

Scratching beyond the Surface: Hip Hop and Its Art of Persuasion

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Overview

Stay true, and they'll come to you

– Russell Simmons

Like sex, hip-hop sells.... Hip-hop is now applied to virtually every product in the marketplace, from fashion items to Sprite soda, McDonald's burgers and computers.

– Lydia Yee and Franklin Sirmans

Today hip-hop is a billion dollar industry; innumerable products and practices are marketed and labeled as hip-hop. It influences young people in countless ways--not only in their music preference, but literature, fashion, dance as well as visual arts. (Yee and Sirmans 9) According to a Forbes Magazine article, "The Business of Hip-Hop: A Billion Dollar Industry" the estimates are that 45 million hip-hop consumers exist between the ages of 13 and 34(qtd. in Kitwana 82). My students find the statistics that reflect that 70% of the buyers of rap music are white hard to believe. A Philadelphia-based market research company, Motivational Educational Entertainment Productions reports in "Reaching the Hip Hop Generation" that African American youth are the most influential trendsetters in our global economy. If my students can begin to understand how hip-hop sells and how its power of persuasion impacts their consumer and lifestyle choices, it should improve their media literacy, traditional literacy and critical thinking skills. This unit on hip-hop and its art of persuasion is intended to align with the School District Philadelphia's 6th grade core curricula. Through this curriculum unit students will conduct inquiry on persuasion and how it operates in their hip-hop world view. Persuasive essay writing will be a core skill for students to master. To lead students to

master persuasive essays this unit will use hip-hop lyrics, fashion, jingles, and other art forms.

Rationale

Rap is something you do; hip-hop is something you live. -KRS-One.

Hip-Hop Inquiry and Media Literacy

Why use hip-hop to anchor an inquiry on persuasion? Hip-hop culture is ever present in most of my students' lives. The overarching question is how does a teacher integrate literacy and social studies content to explore hip-hop? According to Tshombe Walker, in his essay, "Hip-Hop and Rap Music Industry", the most serious issue facing the hip-hop community is that of cultural and economic exploitation. Providing students a lens to explore hip-hop's persuasive techniques and its underlying economic modalities is critical to improving students' media literacy skills and provide methods for students to explore issues of social justice within a capitalist society.

I teach 6th grade reading, writing and social studies at Beeber Middle School, located in the West Academic Area of the School District of Philadelphia. The pupil population is over 600. The student body is 95% African American and less than 1% percent is Caucasian. The balance of other students is bi-racial or from other ethnic backgrounds. Finding ways to engage my disengaged students in reading, writing and speaking is critical in helping them improve their performance on standardized test and preparing them for life after middle school. Consequently, I often use media arts in my pedagogy. Last year I collaborated with the Philadelphia Arts and Education Partnership (PAEP) and received a Pennsylvania Council of the Arts (PCA) Art Commentary grant to conduct inquiry around identity construction using visual and performing arts. Students enthusiastically created masks, dolls, portraits and films while exploring the theme "Who am I". Furthermore, I have had previous success using hip-hop in the classroom. What sets this unit apart from my previous work is the deeper inquiry students will make on the role persuasion has in the performing and visual arts they often take for granted.

Using hip-hop and its art of persuasion will allow me to anchor my unit within a media literacy framework while also helping to improve students' research and writing skills. By using media literacy I will be able to connect traditional social studies and writing curricula with students' hip-hop worldview. The 2005 Kaiser Family Foundation's study, *Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-olds*, found that young people spend an average of 6.5 hours a day interacting with electronic media--often using multiple media simultaneously. Only 43 minutes are spent reading, while nearly four hours are spent watching TV, an hour and 44 minutes listening to music, and over an hour using the

computer. (Sperry 2006) Hip-hop is major force in the media. The hope is that by placing our inquiry around hip-hop I will lead students to critically question how that idiom is constructed; what values are conveyed in hip-hop messages; how audiences respond to hip-hop; and what messages are left out in hip-hop. Who makes hip-hop art forms and who sponsors artists? Ultimately through an inquiry process students will be taught to ask essential questions about how hip-hop persuades and informs their world view.

What is the purpose of hip-hop and its message?

Many artists are aware that records companies are more interested in selling records than they are in selling authentic cultural products (Tshombe 215). The hip-hop movement started off as a fundamentally positive art form responding to the negative forces of living in poverty and oppressive environments. However, commercialism has taken over and as result gangsta rap, violence and sex is what is consumed by most teens. Some hip-hop purists believe that the industry has been corrupted and it is hard for an artist who wants to push a positive message to get a contract or endorsement. DJ Quick illustrated this point as follows:

The industry. It's corrupting a lot of people in hip-hop... They say, Yo! Can, you give us that flavor? And at the same time you're like, well, Yo I don't rap like that." "Well, I'm telling you now this is what is selling... gats [guns] and drinking... Just put a little of this in your rhymes." So now they try to brainwash people. I've seen it happen, man. They start brainwashing kids, and instead of standing their ground, they say "All right. For twenty five G' [thousand] up front, I might as well put a little bit in. What 's it going hurt" (Tshombe 216)

Most of my students often don't understand the relationship between rap content and its profit motive. By having students study the intersection of the art of persuasion with the art of hip-hop they may begin to understand how hip-hop artists mediate the tensions between commercial interest and community interest. Students will be able to ask critical questions such as: Why are some products placed in certain video shots, and why do certain rap artists "drop" [mention] commercial products in their rap lyrics? What messages are communicated and/or implied about certain people, places, events lifestyles, etc? How credible is the information in hip-hop messages? (Sperry 2006)

Hip Hop Art and Commerce

Having students focus on the duality of hip-hop as an art form and commercial enterprise will lead them to understand the effect hip-hop plays in our global marketplace of ideas and commodities. The plan is not to vilify hip-hop as evil and commodity driven, but to come up with rubrics to appreciate its creative and persuasive nature. However, by asking students to study, analyze, and create arguments for and against hip-hop, they should become more critical consumers. By exploring how hip-hop is packaged and sold

students should begin to understand some of the conflicts related to hip-hop and its persuasive power. (Walker, 2001)

Hip Hop and Academic Discourse

Hip-hop is relevant inside and outside the academy. Michael Eric Dyson, a noted scholar and cultural critic, has written numerous books and articles about hip-hop and its impact on youth culture in particular and society in general. Jay Z, a famous hip-hop artist, who most of my students recognize, legitimizes Dyson and the academic study of hip-hop in his introduction to Dyson's book, *Know What I Mean: Reflection of Hip-Hop*.

