

# Whats happening term paper example

[Religion](#), [Bible](#)



## Black Music

What's happening? Black Music.

### 1. (a) Reggae artist, Duane Stephenson

Duane Stephenson is a non-dancehall reggae artist. The reggae sound and beat are not the up-front of the sound; they are the foundation on which his singing voice and his message comfortably perch. His voice is serious even when he sings; he sounds like an old man, probably because he is mature and thoughtful. His fans describe his voice as wise. 1

Stephenson's albums may be too mellow and well, boring to some. His lyrics are strong so he doesn't let the music overwhelm his message. He will make a big, big and bigger splash when he brings more of an audience into his live performances. This will call for a lot of hard work and energy from him and his team but would be worth the effort in the long run.

Again according to his fans and their comments posted on his fan pages across the Internet, ' you have to see him live' and ' once you see his live performance you will understand' what Duane Stephenson is all about. When that happens you will be hooked; you will enjoy and appreciate his recorded music after hearing him live.

He is a capable and talented musician; as well as having that extra spark that makes you stop and pay attention. Songs in which he plays the acoustic guitar are beautifully done. He has a good relationship with the guitar and gets his own unique sound from his guitar. His voice has more depth and interest too in his acoustic music which is showcased in videos like Fairy Tale. In this song which addresses domestic violence, the music flows over

his voice and it is a nice sound.

Songs with a full reggae band and electric guitar are more interesting especially when he teams up with Tarrus Riley another reggae artist who doesn't get enough appreciation like in the ballad Shine Medley.

Stephenson's song August Town talks about the difficult passage from boyhood to adulthood when growing up in a place during war or violence. He has songs where when reading the lyrics it seems like, why does he bother, this has all been said before but he has an engaging way of sending the message, part of it is his music, voice and talent but another big part is his honesty.

“ I've got the scars to show that I made it along life's war” “ I never lived like he wanted but I was mindful of what he taught me” “ when my life got dark he was the only spark the life at the end of the road” take it from me son that you can change the world today and I'm living proof that crime doesn't pay” (Duane Stephenson, August Town, lyrics)

In the song Better Tomorrow he tells mothers to tell their children that tomorrow will be better as life moves forward; that it won't always be the way it is now. That's an important message for kids living under a bridge or in a house with no running water.

Stephenson does not only talk the talk, he walks the walk. He is a partner with the Wailers and the World Food Programme (WFP) in alerting people around the world to people dying from hunger. The WFP invited him to the 2010 George McGovern Leadership Award ceremony where he performed. Secretary of State Hilary Rodham Clinton was in the audience and they were photographed together during the event. 2 Stephenson was quoted in the

Jamaica Observer, “ food is a common bond that unites every single life form on the planet, we all require it to live, yet a billion people each night go to bed hungry and 25, 000 of them die.” His MySpace page includes a button to click to donate to WFP. org

His official website includes along with the usual videos and photographs, ways to learn about World Hunger. “ Stephenson teams up with Hiho Batik Creation of the FEED AFRICA! T-shirt With 100% of the Proceeds Being Donated to theUnited Nations' World Food Programme” (Stephenson, duanestephensonmusic. com). There is a photo of fans showing the shirt with its big colorful map of Africa and there is a widget that calculates the estimated cost of a fan’s favorite food plus the impact on those less fortunate in the world when we eat the food we eat.

#### 1 (b) Poetic Rap Artist, Common

Common is another black artist who is a talented, articulate musician and one who talks about real life in his lyrics. I would say he is a force that will become a well known talent soon. He is a hip hop artist, poet, author and actor.

His concert in December is titled The Dreamer/The Believer. He will perform with his featured guest John Legend. The special and unique twist to his concert is that a new original Maya Angelou poem will be premiered at the concert. His new CD which will be released December 20, 2011 (the reason for the concert) features a track with Maya Angelou titled “ I’m a Dreamer” and a track with John Legend titled “ I’m a Believer.” Common has assured his listeners and future listeners that this album contains positive hip-hop. He told reporter Latifah Muhammad, “ I didn't want to create just something

that was gonna be made for this day," he expresses. " I like creating music that's timeless. We of course want the album to impact right now, to [evoke] this spirit of 'I wanna go buy this album'" (Muhammand, 2011).

