

# Kendrick Lamar

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Kendrick Lamar was born in 1987, in Compton, California. Growing up, Kendrick witnessed the poverty and violence in his city, and this inspired much of his music.

As a child, Kendrick was a good student with an interest in writing. He began rapping and started recording his own songs as a teenager. His first mixtape was released when he was just 16. His early work caught the attention of rapper Dr. Dre, who helped launch his career.



Kendrick Lamar's first two albums told stories of growing up in Compton. His third album *To Pimp a Butterfly* (2015) was more ambitious. The album mixed rap with jazz, funk, and spoken word poetry, and it talked about topics like racism and inequality. In 2018, Kendrick became the first rapper to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music, a huge honor that recognized his skill as a storyteller and artist.

Kendrick Lamar has had a long and well-known rivalry with another rapper named Drake. It all started in 2013 when Kendrick Lamar made a song where he declared himself the best rapper and challenged other famous rappers, including Drake. This was a daring move, and it made people wonder if Kendrick was trying to take the crown from Drake. Over the next few years, the two took jabs at each other in their music and in interviews, and they even wrote entire songs to insult each other.

Kendrick was invited to perform at the halftime show of the 2025 Superbowl in New Orleans.

## Comprehension Questions:

1. What will Kendrick do at the Superbowl?
  - a) Receive an award.
  - b) Play football.
  - c) Perform comedy.
  - d) Perform music.
2. Why was Kendrick's childhood important to his music?
  - a) He met many famous musicians as a child.
  - b) He was raised in a rich and peaceful neighborhood.
  - c) His experiences with poverty and violence shaped his lyrics.
  - d) He didn't start writing music until he was an adult.
3. Why did Dr. Dre help Kendrick?
  - a) Dr. Dre was Kendrick's childhood friend.
  - b) Dr. Dre likes teenage boys.
  - c) Dr. Dre thought Kendrick was talented.
  - d) Kendrick was sick and needed a doctor.

4. Why was Kendrick's third album different from his first two?
- a) It was only about his childhood.
  - b) It included more musical styles and social themes.
  - c) It was only jazz music.
  - d) It was produced by Drake.
5. What does winning the Pulitzer Prize suggest about Kendrick Lamar?
- a) He is a brilliant rapper.
  - b) He is only popular among young people.
  - c) He is famous for his dance moves.
  - d) He writes simple and fun lyrics.
6. What can we guess about Kendrick Lamar's career after winning a Pulitzer Prize?
- a) He will stop making music.
  - b) He only makes songs for movies now.
  - c) He does not care about storytelling in his music.
  - d) His music is considered an art form.
7. Why did Kendrick Lamar's song in 2013 get so much attention?
- a) He praised all the other rappers.
  - b) He claimed to be the best rapper and challenged others.
  - c) He announced his retirement from music.
  - d) He said he was going to make a new song with Drake.
8. Kendrick wants to take the crown from Drake. What does the crown represent?
- a) A member of the royal family.
  - b) The title of best rapper.
  - c) A really nice hat.
  - d) The power of friendship.
9. Which of these statements is false?
- a) Kendrick Lamar started rapping as a teenager.
  - b) Kendrick Lamar won a Pulitzer Prize.
  - c) Kendrick Lamar's music often talks about social issues.
  - d) Drake and Kendrick Lamar have always been best friends.
10. What is the main idea of the article?
- a) There are many famous American rappers.
  - b) Kendrick Lamar is a successful rapper.
  - c) Kendrick Lamar is a better rapper than Drake.
  - d) Kendrick Lamar was discovered by Dr. Dre.

### **Speaking and Writing Activities:**

- Discuss these questions with a partner or a small group.
- Choose one topic and write a response to it. Show your writing to a classmate or teacher.

1. Who is your favorite musician? What do you like about them?
2. Many people feel connected to music that tells stories about real life. What is a song that has a message you like?
3. Poetry and jazz are considered forms of art. Do you think rap music should also be considered a form of art?