Dyson came up from the bottom and told those on top what was up... He started out translating between "us" and "them" ... How many folk out there can talk about pimping in terms laid out by Hegel? Or use Kant to explain the way that prison fashion moved from the cellblock to the city block? Dyson drops the names of philosophers and scholars as easily as he does the names of artists on the latest mix tape moving dance floors in the clubs. (Jay Z, iv)

It will be great to show my students that debate and inquiry about hip-hop is as serious on "street" and as it is in academic discourse. But what are the most effective tools to engage my many of my reluctant readers?

Persuasive Hip-Hop Writing

Using media literacy to explore hip-hop will provide an effective method to engage my students with topics that resonate with their personal experiences. Instead of merely reading and writing, students will learn to contextualize and persuade. In the past when teaching persuasive essays I have had my students write on whether hip-hop had a positive or negative impact on young people. We did a cursory review of the some elements of hip-hop, such as DJing, rapping, and break dancing. We also explored how hip-hop is represented in other parts of the world like Japan, Russia and in parts of Africa. Even after providing context for both positive and negative aspects of hip-hop some students had difficulty crafting their arguments. The fact that hip-hop had both good and bad aspects made it more challenging for some students to plan and write their essays. While graphic organizers helped in outlining the pros and cons of hip-hop, my emerging writers still struggled to write proficient essays. Only my intermediate and advanced writers were effective in using counter arguments to support their premise that hip-hop had a positive or negative impact on young people. One of my best students made nuanced arguments that showed both the positive and negative impact of hip-hop. What made this student's argument persuasive was his ability to use hip-hop lyrics as well as quotes from artists and critics to support his thesis. Engaging in a deeper inquiry about hip-hop and the art of persuasion should help students make more effective arguments regarding hip hop's positive and negative impact on youth culture.

Hip-Hop Building Classroom Community

Hip-hop is a legitimate literacy tool to use in both reading and social studies classes. According to K. Leigh Hamm Forrell, incorporating hip-hop can build community in the classroom between students, their peers and teachers. (Forrell 28) Connecting with what many students perceive as their culture will empower and engage students to read and write beyond the formulaic five paragraph persuasive essay that is required for standardized assessments. Quoting a student who was in my reading and social studies class:

When we did those essays about how we feel about hip-hop having positive or negative effect on kids, it was like you were tricking us to learn how to write. Before doing this project, I did not know I could write so much about any topic. (Hayes 2006)

This student was not atypical among my emerging and basic writers. My teaching practice and scholarship confirms that including students' cultural artifacts—visual art, lyrics, video, films, fashion and popular iconic figures—combats disengagement while simultaneously developing reading and writing stamina. Ultimately this helps students negotiate the standard curriculum mandates. Pennsylvania State Academic Assessment standards for 6th grade are provided in appendix # 1.

Final Outcome

As a culminating activity, students will create, sample rap lyrics and produce multi-media public service announcements (PSAs) to practice elements of persuasion using hip hop. This project will allow students to synthesize what they learned about hip-hop and the art of persuasion. Students will showcase their critical thinking and higher-order thinking skills using communications and media technologies such as cameras, software and the pod-cast.

Objectives

While this unit will be anchored in standard persuasive writing, I will integrate media literacy practices through reading and social studies content. I will teach such concepts as free speech, democracy, media economics, advertising, music history and popular culture. The unit will guide students' inquiry into how hip-hop persuades and influences lifestyle choices of young people. Through the study of persuasive writing and inquiry on hip-hop students will improve their reading, writing, researching, critical thinking and media literacy skills. Detailed objectives are described within 3 major categories below:

Researching and Analyzing Media Economics and Hip Hop

To provide students with background knowledge I will cover topics in media literacy aligned with the school district's standardized social studies curriculum. I plan to use the Public Broadcasting Station (PBS) documentary "Beyond Beats and Rhyme" and a PBS News Hour Report "Hip Hop Is Style" to expose students to the history and persuasive nature of hip-hop. Once students obtain background knowledge about hip-hop and persuasive forms they will conduct inquiry about the relationship between hip-hop art and its persuasive enterprise. Students will conduct web research on hip-hop and media economics. Students will explore how hip-hop promotes fashion, products and certain lifestyle choices. Lastly, students will complete a first person narrative research report about their journey of discovering the persuasive nature of hip-hop and thus become critical consumers.

Reading, Writing and Responding about Hip Hop Culture

To improve media literacy practices, students will write editorials, reviews, persuasive essays and other writing. The reading and writing of editorials will activate students' inquiry about the nature of persuasion. Mini-lessons provided about hip-hop's history and its market driven influence will augment students' inquiry. Students will write persuasive essays based on their initial inquiry into hip-hop culture and market forces. Incorporating hip-hop lyrics to learn about media literacy will allow me to inter-mingle the aesthetics of culture with its actual practices. For example, I can use lyrics to explore media and persuasion, to discover hip-hop music styles, or to explore deeper questions about identity. Students may interpret and analyze music videos to situate culture in context. Through interpretation and analysis of certain music videos students will learn to appreciate the complexities of hip-hop culture along with their own identity. Students will learn to read and respond to lyrics and music videos in much the same way they would a work of fiction or a non-fiction text. They will make connections with theme, character, setting, plot, etc. Students will learn to critically view music videos such as "My Adidas", and determine what literary and persuasion techniques are being used.

