



VH1 Rock Docs: Bling'd: Blood, Diamonds, and Hip Hop

A VH1 Special

Lessons for High School Social Studies Classes

What's so Hip (Hop) about Diamonds?
Lesson 1

Note to Teachers: Note to teachers: Please view this videotape for appropriateness for your classes. This lesson can be adapted for various age groups. Discretion on the part of the teacher is strongly recommended.

Objectives

- Students will develop an understanding of the “Hip Hop image” by viewing 13 images of Hip Hop artists from the VH1 website. This understanding will include being able to describe what fashion, jewelry, etc. make up this image.
- Students will then develop an understanding of the “Corporate America” image as described by “Dress for Success” authors.
- Students will compare their two images and be able to distinguish qualitative differences, including references to jewelry.
- Upon finishing the video, students will be able to list five reasons why Hip Hop artists use the images (including jewelry). Students will come to understand the cultural issues surrounding the acquisition of diamonds from regions involved in the conflict regions of Africa and the effect this knowledge has on Hip Hop artists.

Materials

- Videotape of VH1's *Bling'd: Blood, Diamonds, and Hip Hop*
- Television and VCR
- Color prints of the 13 images located here (http://www.vh1.com/shows/dyn/vh1_rock_docs/series_photos.jhtml - then click on Bling Bling photos. Print out or show photos on screen for students) if internet access is not available for students.
- If internet access is not available, print out the "Dress for Success" article here: http://www.quintcareers.com/dress_for_men.html

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Students should be somewhat familiar with Hip Hop music and/or artists.

Procedures

- This lesson should be started in class before students view the VH1 special. It is meant as a preparation for students to consider the image of Hip Hop artists. Students will begin the lesson by viewing the 13 images of Hip Hop artists. Use Discussion Questions below to compare this image with the standard "Corporate America" image of fashion. (Students will read the article listed above).
- Have students view and listen to the special *Bling'd: Blood, Diamonds, and Hip Hop*.
- Students should discuss the video and compare their views with what they thought before the video. Use the discussion questions below.

Discussion Questions (before viewing the program):

1. What is the image of Hip Hop?
2. How does the fashion of the Hip Hop artist contribute to his appeal?
3. What is the role of jewelry (in particular diamonds) in this fashion?
4. What does the article, Dress for Success, say about wearing jewelry?
5. Why do you think jewelry is not to be displayed in a job interview?
6. Look around your class (or school) and give examples of jewelry that is displayed. Does your school have any regulations about the wearing of specific jewelry? Why do you think they do, if this is the case? If you aren't certain, perhaps your teacher or principal can be interviewed for an answer.
7. What image comes to your mind when you see a diamond?

Discussion Questions (after viewing the program):

- What is your image of Hip Hop?
- What, initially, do the Hip Hop artists say is their reason for wearing diamonds? How does the fashion of the Hip Hop artist contribute to his appeal?
- What is the source of the conflict in Sierra Leone? How does this conflict effect the diamond market?
- What is the definition of a “conflict” or “blood” diamond?
- What effect does the knowledge of this conflict seem to have on the Hip Hop artists in the program?
- What image comes to your mind when you see a diamond?

Further Research and other related lessons: Students may find the information on their own (age appropriate), or begin by using some of these selected sites. In addition, there are two other lessons related to this show available.

- PBS Lesson on Blood Diamonds
- Movie Review - Blood Diamonds
- Amnesty International Lesson on Conflict Diamonds

National Standards for History/Social Studies
National Center for History in the Schools - <http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/>

Era 10 – Contemporary United States (1968 to the present), Standard 2D. The student understands contemporary American culture. Student will analyze how social change and renewed ethnic diversity has affected artistic expression and popular culture (Analyze cause and effect relationships.)

Era 9 Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s), Standard 1B
The student understands how the social changes of the postwar period affected various Americans. Explore the influence of popular culture and analyze the role of the mass media in homogenizing America culture. (Analyze cause-and-effect relationships)



This lesson plan was created by Tim Dugan, 2005 Cable in the Classroom National Teacher Advisor and Social Studies teacher at Princeton High School, Cincinnati, OH.