He's a man who thinks ahead and has many projects going on at the same time. His energy seems limitless. One Day It'll All Make Sense is the book he authored in which he tells the story of his own life. The book came out in Septmeber, 2011. He also appears in the television series Hell on Wheels is the television series.

His The Common Ground Foundation has a goal to empower young people and help them to understand what is going on in the world beyond the boundaries of their own neighborhoods. " Show a child the world outside of their neighborhood. Watcha child grow to lead the world . . . Empowerment" (Common Ground, commonground. com).

Common is quoted on the Common Ground website saying, " it's about finding what you love and you want to be and going out and doing it." He signed his quote " Common" underlined with a peace symbol under the line. Seems like no matter how calmly and practically Common tries to speak to the public his words are always labeled controversial. For some reason most everything he says and does is made controversial by some group and/or parts of the mass media. A lot of it seems to be due to lyrics of songs he wrote when he was younger. The vocal critics ignore everything else he has written and his behavior it he world. He's a mature adult now. He is outspoken and honest so those are probably the real targets of the media uproars.

When First Lady Michele Obama invited him to a Spring poetry reading in

2011 she was criticized. The White House answered, ““ While the president doesn’t support the kind of lyrics that have been raised here,” Carney said, “ some of these reports distort what Mr. Lynn stands for more broadly,” referring to Common by his given name, Lonnie Rashid Lynn, Jr. “ Within that genre of hip hop and rap he is known as a conscious rapper”” (Dirner, 2011). It led some to ask how appropriate it was for the White House to host the " vile" and " quite controversial" rapper. (Marikar, 2011).

Because he read a poem in 2007 ““Burn a Bush’ ‘ cause for peace he no push no button” some of the vocal critics we’re asking how appropriate it was for the White House to host the " vile" and " quite controversial" rapper (Marikar, 2011). There are just some people who can’t think their own thoughts but criticize anyone who does.

Common isn’t such a new artist as some but he is still underappreciated and that is why I included him here.

## 2. Lyrics

Better Tomorrow by Duane Stephenson

Whoa, better tomorrow, tomorrow

I can think of a million ways that life can change

A million reasons why a man could go insane

So mother, tell your children, to keep a smile on their faces

As they journey a long life’s way

Better tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow,

Better tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow

Better days will come one day, when it comes it's here to stay

Better tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow. (Stephenson, Black Gold album)

Blue Sky by Common

Top of the class

Black Wall Street so my stock'll never crash

Giving what I ask

Pure religion and cash

For the windows that open I'm raising my glass

Daylight beams

Nightlife schemes

This is my inception

I'm writing my dreams.

A mortal view of a star

Doing what I'm born to do

I see the blue skies

Say the lord's coming through (Common, The Dreamer/The Believer)

None for the n-ggas trying to hold them back

Five in the air for the teacher not scared to tell those kids thats living in the ghetto that the n-ggas holdin back that the World is theirs!

Yeah yeah, the World is yours, I was once that little boy

Terrified of the World

Now I'm on a World tour

I will give up everything, even start a world war

For these ghettos girls and boys im rapping round' the World for!

Africa to New York, Haiti then I detour, Oakland out to Auckland

Gaza Strip to Detroit, say hip-hop only destroy

Tell em' look at me, boy!

I hope your son don't have a gun and that would be a D-boy

Alright, already the show goes on

Alright, till the morning we dream so long

Anybody ever wonder, when they would see the sun up

Just remember when you come up

The show goes on!

Alright, already the show goes on

Alright, till the morning we dream so long

Anybody ever wonder, when they would see the sun up

Just remember when you come up

The show goes on!