Creating Hip Hop Multi Media Persuasion Products

To support students in synthesizing their inquiry about hip-hop and its persuasive power, students will create their own multi-media end products. I plan to collaborate with organizations such as Temple University's Media Education Lab and our expressive arts teachers -music, computer studies, and art and design teachers- to support students in creating digital hip-hop PSA's. By using hip-hop lyrics and visual media, students will showcase what they have learned by combining critical and higher order thinking skills. Students will create story boards and use rap lyrics, images, text, sounds, and animation to communicate to targeted audiences. Students will use their technological and media savvy skills to follow the creative process from planning, storyboarding, filming and editing. They will create their own rap lyrics, or incorporate with "fair use", music and hip hop images using iMovie and Garage Band. To culminate the project I plan a celebratory event to highlight students' accomplishments. In addition to watching their

peers' finished products, students will perform spoken word, rap and demonstrate dancing and other hip-hop art forms discovered during the inquiry process. For this project, the journey and process will be celebrated as much as the completion of the end products.

Strategies

Because I teach two sixth grade classes of literacy (reading and writing) and social studies during at least 120 minutes per day, I will have ample time to spread my unit over 6-8 weeks. The core content of this unit will be taught primarily during social studies lessons. However, some of the writing and reading skills will be taught during my balanced literacy block. Alternatively, I can teach the unit over an entire marking period incorporating media and financial literacy embedded across the reading, writing and social studies curriculum.

Before, During and After Persuasive Techniques

The Pennsylvania State Standards Assessment (PSSA) in reading and writing requires students to become proficient in persuasive techniques. Therefore, our study of persuasion will be deliberate. Before students write persuasive essays for their writing portfolio grades, students will complete a BDA (Before, During and After reading) exercise in which they analyze, compare and contrast editorials, advertisements and hip-hop lyrics' persuasive techniques. BDA strategy is an interactive reading and note-taking tool that allows students to comprehend information and literary text. Before reading, students can prepare to read by scanning text and pictures for clues, making predictions, or setting a purpose. During reading, students can ask questions and have dialogue with the text. "Text rendering" is an example of a during-reading activity. Text rendering directs students to say or highlight any words, phrases or sentences that resonate for any reason, including confusion and lack of understanding. I plan to use BDA strategies for reading editorials, rap lyrics, non-fiction and fiction text related to hip-hop culture.

Other Graphic Organizer and tools that can be used during BDA activities are provided below:

K-W-L – What You Already Know, What you Want to Know and What You Learned

Using a K-W-L graphic organizer is a good starting point for eliciting students' prior knowledge and determining what they knew about a particular genre, concept or persuasive techniques. Using KWL is great with inquiry planning because teachers can ask probing questions to lead student to learn new things; and after completing the reading, writing and inquiry process students can describe what new things they learned. When asking clarifying questions it encourages students to think for themselves. I let my students know I do not have all the answers. I find that facilitating discussions through using a K-W-L chart supports both my higher and lower functioning readers and writers.

After leading class discussions, I have students work in small groups and revise and illustrate their K-W-L charts which helps expand their thinking and make connections to their inquiry projects.

Venn Diagram

Using a Venn diagram allows students to organize information to compare and contrast genres, concepts or literary elements. For example, students can represent the similarities and differences of persuasion in hip-hop lyrics with editorials or advertisements.

Elements of persuasion that could be found in hip-hop lyrics, advertisements or editorials include: hooks -special attention grabbers- repetition of key words or terms, use of facts, statistics, real life experiences and analogies. I plan to conduct mini-lessons using an inter-active Venn Diagram found on the ReadWriteThink website.

(<http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/venn/>)

Vocabulary Squares

A vocabulary square is a graphic organizer divided into four quadrants that helps students demonstrate their understanding of word origins or parts of speech, synonyms or antonyms, visuals logos or icons and formal brief definition of words (Burke, 178)

Students really take ownership of words that they are able to show their understanding from multiple perspectives. I will use vocabulary squares when previewing persuasive, economic, or literary terms as well as interesting or difficult terms words found in hip-hop lyrics or terminology. Vocabulary squares can be found on the following link:

<http://englishseven.com/toolsforthought/VocabSquares.pdf>

Literary and Sound Devices

Persuasive writing is full of literary and sound devices. Students often enjoy the sound or literary pleasure of rap music. But when they come across literary or sound devices in academic text they seemed less engaged. I will create or use pre-existing graphic organizers to help students scan lyrics and text for examples of sound devices and figurative language. Through this process students should be better able to understand some of the emotional appeal found in both hip-hop and academic persuasive writing.

Constructive Responses

As per the Philadelphia School District's reading curriculum, students must be able to respond to open-ended prompts related to fiction and non-fiction text. For example, the TAG it 3 strategy graphically helps students to Turn the prompt into an opening statement; Answer the prompt; Give details, evidence and examples from the text to support their answers. The more practice students have with this method of responding to text the better they perform on their state test. Therefore, I will have students write constructive responses for standard academic text such as editorials and persuasive letters as well for advertisements and hip-hop lyrics. Refer to the link

(<http://www.phila.k12.pa.us/schools/creighton/PSSA%20tag.pdf>) to see how this strategy looks and works graphically.

