

Lesson Plan #1: Poetry and Hip-Hop

Tracy Hayward
English—10th Grade
25 students—55 minutes

OBJECTIVE:

The purpose of this lesson is for students to discover the similarities between hip-hop and poetry. Through this exercise students will learn the power of spoken word and how it can serve empower them as individuals, and consequently, bring people together as a community to be heard. Both of these clips purposely have no mention of drugs or alcohol, as I want the first few exercises to be about the art forms not the content within them.

MATERIALS:

- *Video clip of slam poetry found at <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan-june00/poetryboxfreestyling.html> “So What(for the White Dude who said this ain’t poetry)”
- *Video player
- *Video clip of Lauryn Hill rapping

STEPS:

1. Set up video player before class
2. Introduce the purpose of the lesson to students. Inform them that they will be comparing the two in their journals. Make sure they know that they should be trying to form an opinion. 5 mins.
3. Play slam poetry clip.5 Mins
4. Give students about five minutes to respond to clip in their journals
5. Play music clip of Lauryn Hill rapping her video. 5 mins
6. Give students about five minutes to respond.
7. Now ask students to compare and contrast both styles in their journal.5 mins.
8. Have students read some of their reflections from their journals. 10 mins.
9. Discuss in class: How can these forms of expression be empowering? Which one of these two expression forms best suits you?10-15 min.
10. For homework ask students to write a short personal rap or poem about themselves. Sharing a few the next day will be optional.

LITERACY ASPECT:

Students will analyze two different art forms and create a sound opinion of both. Students will write in journals to reflect on video clips. Our class discussion will center on how different forms of expression can be empowering to each individual and how this is tied to entire communities. Students will create their own raps or poems in order to see the freedom of this form of expression. The discussion in class is key to the lesson. This will allow for a bit of debate, which is geared toward developing verbal skills and developing argument skills.

ASSESSMENT:

By our discussion in class and the reading of the journals, I hope that I will be able to see that students understand the connection between poetry and hip-hop. I will check journals weekly to make sure all students are keeping up and understanding the assignments. The class discussion will really allow me know if they are understanding the lesson, and I will be purposely setting students up for light debate. I will also be asking a lot questions that will make students question and think about these issues.

REFLECTION: I worry that the connection is too obvious for some, however, if I enlighten a few that satisfies me. I am excited to introduce poetry in a way that is more modern to my students and I think comparing to a famous hip-hop artists rap will get them interested. The homework assignment is part of a larger assignment I am planning that will incorporate different reflections that will later be tied together to make a book