery  
<http://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/senegal-rappers-musicians-journalists-protests-political-social-change-dakar>
  - Video documentary  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lfoF4c3Ah4>
- **“Rap Revolution: Voices of Dissent in Senegal” The Independent February 20, 2012 by Daniel Howden**  
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/rap-revolution-voices-of-dissent-in-senegal-7218932.html>

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Once Upon a Time in New York City, The Birth of Hip-Hop (series) BBC**  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007mw93>
- **“Faux! Pas Force (Y’en a Marre)” music video**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCuKAn-T0pk>
- **“Hip-hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes” PBS series**  
<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/hiphop/>



Senegalese riot police clash with protestors in city center of Dakar.

Photo credit: ISSOUF SANOGO/AFP/Getty Images

#### PROCEDURE

##### 1. READ AND CONSIDER FACTS IN THE “ABOUT SENEGAL” TEXT.

##### 2. LAUNCH

- a. Display the definition of “civic engagement”
  - o Have students list examples of civic engagement
- b. Give a brief introduction of the 5 elements of hip-hop

##### 3. INQUIRY

Present the essential question: “Can hip-hop be a form of civic engagement?”

**a. Listening session:** As a whole-group, listen to the NPR podcast, “‘Enough is Enough’ say Senegalese Rappers.” Identify evidence provided in the podcast for the movement’s slogan, “Y’en a Marre.”

**b. Information gathering:** In what ways are rappers using their voice to mobilize people for political change? Break students into small groups and have them read and analyze a variety of sources to answer this question. (sources listed below)

- o “Enough is Enough” NPR article
- o “Protest After Senegal Arrests Activist Rapper” NY Times
- o “Senegal’s Rappers Drive Protest for Political Change” Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
- o “Senegal’s Revolutionary Rappers Fight the Power,” TIME
- o “Rap Revolution: Voices of Dissent in Senegal” The Independent

**c.** Small group discussions rooted in the essential questions. Students must use evidence from the sources to support their thinking. After 15-20 minute discussion, have small groups present their findings to the class.

##### 4. FOLLOW-UP & ASSESSMENT

Students will write about the relationships between hip-hop, politics, and civic engagement in Senegal. In their paper, they can consider these questions:

- a. What is your definition of “civic engagement”?
- b. Is hip-hop a form of civic engagement in Senegal?
- c. Are there examples of hip-hop as civic engagement in the United States? (requires further inquiry)
- d. What can we learn about the power of hip-hop in political change?
- e. Do you have any lingering questions that might challenge others to think about hip-hop as civic engagement?

Rebel Music: Senegal’s Thiat and Kilifeu.





## TEACHER'S EPISODE DISCUSSION GUIDE: SENEGAL

**Overview - Rebel Music: Senegal** highlights Senegalese musicians who are using their art to inspire and transform their communities and politics in their country. This powerful story follows the Senegalese rappers Thiat and Kilifeu from the hip-hop crew: Keur Gui. In this episode, Thiat and Kilifeu demand political change for their country, using the power of music to escalate awareness and activate their community. Thiat and Kilifeu are well aware that the future of democracy in Senegal is at risk and that their music has the power to overturn corruption and inspire their people.

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will consider people's experiences in Senegal and how it influences their music.
- Students will analyze quotes, from Rebel Music, and texts related to political change and crisis in Senegal.

### MATERIALS

- Access to [www.rebelmusic.com](http://www.rebelmusic.com)
- Copies of student handout (Episode Discussion Guide)

### KEY TERMS

- Political crisis
- Constitution
- Enemy of the state
- Political movement
- Protest
- Keur Gui ("The House")
- "Y'en a Marre" ("We are fed up!")

## PROCEDURE & EPISODE DISCUSSION GUIDE ASSISTANCE

1. Preview the questions on the Student Handout.

2. Watch the episode, giving students an opportunity to answer select Discussion Questions.

### a. Discussion Questions

1. The rappers say they will rap about "important things..." and "the interests of the people."
2. The rappers were beat, tortured, and jailed for denouncing the mayor of Kaolack.
3. Y'en A Marre means "We're Fed Up!"
4. Senegalese rappers and youth are fed up in 2011 and 2012 because President Wade is trying to change the constitution to run for a third term. Other reasons for the political crisis are: unemployment, power outages, and corruption. "We were fed up seeing how the politicians ignored the population's problems."
5. The government tries to silence the movement through intimidation and threats thus turning rappers against them. Specific forms of violence include tear gas, murder, and running over protesters.
6. The people's voice is important in this episode. Some quotes are: "We gave everyone a microphone" and "common Senegalese had seized the public space."
7. Senegalese in the episode claim that President Sall is not any better than Abdoulaye Wade because there are still power and water shortages. In Keur Gui's single, "Diogoufi" they rap about these issues. Later, Sophie describes the threats Keur Gui receives upon releasing their new CD.

