



Ice -T's Rap School

VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12
Lesson 2

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 understand how composers use their personal background to create music.
- Students will gain insight into how rap music tells both a personal and cultural story.
- Students will better understand Nelson Mandela and apartheid.
- Students will write an autobiography about themselves using a rap rhyme scheme.

National Standards:

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 lyric sheet for “Preparing to Die” (provided below)
- Ice-T recording of “Preparing to Die” (available on iTunes or CD’s listed below)
- Response by President Nelson Mandela to the 1994 Peace Lecture of the WCRP (South African Chapter)
<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mandela/1994/sp940807.html>

Prior Knowledge

- Students have completed Lesson 1.
- Students understand basic musical terms such as melody, rhythm, and form.

Procedures

1. Cue segment 3 and 4 of VH1 *Ice – T’s Rap School*.
2. Lead a class discussion around the following questions:
 - What are the group dynamics? Did they work together?
 - What are the positive/negative components of group dynamics?
 - How is the South Bronx different from what students expected?
 - Are they tolerant of different cultures, races, and religions?
 - What did you notice about the rap music and the people that helped to make the students successful?
3. Distribute the lyric sheet for “Preparing to Die” (below). As a class analyze rhyme structure and then move into a discussion of what makes this an autobiography. What is Ice -T telling the listener about himself?
4. Read the response (see website above) by President Nelson Mandela to the 1994 Peace Lecture of the WCRP (South African Chapter). After reading his speech, have students discuss apartheid and Nelson Mandela’s role and how it relates to Ice-T’s “Preparing to Die.”

5. Have students begin to write their own autobiographical rap rhymes. Remind students that raps are autobiographical talk songs and are spoken, not sung. Directions:
- Find a **positive** topic that you know enough about to keep talking.
 - Tell your story in rhyme. Most raps rhyme in couplets. That means lines rhyme two at a time. Lines one and two rhyme with each other, but not with the other lines. Lines 3 and 4 rhyme with each other, but not with the other lines, etc.
 - The beat can be different in different lines. Some lines can be short; others, long.
 - Suggestions: To stress a point you might want to add a refrain. A refrain is a group of lines that remain the same and are repeated throughout the song to stress a specific idea.

Extensions:

Read autobiographies of Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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>
- For additional information on Nelson Mandela: <http://www.anc.org.za/people/mandela.html>
- For additional information on apartheid:<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apartheid>

National Standards for Music Education

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

“Prepared To Die”

by Ice - T

Watch me flip and rip
On the freedom tip
Open your mind
See the point of the ice pick
I stand tall
While my brothers
Still choose to crawl
Black power, it 7s in effect y'all
But you don't understand
You're still a slave to the man
Prepare for revolution
Some sucker say we're free
I gotta disagree
Half my posse's in the penitentiary
So I'm a drop and kick the science
With defiance
Because I have no alliance
With suckas who choose
Not to act Black
When they are Black
Get out my face with that
You better ease back
Cause Mandela did 27 hard ones
Not in a windowed room
But in a barred one
While his wife had tears in her eyes
The man is a hero
He needs a Nobel Prize
But that will never happen
So I'm gonna keep rappin'
Freein' my brothers' minds
From their entrapment
To silence the Ice, they'll probably
Put a bullet in me
But I'm prepared to die
And Mandela's free!



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.