



VH1:

And You Don't Stop - 30 Years of Hip-Hop
Part 2
VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12
Episode Title: "Bring the Noise"

Lesson 2 – Hip Hop and Political Activism

NOTE TO THE TEACHERS: The multi-media resources used in conjunction with these lesson plans may include references to substance abuse, violent acts, illegal activities, and topics of a sexual and/or political nature. Some academic communities may consider the material inappropriate for educational use in the classroom, thus you are encouraged to review the resources before presenting them to your students. If necessary, consult with an administrator, send a letter/waiver to the parents/guardians, or choose the specific resources that will enhance your lesson and are acceptable for classroom use.

Teacher Toolbox (websites & texts related to Hip Hop & Civil Rights Movement):

Hip-Hop America by Nelson George

Vibe History of Hip Hop edited by Alan Light

Rap & Hip Hop: The Voice of a Generation by S. Ayazi-Hashjin

Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years 1954-1965 by Juan Williams

"Eyes on the Prize" (video series)

"VH1's And You Don't Stop: 30 Years of Hip Hop – Part 2" (video)

<http://civilliberty.about.com/od/activism/> (link about political activism)

www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAnonviolent.htm (non violent resistance)

www.vh1.com/shows/events/hip_hop_honors/2004 (hip hop timeline)

www.ohhla.com (lyrics)

www.hiphopsite.com

www.daveyd.com

www.sohh.com

www.hiphop-directory.com

www.rapdict.org (rap dictionary)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hip_hop

<http://rap.about.com>

<http://civilliberty.about.com/cs/activism/ht/ACT072503.htm> (5-Step Action Plan for Political Activism)

www.Congress.org (locate your local representative)

Internet Search Engines: google, dogpile, alta vista, & ask jeeves

Objectives

- Students will identify and employ non violent methods/tactics to bring about social change as exemplified in hip hop culture
- Students will examine hip hop as a form of political activism
- Students will be able to identify the various musical/lyrical approaches (radical or conservative) used by hip hop artists to address social injustices
- Students will gain an understanding of the social impact hip hop made on American culture, which forced institutional change for the common good

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies Thematic Strands:

- Culture
- Time Continuity & Change
- People, Places, and Environments
- Individual Development and Identity
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Global Connections
- Civic Ideals & Practices

Materials

- VHS/VCR Player
- Television
- Audio Playback Equipment
- *VH1's And You Don't Stop: 30 Years of Hip Hop – Part 2*
- Web-Based Lesson Materials
- Writing Utensils (pencils/pens)
- Notebooks/Paper
- Internet Access
- Overhead Projector, Screen, & Transparency Materials

Procedures

1. **This lesson should follow the completion of Lesson 1 or the viewing of VH1's And You Don't Stop: 30 Years of Hip Hop – Part 2*

(a) On a transparency, write the following: **Henry David Thoreau & Non Violent Resistance**. Seek prior knowledge from students through inquiry about each topic. List the students' responses on the transparency. **If you discover that many of the students are not familiar with either topic, move on to (b).*

(b) On a transparency, provide a definition of Non Violent Resistance – *a method of social change that employs strategies such as strikes, sit-ins, boycotts, and civil disobedience*. Connect this definition to the example of the hip hop community's boycott of the Grammy Awards, revealed on VH1's And You Don't Stop: 30 Years of Hip Hop – Part 2. Discuss the reasons for the boycott, the support of the boycott (What motivated people to become politically involved?), and the results of this non violent method to promote change

in society. Record the student responses and ideas/issues shared in this discussion.

(c) Distribute a copy of Henry David Thoreau's essay "Civil Disobedience" (1849). *Reference www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAnonviolent.htm for information on Henry David Thoreau and the essay. Explain how he attempted to morally justify peaceful resistance to unjust laws or practices in society; his theory inspired many Americans to employ these tactics to fight against slavery, trade unions, and for women's suffrage. Ask students to read the essay. Then, connect Thoreau's approach to hip hop culture and the desire of some artists to inspire people to resist unjust laws, practices, or social ills through music. Reference artists that were mentioned in the VH1 program, i.e. Public Enemy, David Banner, The Ghetto Boys, and Run DMC. Like the words in Thoreau's essay, how can the lyrics of their songs, influence human behavior and inspire or motivate people? Record the students' responses.

(d) *Optional -Teacher may choose to play a political hip hop song to stimulate more dialogue or assist the students in making the connection. Possible song selections range from radical to conservative: Public Enemy's "Don't Believe the Hype," The Ghetto Boys' "My Mind is Playing Tricks on Me," Jadakiss' "Why?" or Run DMC's "Hard Times." Ask the students to respond to the questions listed below, after listening to the song(s):

- Is this song a form of political activism?
- Is it a non-violent method to bring about social change or resist unjust laws/practices in society?
- What issues or reasons could motivate people in the hip hop community to become politically active?
- How can hip hop be used as a medium to communicate with people, address social injustices, influence our political system, and possibly bring about a change in society?
- What issues or reasons could inspire you to become politically active?

2. Ask the students to follow in the footsteps of Thoreau and members of the hip hop community by becoming involved in an issue that they care about and take a risk to bring about a positive change or solution to this problem (non-violent tactics only). The problem or issue can be local, national, or global. After the students identify an issue that interests them, research it.

(b) Guide the students in developing an action plan for their political activism. Refer to the 5-Step Action Plan format at <http://civilliberty.about.com/cs/activism/ht/ACT072503.htm> Students will write a Plan of Action.

Extension

- Students may write a letter, send a copy of their plan of action, or email their local representative at www.Congress.org to resolve this problem or issue.



*This lesson plan was created by Charity Jones, Secondary Educator,
at Oak Park High School, Oak Park, Michigan.*