#### a. Discussion Questions (continued)

8. Article 80 states that if you offend the President you can go to jail.

#### 2. After watching the episode, give students an opportunity to look at the next section: Questions & Activities for Deeper Understanding. These questions will probe deeper into the central themes of the episode -

1. Students compare and contrast their community with Senegal.
2. Male youth are mostly present at the protests.
3. Considering risk-factors in fighting for political change.
4. Youth participation in democracy and political change.
5. The use of metaphors and slogans in political movements. "Keur Gui" means "the house." And one of the artist's names, "Kilifeu," means "the father of the house, like within every normal house." According to the episode, Kilifeu also states: "And my colleague's name, Thiat, means the youngest in the house. The last born...Everything comes from a house and returns to a house. The garbage on the streets comes from a house, the president, a thief, a killer, anyone comes from a house. So, we have tried to represent the world via the house, philosophically speaking." (Taken from episode content)

#### 2. Extended Learning Opportunities can be used as follow-up activities or assigned for homework. These questions and activities ask students to make connections between the Senegalese artists, themselves, and their communities.

1. This question focuses on music as a tool for raising awareness and inspiring civic engagement. Students can also self-select a song from any music genre they believe demands civic engagement. See the Context Lesson Plan for more details.
2. This question offers students an opportunity to connect to experiences of hardship and struggle in Senegal. If students don't feel connected to those struggles, they can consider how their experiences differ from those in the episode.
3. Students can study the movements in Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Ghana, Benin, and/or Mali.
4. This question focuses on thinking critically about political decision-making and the power to make change.



### EPISODE DISCUSSION GUIDE - STUDENT HANDOUT

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Kilifeu and Thiat say if they are “going to rap, it will be about...” what?
2. What happened as a result of “denouncing the mayor of Kaolack”?
3. What does the protest slogan, “Y’en a Marre” mean?
4. Why are rappers and youth “fed up”?
5. The rappers say they are considered “enemies of the state.” How do the government and police try to censor and silence the movement?
6. Identify and record two quotes that emphasize the importance of everyone’s voice in the movement.
7. According to Keur Gui’s single, “Diogoufi” what evidence is there for claiming there hasn’t been any change since President Sall was elected President? Explain.
8. What does Article 80 state?

#### QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES FOR DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

1. Design a Venn diagram of images, pictures, and words that demonstrate how you see the similarities and differences of politics and life in Senegal and the United States. You should record ideas as you watch the episode.
2. In the episode, Fadel says, “...if we needed to die in 2011, 2012 so that the constitution is no longer changed in Senegal, that’s how it should be.” What does it mean to risk your life for your people?
3. How important is it in a democracy for young people to get involved in politics? Does this also apply to you?
4. The name of the group, “Keur Gui” means “The House.” What do you think this a metaphor for? Is there a saying or metaphor that translates like this in English? How closely tied is this idea with the identity of this music group?

#### EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

1. **In Rebel Music, Keur Gui use rap as a “weapon against their enemies.” In the United States, some rappers use music to mobilize people to support their governmental leaders. How did music play a role, if any at all, in the 2008 Presidential elections in the United States? Watch “We Are the Ones” by Will.i.am or Jay-Z “My President.”**
  - a. Reflect and explain how the song is a tool for change and raising awareness.
  - b. What exactly is said or done to make you believe, or not believe, in the power of the song?
  - c. Discuss an issue in your community that is being ignored and explain how music (or art) could bring awareness to this issue?
  - d. Take action and create the art and present or display it in your school or community.
2. **Thiat states, “Life is struggle...every day is a struggle.” In what ways can you identify with this statement? Or, how might your struggles contrast to those mentioned in the episode?**
3. **Who do you think should be included in political decision-making in a democracy? Identify a local politician who is working on an issue you think is important and write a letter to them describing your opinion in detail, with supporting evidence, explaining why it is important to hear your voice and opinion. Consider some of these questions:**
  - a. Are all politicians the same?
  - b. Is politics a small circle that only includes some people? Should experts, community members, citizens, people over 18, etc., make decisions?
  - c. Who seems to be ignored in the political decision-making process in both the United States and Senegal?