To support students' reading, writing and critical thinking skills I will conduct mini-lessons on interpreting hip-hop lyrics and music videos. I will model how to respond to persuasive hip-hop lyrics and other texts. A persuasive writing rubric will be used to assess students' proficiency in convincing readers that hip-hop has either a positive or negative influence on youth culture. Furthermore, I will use the school district standardized reading strategy to help students respond to open-ended prompts about hip-hop lyrics and culture

Persuasive Writing Graphic Organizer

Using a graphic organizer to plan and draft persuasive pieces provides an effective way for students to outline their basic premise, reasons, supporting facts and opinions. Providing a structure of this type makes it easier for students to develop an effective introduction, body and conclusion for persuasive essays. I further plan to show students how to use quotes from rap lyrics as hooks or attention grabbers in their persuasive essays on whether hip-hop has a positive or negative impact on youth culture.

Hip-Hop Persuasive Investigation.

To bridge the connection between persuasion found in formal academic text with hip-hop lyrics students will use a hip-hop investigation organizer. Students will locate lyrics and analyze the premise of the lyrics, the facts and opinions used, describe what product or life style is being promoted and note if the hip hop artist has the credibility (i.e. "street cred") to promote the ideas found in the lyrics. Sample lesson plan # 2 provides more details for this inquiry approach.

Because the strategies used in the unit are varied, lessons can be easily staggered over a longer time period, or implemented as discrete lessons taught in a stand-alone fashion. The strategies in this unit can be similarly grouped into three categories:

Inquiry Strategies

Inquiry learning provides students an opportunity to improve their critical thinking skills. David S. Jake, et al. in an online article "Inquiry Based learning and the Web" posit that inquiry-based learning is a process where students formulate questions, obtain facts, and then build knowledge to reflect on their original question. (Jake et al. 15 March 2007) To support students' inquiry and research skills, I will ask them to explore the essential question "how does hip hop's persuasive appeal impact youth consumer and lifestyle choices?" An essential question such as this one frames the research and requires students to make decisions and make a plan of action. My students will complete a first person narrative research project. Through their discoveries, students will explore the aesthetics

of rap, hip-hop fashion, dance and visual arts. By using inquiry students will understand how hip-hop persuades and influences youth culture.

I will conduct mini-lessons to initiate the inquiry process. Using K-W-L to determine what students know about hip-hop, persuasion and media economics could be a good starting point. To guide students to come up with manageable I-Search, personal research projects it is important to allow for active discourse between teacher and students as well as among students in small groups. Students may be grouped according to the research interests and other variables determined by the teacher. Often many of my students know far more about formal academic concepts than they realize. It is through talk that they really make connections to what they know informally with formal academic content. For example, if I ask students what they know about persuasion and its role in the media, initially, many might not be able to articulate well on this topic. However, through questioning students about what they know about hip-hop and its influence on fashion, language, and life styles students may begin to understand the role persuasion plays in hip-hop in general and the media in particular. Discourse allows students to ask lots of questions of the teacher and for the teacher to ask further probing questions or turn questions back around to other students. It is from this discourse that students refine their own personal inquiry stance. In addition to discourse, I will have lots of secondary resources available. This may include hip-hop magazines, articles, videos and documentaries. Special media artists may visit or field trips planned to obtain primary resources. Furthermore, students will visit the library and music-media lab to conduct web searches on their inquiry topics.

Multi Media Strategies

To prepare students to create hip-hop inspired PSA's mini-lessons will be conducted either by visiting media specialists or myself on how to use cameras, audio, video clips, I-Movie and Garage Band. However, students will not be allowed to use cameras or practice using media making software until they complete storyboards for their PSA's. When creating storyboards students will consider: target audience, visual images, script, text, lyrics, sound track, transitions and special effects. Websites such as www.storycenter.org and www.streetside.org will be reviewed to offer models of student-created digital stories. Furthermore, students will discuss and analyze music videos and how hip-hop finds its way in product or lifestyle promotions. Through modeling and viewing digital stories and videos, students should be able to come up with some original ways to use persuasive techniques to promote positive lifestyle choices at school, home or in the community. Visiting media specialists will reinforce ideas I present on copyright and "fair use" practices. While covering "fair use" we will spend time discussing the history and practice of sampling in rap music and other hip hop art forms.

Assessment

Assessments will include evaluation of students' persuasive essays, research reports and their hip-hop multi-media PSA's. The I-Search will be graded for its completeness; writing standards (focus, content, organization, style and convention) and the validity of students' research. Included in the grade will be an assessment of the student's ability to use internet sources, personal interviews, direct quotes, and lyrics. A sample project description for the Hip-Hop and Persuasion I-Search Project is located on Appendix 2.

Students' persuasive essays will demonstrate understanding of hip-hop (lyrics, history, and media literacy). Students' hip-hop reviews will be assessed on how they describe and constructively analyze hip-hop lyrics, fashion, dance or other creative art forms. Ultimately students should uncover how hip-hop responds to social justice issues.

Classroom Activities / Lesson Plans

Sample Lesson Plan 1

Title: My Adidas – Finding Persuasion in Hip Hop

Grade Range and Subjects: 6th - 8th Grade Social Studies and Literacy (Reading and Writing):

Duration of Lesson: 2-4 Class Periods of at Least 45 Minutes.

The specific goals are to: identify significant persuasion tools found in hip hop lyrics; explain the relationship between hip hop art and hip-hop business; analyze how hip hop is major part of mass culture; understand the relationships between music, history, and culture; use a variety of primary sources to gather information for research topics; read and analyze lyrics and poetry and write constructive responses.

The materials and resources include but are not limited to: print and electronic lyrics, online media links, PowerPoint, pre-formatted or teacher generated graphic organizers.

Inquiry Question: What do we know about how hip-hop persuades?

Warm Up Activity – Before Reading: The Pleasures of Rap and Poetry

Students will scan the lyrics “My Adidas” then in groups of four read the lyrics out loud. After this, students will complete a graphic organizer identifying the sound devices and figurative language found in the lyrics.

