

# HISTORY OF HIP HOP

## LESSON PLAN

### LEARNING GOALS

**Students will be able to...**

- identify the elements
- identify the principles
- apply cultural knowledge

**TEACHER NAME:** Oriana Lee  
**CONTACT:** orianalee@whohf.com

### MATERIALS

**Students will be using...**

- paper
- writing utensil
- music player

### SUBJECTS

**Students will engage...**

- Hip hop history
- writing
- artistic expression

### LESSON DESCRIPTION

Students will gain knowledge about the foundational history of Hip hop. This lesson invites students to learn about the culture and the artists responsible for creating the four elements and the principles of the culture, as well as some of the other important components of the culture like the musical influences and the social justice aspects.

### VOCABULARY (5 MIN)

1. Hip hop-a culture and art form, created by Americans of African and Hispanic descent in the 1970's by teenagers as a form of expression.
2. Elements of Hip hop - DJing, MCing, Breaking, and Graffiti Writing + Knowledge
3. Principles of Hip hop- Peace, Love, Unity, and Having Fun.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

1. What is Hip Hop culture?
2. What does Hip Hop mean to you?
3. What are the principles of Hiphop and why are they important?
4. How do you notice the media incorporating Hiphop?
5. How does Social Justice show up in Hiphop culture, especially Rap Music?

## INSPIRATION (5 MIN)

1. James Brown- inspiration behind both the breakbeat and the breakdance culture, as not only was Brown's music responsible for some of the first declared Hiphop sounds, the dancers borrowed heavily from Brown's footwork.
2. The Last Poets-largely credited for the vocal expression now known as rapping, artist, Gil Scott Heron performed a similar style of vocal artistry in the 1960's that heavily influenced early MC's, and can even still be attributed today with the popularity of Spoke Word poetry.
3. Africa Bambaataa-Hiphop Pioneer who brought a full consciousness to the culture through the foundational elements, and by introducing the guiding principles.

## ACTIVITY (25 MIN)

1. Listen to three songs with famous breakbeats: James Brown, Funky Drummer; Billy Squier, The Big Beat; and The Honeydrippers, Impeach the President (find on YouTube or other platforms). Observing what kinds of feelings each song evokes, students will write down what comes up for them as they listen to each song. Compare and contrast all three songs, discussing things like tempo, sounds, emotions evoked, etc.
2. Write a one-page essay about your relationship with Hip Hop culture and how you experience it daily. Use as many details about the culture, and related-vocabulary.
3. Peace, Love, Unity, and Fun are the principles of Hip hop. Work together in small groups, or as a whole class to create a shared white board experience around these principles. Draw, write, or find images from the internet to represent these four principles.
4. Study Taki 183, looking at a variety of his tags and pieces on the internet. Create your own tag on paper using as much style, color, and design as they feels represents them artistically.
5. Research some internet articles about Breakin' as an Olympic sport. Discuss or write about why or why it should not be considered a sport. Share ideas about how it might be judged or scored based on Olympic guidelines.
6. Listen to the song, read, and interpret Nas' "I Can" lyrics. Write a short paragraph summarizing each verse. How are you inspired by these lyrics?
7. Engage a group discussion about the corporatization of Hip Hop and the many ways in which you observe it being monetized. List five companies you have noticed using Hip hop in commercials and advertisements. Share.
8. Listen to the lyrics of the song "The Message" by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five  
Have students identify as many of the following literary devices from the song:
  - a. Hyperbole

## DEBRIEF (5 MIN)

1. What have you learned about Hip hop culture that you didn't know before?
2. How can you incorporate more of the principles of Hip hop - peace, love, unity, and having fun, into your everyday life?

## FURTHER RESOURCES

### LITERATURE

Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-hop generation//Jeff Chang

Subway Art//Martha Stewart & Henry Chalfant

Back in the Days//Jamel Shabazz

The Vibe History of Hip Hop

### TV/FILM

Beat Street

Breakin'

Electric Boogaloo

Style Wars

Rhyme & Reason

Hiphop Evolution (Netflix)