[Lupe Fiasco Verse 3]

So no matter what you been through

No matter what you into

No matter what you see when you look outside your window

Brown grass or green grass

Picket fence or barbed wire

Never ever put them down



You just lift your arms higher

Raise em till' your arms tired

Let em' know you're there

That you struggling and survivin' that you gonna persevere

Yeah, ain't no body leavin, no body goin' home

Even if they turn the lights out the show is goin' on!

Alright, already the show goes on

Alright, till the morning we dream so long

Anybody ever wonder, when they would see the sun up

Just remember when you come up

The show goes on!

Alright, already the show goes on

Alright, till the morning we dream so long

Anybody ever wonder, when they would see the sun up

Just remember when you come up

The show goes on!

The Show Goes On by Lupe Fiasco

Have you ever had the feeling that you was being had

Don't that sh-t make you mad

They treat you like a slave, with chains all on your soul,

And put whips up on your back,

They be lying through they teeth

Hope you slip up off your path

I don't switch up I just laugh

Put my kicks up on they desk (Lupe Fiasco, LASERS)

Answer to Question 3. Lupe Fiasco may be the musician who starts a sophisticated trend into the future as an American Muslim rap and balladeer philosopher. In other words he is multi-talented, thoughtful, intelligent and outspoken.

This could be his break out year to become a name recognized in every house across the country. He has been nominated in two categories for this year's 34th Annual Grammy Awards. First he has been nominated in the category of Best Rap performance for the song, The Show Goes On from his album LASERS. The second category he has been nominated for is for Best Rap Album for the album LASERS.

The album title LASERS stands for " Love Always Shines Everytime: Remember to Smile." That is a good reflection of Lupe Fiasco's outlook on life although he takes solving the problems of the world very seriously. His hit song from the album The Show Goes On is a musical mix of hip hop lyrics, rock and roll electric guitar, and gospel chorus influenced back-up singers. All the musical genres layered together makes an audience happy. Often the performance of the song has been described as " ebullient" and " energetic." Two words that could be used to describe Lupe Fiasco as he dances in front of the band and encourages the audience to become involved in the song. The lyrics are all about empowerment of young people.

Yeah, yeah, the World is yours, I was once that little boy

Terrified of the World

Now I'm on a World tour

I will give up everything, even start a world war

For these ghettos girls and boys I'm rapping round' the World for!

Africa to New York, Haiti then I detour, Oakland out to Auckland

Gaza Strip to Detroit, say hip-hop only destroy

Tell em' look at me, boy! (Fiasco, LASERS)

Fiasco doesn't hide his emotions, politics and life outlook. He first became noticed with a song titled Kick, Push. Listeners and critics welcomed the song because it breathed fresh air into the hip hop genre. The lyrics were smart; the up and downs in life were sung about using a skateboarding metaphor. The music included a brass ensemble that lifted the sound out of the doldrums of the 'hood.

Four years passed before the release of LASERS in March, 2011 with no singles or other albums being released because of contention between Fiasco and the record company Atlantic Records. That was enough to really tick off his fans. On October 15, 2010 hundreds of his fans protested in front of the record company's offices demanding the release of the album. " Fans call that day ' Fiasco Friday.'" (Fiasco, lupefiasco. com)

Fiasco stated that he had been very moved by the out pouring of support. He had been at times during the four years hiatus of not releasing any more albums but fortunately for his audience he bounced back stronger (Fiasco, lupefiasco. com).

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He does not shy away from controversial topics such as the media and the mess they make of political discourse. His song Words I Never Said is not a love song. It's an angry tune with lyrics which include calling a spade, a spade in the mean world of media. He mentions that Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck are racists in the song. That is something obvious to everyone but for some reason kept quiet. It's good to hear the truth for a change.

That is another way new audiences will welcome him with open arms: his honesty. Audiences are bored with being manipulated. Fiasco's honesty about social problems and his energetically musical way of bringing them out into the public debate will bring him many new listeners.

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