Mini Lesson – Text Rendering: Persuasion Found in Hip-Hop Lyrics

Using web sites (http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2dn7d_run-dmc-my-adidas-pub_street); (http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1041994/my_adidas_story/) and PBS NewsHour Report “Hip Hop is Style,” the teacher will discuss lyrics and brief history of hip-hop’s influence on the Adidas brand. Students and teacher will read article from PBS’ NewsHour online to provide more background on the relationship between hip-hop and fashion. The teacher will ask students to identify a sentence, phrase and word that stand out in the text and discuss elements of persuasion found in the report “Hip-Hop Is Style.”

Activities - Response to Hip-Hop Is Style

Students will do a close re-reading of lyrics paying attention to how lyrics of “My Adidas” use persuasion. The teacher and students will explore persuasive words found in the lyrics as well as discuss issues related to hip-hop economics. Students’ notes will cover the following questions: What does the title “My Adidas” represent, why is it repeated so much in the rap? What mood does the rap create? Does the effect of seeing the video and hearing the rap create a different mood as compared to just reading the lyrics alone? How does it make you feel to know that the background music is more like rock as opposed to R & B? If Run DMC never agreed to produce this song, do you think the Adidas brand would have had the same popularity? What other examples of rap lyrics can you think of that use persuasive techniques to sell products or lifestyles?

After completing, the discussion questions students will write a constructive response, describing who the speaker in the lyrics, “My Adidas” is talking to and how the speaker is using persuasion to convince his audience that Adidas is a powerful brand. Students’ responses will provide at least 3 examples from the lyrics.

Wrap-up or Extension—Persuasive Hip-Hop Lyrics Investigation

As a wrap-up, students will research or locate lyrics from popular hip hop artists and identify persuasive techniques found in the lyrics. Students will complete a graphic organizer to analyze and critique persuasion elements found in hip hop lyrics. Students will be asked to describe what makes the lyrics persuasive. What is the premise of the lyrics or artist? What facts or opinions does the artist use to persuade his/her audience? Are the lyrics promoting a product, lifestyle, or both?

Sample Lesson Plan 2

Title: Persuasive Essays- Does Hip Hop Have a Positive or Negative Impact on Youth Culture.

Grade Range and Subjects 6th - 8th Grade Social Studies and Literacy (Reading and Writing)

Duration of Lesson: 4-8 Class Periods of at Least 45 Minutes.

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The specific goals include but are not limited to: identifying significant persuasion tools found in hip-hop lyrics; explaining the relationship between hip-hop art and hip-hop business; using a variety of primary sources to gather information for research topics; understanding the format and style of hip-hop persuasion and write persuasive essays.

The materials and resources include but are not limited to: print and electronic lyrics, online media links, PowerPoint, pre-formatted or teacher generated graphic organizers.

Inquiry Question: What role does persuasion have on hip-hop culture?

Warm Up Activity – K-W-L Hip-Hop and the Art of Persuasion

Students will complete a K-W-L chart listing what they already know about persuasion and hip-hop. What new things they want to know? After the project is complete they can list the new things they learned. The teacher should allow for lots of discourse and ask probing questions to help students generate extensive lists for their K-W-L charts. For the warm-up students may list 3-5 things they know about persuasion and hip hop. However, for the K-W-L chart to be considered complete, students should name at least 15 things they know and want to know about the topic. The more questions students have the better their inquiry process will progress.

Mini Lesson – Persuasive Graphic Organizers

The teacher will model how to use persuasive graphic organizers. He or she will guide students in taking a position on whether hip hop has a negative or positive impact on youth culture. The teacher will model for students how to graphically organize their thoughts and ideas for the introduction, body and conclusion of their persuasive essays. The teacher should use appropriate and reading level accessible magazine articles, web sites or previous students' essays to show both sides of the debate. Through mini-lessons, the teacher will model how to develop a premise, provide 3 reasons to support a position, and provide at least 3 facts or opinions for each reason, as well as be able to restate the premise or position in a different way. Several sample persuasive graphic organizers can be found by clicking on (<http://www.region15.org/curriculum/pwp.pdf>).

Activities: Composing Persuasive Essays Using Hip-Hop Hooks.

Students will draft and revise persuasive essays convincing readers that hip-hop either has a positive or negative impact on youth culture. Students' essays may include rap lyrics or quotes from rap artists or critics as hooks to grab and maintain readers' interest. Students will use statistics, facts and opinions to support their positions. Higher level writers will use counterarguments to support their positions. Once drafts are complete students can do self or peer reviews using a persuasive writing checklist. The checklist or rubric can show if the writer has provided an effective premise, attention-grabbing hooks, at least three reasons to support their position, organization, structure, effective writers'

voice, and few grammatical errors. A generic checklist can be found at (<http://worksheetplace.com/mf/pw1.pdf>).

Wrap up or Extension – I Search – Hip Hop and Persuasion Inquiry

After completing their persuasive essays, students may begin deeper inquiry on what role persuasion plays in hip-hop lyrics and lifestyle. Students will use the internet as well as other secondary and primary sources to write their own first person narrative about their process and discoveries.

Sample Lesson Plan 3

Title: Persuasive Hip-Hop Public Service Announcement

Grade Range and Subjects: 6th - 8th Grade Media Arts and Literacy (Reading and Writing)

Duration of Lesson: 6-8 Class Periods of at Least 45 Minutes.

The specific goals include: creating storyboards, planning, and producing and performing hip-hop inspired public service announcements (PSA's) demonstrating persuasive appeals using multi-media technology while incorporating: images, lyrics, text, music, transitions and special effects; demonstrating acceptable "fair use" practices by sampling lyrics, text, data, royalty free images and content; displaying multi-media and hip-hop art showing the persuasive power of hip hop.

