

K'naan's song "Soobax," a hip-hop, rap, and reggae hybrid track, speaks to perpetrators of violence who participate in the Somali civil war. This song fits into the curriculum because it exemplifies a coextensive moment between music and politics. By condemning the violence that threatens the lives and futures of all Somalis, K'naan states his opposition to tribal infighting that had begun when the government destabilized in the 1990s. Not only is he speaking to the groups that are fighting each other but also to political powers outside of Somali in order to call attention to their plight. He speaks of feelings of abandonment by world powers who might be able to intervene, "Left alone, all alone/ Settle your issues on your own." This lyric references the UN decision to stay out of the Somali conflict and the resulting abandonment of Somali citizens. He goes on to reference his status as a refugee, which is a criticism of governments who abandon countries in need.

The musical styles that he fuses together have socio-political undertones. Rap has a historical precedent of explaining personal struggle as a result of an unjust system. Through the lyric "I'm known as a lyrical rhyme domino," K'naan identifies himself as a rapper suggesting that he has something important to say about his life experience, frequently including comments about society which are often political. He emphasizes the personal aspect of his expression through repetitive use of the words "I" and "you." He, however, departs from the braggadocios conventions of rap by explaining "I don't do it for show" rather "I work for the struggle." He understands that rap can be used as a tool for political outreach and change. The use of both English and Somali lyrics reflect the dualism present in many Somali refugees. The anger he expresses in the Somali chorus communicates his rage at his homeland being taken away from him but also a sort of reclaiming of and tenacious holding onto his culture.

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