



Ice -T's Rap School

VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12
Lesson 1

Note to Teachers: The programs viewed in conjunction with these lesson plans may include references, consistent with the eras portrayed, to substance abuse, violent acts, and topics of a sexual and/or political nature. Because this may be considered inappropriate for classroom use in some communities, you are encouraged to review the programs before presenting them to your students, and if necessary, choose those sections that enhance your lesson and are acceptable for use in your classroom.

Objectives

- Students will learn the history of rap and gain an understanding of the components of rap music including the social element.
- Students will analyze “Power” by Ice -T to better understand the content, rhyme scheme, melody, and rhythm of rap music.
- Students will experience the correlation between Shakespeare’s poetry and rap music of today.
- Students will discuss the power of autobiography and how music can be used as a vehicle to help us express our personal lives and our culture.

National Standards:

3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Materials

- VHS VCR Player
- Television
- Audio playback equipment
- VH1 *Ice-T's Rap School*
- Pens/pencils, blank paper (students)
- Student copies of the Shakespeare Sonnet #30 (provided below)
- Student copies of the lyric sheet to “Power” (provided below)
- Student copies of the Understanding Rap Worksheet (provided below)
- Teacher copy of the Understanding Rap Worksheet Answer Key (provided below)
- Ice - T Recording of “Power” (available on iTunes or CDs listed below)

Prior Knowledge

- Students understand basic musical terms such as melody, rhythm, and form.

Procedures

1. Cue segment 1 and 2 of VH1 *Ice – T's Rap School*.
2. Play “Power” by Ice -T. Have students discuss what they heard in the music. (Focus on musical terms, including dynamics, instrumentation, lyrics, rhymes, rhythm and form.) Write down their responses on the board.
3. Distribute the lyric sheet to “Power” (below). Discuss the basic components of rap:
 - Beat
 - Rhyme pattern (Often rap uses alliteration, assonance, and rhyme patterns.)

Discuss autobiographies and what they tell us about individuals:

- What do we know from this song and the VH1 program about Ice - T?
- How does Ice - T express his life, culture, and personality in his music?
- How is this music autobiographical?

Other possible discussion topics include:

- Emotion
- Cultural/social history of rap

4. Have students work in groups to understand and analyze rhyme structure of “Power.” Then as a class discuss each group’s findings related to rhyme, content, beat, rhythmic structure, and instrumentation of the song.

5. Distribute the Shakespeare Sonnet #30 (below). Have students take turns reading Sonnet #30 out loud to class. Discuss and analyze the sonnet in class using the following guidelines:
 - Rhythmic structure/organization of sonnet
 - What is Shakespeare saying?
 - Compare sonnet #30 with Ice - T's "Power" lyrics: How are they similar rhythmically? How do they both express emotions? Are they both autobiographical?
6. Have the class take turns each saying a few lines of the sonnet with a rap beat, similar to Ice - T's rap music. (Teacher can then have students add a beat to the rap and have some students clap/tap the beat and others take turns saying the rap/ sonnet.)
7. Distribute the Understanding Rap Music Worksheet (below) and have students complete the worksheet.

Extensions:

Discuss famous people's autobiographies. This will help students start to get ideas for their own rap, which students will write in the following two lesson plans.

Supplemental Resources:

- Ice -T's official website: <http://www.icet.com/>
- Recordings: *The Iceberg/Freedom of Speech...Just Watch What You Say* (1989), *Power* (1988), *Gangsta Rap* (2006)
- For additional information about autobiographies: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autobiography>

National Standards for Music Education

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

“Power”

by Ice -T

I'm livin' large as possible, posse unstoppable
Style topical, vividly optical
Listen, you'll see 'em sometimes I'll be 'em
Cops, critics and punks, never ever wanta see me in POWER
Well, that's too bad, Apocalypse Now I'm back and I'm mad
We're comin', you're runnin' cold and cunning
Ice T on the mic, TopGunning
After your neck, checkin' respect, makin' you sweat
Rhyme Syndicate boy in effect
The rap motivator, teacher, talker, night rhyme stalker
Words thrillin', so real they're chillin', the hit author
Gettin' louder than a shot gun, you don't want none
RHYME PAYS was the name of the album
But that was number one, this is the number two
The posse grew, we're gonna break through

Power

Somebody line up the suckers who refuse to recognize the truth
Tie up the punks who refuse to understand the youth
My posse's growin' and it's gettin' larger every day
Detroit, Chi-Town, Pittsburgh, Houston, L.A.
Come on, come on, come on, toys, let's play
Circle the calendar, perpetrator doomsday
ICE T fool man of my own full grown
I cause havoc when I speak upon the microphone
I'm outspoken, no jokin', get in my face your jaw will get broken
Layin' it, sayin' it, then you're playing it
Lyrics so heavy that you might try weighin' it
Hated by many but I hate 'em back
Loved by troopers who know where it's at
You might like me, might think I'm wack
But don't step to me 'cause the boy stays strapped
I'm taking no shorts, hatin' the courts, hatin' the judges
Punk DA's with their personal grudges
I hate the clubs that think with their butts
No hats, no jeans, no sneakers, no what?
No beepers, no gold? Yo kiss my ass
We'll wait and see who gets the last laugh
We'll have the power

Sonnet #30

By William Shakespeare

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste;
Then can I drown an eye (unused to flow)
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,
And moan th'expense of many a vanished sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee (dear friend)
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

Understanding Rap Music Answer Key

Match Terms with Definitions

DJ	Brings the music
Scratch	Shows beat; sound on record
Rapper	Talk in rhyme to a set beat
Ice – T	Rap Performer
Hip Hop	Another name for Rap
MC	Introduce songs and rap between
Manager	Organizes the show
Autobiography	Person writes about themselves
Shakespeare	Elizabethan writer
Rhyme	Phonetic similarity between words
Instrument track	Beat recorded
Sample	Recorded music
Sonnet	Poetic form

Understanding Rap Music Worksheet

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Sonnet	Rap Performer



These standards-based materials are provided through a partnership with MENC: The National Association for Music Education. This lesson plan was created by MENC member Dr. Katherine Sinsabaugh, Adjunct at CW Post Long Island University and Teachers College Columbia University, 325 Riverside Drive #53, New York, NY 10025, Sinkny@aol.com.