Materials / Resources: LCD projection, royalty free material, Digital Camera, I Movie, Garage Band, pre-formatted or teacher generated story board templates.

Inquiry Question: How can hip-hop be used to persuade youth to do positive things?

Warm Up Activity – "Sample This- Quick Write."

Students will first silently read the quotes

Caught, now in court ' cause I stole a beat / this is a sampling sport / mail from the courts and jail / claims I stole the beats that I rail ... I found this mineral that I call a beat / I paid *zero*... (Chuck D interview—
<http://www.alternet.org/story/18830/>)

Plagiarism - Literary theft. Plagiarism occurs when a writer duplicates another writer's language or ideas and then calls the work his or her own. Copyright laws protect writers' words as their legal property. To avoid the charge of plagiarism, writers take care to credit those from whom they borrow and quote. (American Heritage Dictionary Online)

After reading the quotes, students should complete a “quick write.” Is hip hop artists use of sampled lyrics, plagiarism? Why or why not? Students will write a brief paragraph stating their views about sampling. Then they will share out loud their responses and make a T chart showing the pros and cons of sampling music used in rap lyrics.

Mini Lesson – Demonstrate “Fair Use” Practices in Hip Hop

The teacher or visiting media artist will provide mini-lessons on copyright and “fair use” guidelines for school projects. It is critical for teachers to spend time covering what is the acceptable use of music, photographs and motion media. The general limitations to be discussed include: Motion Media (such as movies, commercial, or television programs): 10 percent or 30 seconds; Text: 10 percent or 1000 words; Music, Lyrics, music videos: 10 percent or 30 seconds; Numerical data sets: 10 percent or 2,500 field or cell entries; Illustrations and photographs: 10 percent or 15 images in collection; no more than five by a single artist or photographer. (Christel, 228)

Students must understand that they still must cite or credit their sources. If they want to use more content than the above noted limitations, they must write the copyright holder for permission. To assess whether students understand acceptable “Fair Use” practices, different scenarios using hip-hop lyrics, images, and text will be presented and students will have to decide if the case is acceptable or not acceptable “Fair Use”.

Activities – Beyond the Beats and Rhymes

Students will view selected media-literacy clips of the documentary “Beyond the Beats and Rhymes”. This documentary directed by Byron Hurt in association with Independent Lens Television Services examines hip-hop and its commercial appeal. The particular segments of the film that explore issues around media literacy will provide excellent context for my students to consider ways that hip hop could promote positive non-sexist, non-homophobic messages that inspire youth to do positive social justice service learning. Clips from this film along with teacher resources may be viewed at (<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/classroom/hiphop.html>). While viewing the segments of the documentary students will take notes covering the following questions: What is the brief history of hip-hop? What does hip-hop culture represent? How did seeing the film clips change your views about how gender and violence is glorified in music videos and rap lyrics? Did seeing this film inspire you to want to find new ways to use hip-hop promote positive social change? Why or why not? What impact does the violence and aggression displayed in music videos and rap lyrics have in shaping young men and women’s identity?

Wrap up or Extension — Hip Hop Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

This unit may culminate with a hip-hop PSAs showcase. With support from a media arts partner such as Temple University’s Media Education Lab students work may be

presented at outside venues. In preparation for the showcase students may work in groups of four; students will form production teams to create a persuasive digital PSAs to deal with issues like bullying, youth violence, teen pregnancy, recycling, littering, etc. The teacher or media artist will model how to use storyboards for planning their own digital videos or pod-cast. Students may use images from their research process, persuasive essays, hip-hop critiques as well as create their own material. They will use multi-media images and present live performances of raps, spoken word, hip-hop inspired dance moves to reflect their inquiry findings.

Annotated Works Cited / Resources List

Works Cited / Teacher Resources

- American Heritage Dictionary of English Language. 2006. Houghton Mifflin Company. 06 Jun 2008 <<http://dictionary.reference.com/>>. Provides a useful online dictionary reference source.
- Burke, James. *Tools of Thought: graphic organizers for your classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002. A book written by Jim Burke of Burlingame High School, California, is a must have for teachers using graphic organizers for English and Humanities content.
- Christel, Mary. *Lessons Plans for Creating Media-Rich Classroom*. Ed. Mary Christel, Scott Sullivan. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 2007. Provides practical ideas for incorporating media literacy in classrooms. It comes with a companion teacher's resources disk.
- Condry Ian. *Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalizations*. Chapel Hill, N.C: Duke University Press, 2006. This book examines the influence of hip-hop in Japan and its global influence on popular culture.
- Cooper, Martha. *Hip Hop Files: Photographs, 1979-1984*. Cologne, New York: From Here to Fame Publishing Co., 2004. This picture book provides vivid images of hip-hop art and culture, from graffiti, to break dancing.
- Dyson, Michael. *Know What I Mean? : Reflections on Hip-Hop*. New York: Basic Civitas Book, 2007. This book contains an introduction by Jay Z and afterward by Nas. This book explores hip hop from the academic perspective, but makes it relevant to youth and older hip-hop enthusiasts.
- Forell, K. Leigh Hamm. "Ideas in Practice: Bringin' Hip-Hop to the Basic." *Journal of Developmental Education* 30(Winter 2006): 28-33. This article is geared toward college settings, but still provides practical insights for using hip-hop discourse to build classroom community.

Hayes, C. Personal Interview. 05. May 2008. I quoted one of my students and he was excited that I valued his thought enough to place them in my paper. It is great to use students as sources for your research as well as use students' work to model the inquiry process.

International Reading Association & National Council of Teachers of English. ReadWriteThink: Student Materials: Venn Diagram. 16 Feb. 2007. <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/venn/index.html>. NCTE web site offers valuable tools like this interactive Venn diagram. This link could be used to model for students how to use Venn diagram to compare and contrast different music genres or persuasion styles.

Jake, David, Pennington Mark E., Knodle Howard. A. Using the Internet to Promote Inquiry-Based Learning. 15 Feb 2007. <<http://www.biopoint.com/inquiry/ibr.html>> This e-paper describes a structured approach to using the internet to support inquiry-based learning.

Kelley, Robin D. "Introduction." *Harlem on the Verge*. comp. Alice Attie. New York: Quick Lane Press, 2003. This picture book provides excellent images of hip-hop's influence on Harlem's changing landscape.

Kitwana, Bakari. *Why White Kids Love Hip Hop*. New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2005. This book provides critical insights into hip-hop urban and suburban growth and development. This book would be useful for teachers and students' research.

McLeod, Kembrew. "How Copyright Law Changed Hip Hop." *An interview with Public Enemy's Chuck D and Hank Shocklee about hip-hop, sampling, and how copyright law altered the way hip-hop artists made their music* 01-06-2004 1-4. 16 May 2008 <<http://www.alternet.org/story/18830/>>. This interview with Chuck D provides background information about sampling and the tensions around copyrighting in hip-hop art. This article could be useful for student research and mini-lessons on copyright issues.

Parker, Diane. *Planning for Inquiry: It's not an oxymoron*. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 2007. This book provides tips and strategies for implementing inquiry at the lower and upper elementary grade levels.

Reaching the Hip-Hop Generation. *The MEE Report*. Philadelphia: MEE Production Inc. 1991. This report provides insight on hip-hop the generation and covers strategies of delivering communications to the urban youth market.

Sperry, Chris. "The Search for Truth - Teaching media literacy, core content and essential for healthy democracy." *Threshold* 8(Winter 2006): 8-11. This article provides

strategies and perspectives of using media literacy in core subject matters such as social studies and language arts.

Walker, Tshombe. "Hip Hop and Rap Music Industry." *African American Jazz and Rap*. ed. James L Conyers, Jr. North Carolina: McFarland & Company Inc., 2001. This article provides a balance scholarly and practical analysis of the hip-hop industry.

Yee, Lee Sirmans Franklin. "Introduction." *One Planet Under the Groove- Hip hop and contemporary art*. comp. Karen Kelly. Bronx: Bronx Museum of the Arts, 2001. This publication accompanies a provocative exhibition of hip-hop art.

Student's Bibliography / Resources

Baker, Soren. *The History of Rap and Hip Hop*. New York: Lucent, 2006. This book written for younger readers chronicles the growth and development of hip hop culture.

Fresh, Doug E. *Think Again (Think Kid Hop)*. New York: Scholastic Inc, 2002. This exciting children's picture book provides a good model for positive hip-hop messages. A rap along CD accompanies the book.

Giovanni, Nikki. *Hip-Hop Speaks to Children With Audio CD: A Celebration of Poetry with a Beat (A Poetry Speaks Experience)*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2008. This children's book combines elements of poetry and hip hop my students will enjoy. The companion CD contains voice over contributions by both poets and hip-hop artists.

Scott, Damion, and Kris Ex. *How to Draw Hip-Hop*. New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 2006. This book provides drawing and illustrations techniques for creating hip-hop art. Students may use this book for design ideas for their PSA's.

The Vibe History of Hip-Hop. Comp. Vibe Magazine. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1999. This compilation provides great illustrations and accompanying text of the story behind the hip-hop movement. Students could use this book for their inquiry projects.

Student Web and Media Resources

Burke, James "Vocabulary Squares." *tools for thought*. 2006. Heinemann. 06 Jun 2008 <<http://englishseven.com/toolsforthought/VocabSquares.pdf>>. This handout can be used to support students' hip-hop and academic vocabulary skills development.

Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats & Rhymes. Dir. Byron Hurt. Perf. 50 Cent, Carmen Ashurt Watson, Dr Jelani Cobb Chuck D. Dr Michael Eric Dyson, Jada Kiss, Mos Def. DVD. Independent Lens, 2007. This film explores issues around gender, violence

and media literacy. I plan to show limited segments of the film to give context for our students' inquiry projects.

"Hip-Hop Style" What is Cool?" *NewsHour's Hip-Hop Report* The Online NewsHour. <<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/infocus/fashion/hiphop.html>>. This hip-hop report focuses on the role hip-hop plays in fashion. From this online report there is a link to video clip of news coverage about hip-hop fashion trends.

Just for Kicks - My Adidas Story. Dir. Thierry Daher. Perf. Sneaker Collectors, Hip Hop Artists, Brand Marketers. Online Video. Caidproductions, 2008. This brief documentary provides an overview of the Adidas hip-hop and sneaker connection. This film can be uploaded at http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1041994/my_adidas_story.

"Persuasive Writing Checklist." *Free Worksheets*. Worksheetplace.com. 17 Jun 2008 <<http://worksheetplace.com/mf/pw1.pdf>>. This site provides printable checklist and worksheets to support students during the writing process.

"Persuasive Writing Graphic Organizer." *Region 15 Curriculum Resources*. Regional School District 15 Middlebury and Southbury, CT. 17 Jun 2008 <<http://www.region15.org/curriculum/pwp.pdf>>. This link provides several examples of persuasive writing graphic organizers.

Run DMC - My Adidas Pub. Online Video. Dailymotion, 2006. This video adaptation recorded in France can be uploaded online at http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2dn7d_run-dmc-my-adidas-pub_street. This 45 second clip shows the global reach hip-hop commodities have in the marketplace.

Street Side Stories. 19 Jun 2008 <www.streetside.org>. This site helps give elementary and middle school students a voice through digital story telling.

Center for Digital Stories. Center for Digital Story Telling. 19 Jun 2008 <www.storycenter.org>. This site provides digital resources for teachers and students.

"Tag It A 3." *PSSA Test Taking Strategies*. School District of Philadelphia. 06 Jun 2008 <<http://www.phila.k12.pa.us/schools/creighton/PSSA%20tag.pdf>>. This graphic organizer provides the process for responding to fiction and non-fiction text.

Appendix 1: Pennsylvania and School District of Philadelphia Curriculum Standards

Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening and Viewing Standards

Standard: Reading #1 - Apply effective reading strategies to comprehend, organize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate texts to construct meaning.

Standard: Reading #2 - Read a variety of materials including fiction and non-fiction, classic and contemporary texts from a diversity of cultures (especially African, Asian/Pacific, European, Latino, and Native American cultures), communication systems, and functional texts.

Standard: Reading #3 - Read for a variety of purposes: to seek information; to apply knowledge; to enhance enjoyment; to engage in inquiry and research; to expand world views; to understand individuality, shared humanity, and the heritage of the people in our city as well as the contributions of a diversity of groups to American culture and other cultures throughout the world.

Standard: Writing #1 - Plan, draft, revise, and publish writing using correct grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, and effective vocabulary, appropriate to the purpose, context, and audience.

Standard: Writing #2 - Write for academic, personal, social, civic, and school-to-career purposes.

Standard: Writing #3 - Write in a variety of forms including journals, essays, stories, letters, plays, poems, and reports using figurative, descriptive, literary, and technical language.

Standard: Writing #4 - Conduct and document inquiry-based research using oral, print, and communications systems.

Standard: Speaking #1 - Speak for a variety of purposes including informing, persuading, questioning, problem solving, sharing ideas and stories, reaching consensus, and responding sensitively and respectfully using language appropriate to the context, audience, and purpose.

Standard: Speaking #2 - Speak using effective communication skills including enunciation, inflection, volume, fluency, and non-verbal gestures.

Standard: Listening #1 - Listen actively for a variety of purposes including comprehending, interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, responding effectively, and for enjoyment

Standard: Viewing -View media, technology, and live performances for a variety of purposes including gathering information, making informed judgments, processing information, and for enjoyment.

Social Studies Standards

Culture - Demonstrate an understanding of culture and how culture affects the individual and society.

Time, Continuity, and Change - Analyze historical events, conditions, trends and issues to understand the way human beings view themselves, their institutions, and others, now and over time, to enable them to make informed choices and decisions.

People, Places, and Environment - Apply geographic skills and knowledge to demonstrate an understanding of how geography affects people, places, movement, and environments.

Individuals, Groups and Institutions Demonstrate an understanding of the role of individuals, groups, and institutions and how their actions and interactions exert powerful influences on society.

Art Standards

Media, Technique, Processes - Understand and apply art media, techniques, and processes.

Reflecting on Artwork - Observe, reflect, and value the characteristics, meanings, uses, and merits of one's own artwork and artwork from diverse cultural groups and historical periods.

Appendix 2: Hip-Hop and Persuasion I-Search Paper Project Description

The following sections must be included for this project:

1. My Question (becomes the introduction) What do you want to find out about the connection between hip-hop art and the art of persuasion? Describe why you were interested in this topic and how it connects with your understanding of how hip-hop is shaped by persuasion. You need to focus on one essential question. For example, why did hip-hop spread in New York and other big cities? How does hip-hop influence fashion styles? What attracted white people to hip-hop? How does hip-hop culture influence consumer product and life style choices? How are hip-hop and the media connected?

How do certain hip-hop artists use positive messages to influence and inspire youth? (1-2 paragraphs)

2. My Search Process In this section of the paper, describe the steps you took to complete the research. Make your paper come alive. You will write in the first person narrative describing the sources you began with and discussing the people you interviewed. What parts of the search process were difficult, what parts were easy, and what part of the search process was most interesting? Also describe how your questions may have changed as a result of our searches and give credit to anyone who helped you in the search process (Library staff member, hip-hop fan, media artist, teacher, etc.) (2-3 paragraphs)

3. What I've Learned - Focus on two or three major conclusions you have drawn from your research topic and support them with examples and arguments that will help the reader understand how you arrived at those conclusions. Try to connect what you found out with the original question and suggest further areas to explore. (2-3 paragraphs)

4. What This Means to Me Describe how you developed as a researcher. Explain how this work will affect the way you think about how hip-hop is shaped by persuasion in the future. Describe which of the things you learned means the most to you and why this information is important to you. Also explain how what you have learned has affected the way you view the connections between persuasion and hip-hop. What new appreciation do you have for how hip-hop is shaped by persuasion? (1-2 paragraphs)

5. References Complete a Works Cited page listing all the references you used. There must be an in-text citation for each of your sources.

I-Search Paper Expectations

Research: You must include all the required sources in a meaningful way show the connections between persuasion and hip-hop. Your paper must have a clear question (thesis or topic) that describes what you want to learn.

Format: Your **3-4 page** paper must include the required parts of the I-Search listed in the Guidelines above. Each part must reflect a real attempt at in-depth thought.

Neatness: Your typewritten paper should be free of grammatical and structural errors through extensive proofreading. (*12 pt/double spaced, standard margins, etc.*)

Deadlines: The draft of your research topic and question is due in one week 1. The draft of your research process is due in 2 weeks; the draft of what you have learned and what this means to me is due in 3 weeks; the final list of your references is due in weeks. The final paper is due in 4weeks. (this will break the project into junks and help you with a timeline, for planning your work)

Citations: You must use a **minimum of 4** sources of information. One must be a personal interview with an “expert” on your topic and three must be from a book, reference book, magazine article or an online Website - Do not plagiarize, please cite any sources where you obtain your information from.