

**Revolution through Hip-Hop:
How Hip-Hop is Used as an Outcry Against Things in Our Students' Communities**

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INTRODUCTION

Thirty years after its inception, hip-hop music has continued to take our nation by storm. The popularity and the strong influence of hip-hop now cut across racial and social class lines. Its influence is so pervasive that no one, young or old, has hope of escaping it. Currently, however, much of the hip-hop music that is presented on the radio and in the media fails to deliver a message that pertains to significant social or political issues in the communities nationwide.

I am designing this unit with the intent of teaching students to see hip-hop as a valid and legitimate form of poetry and as a powerful form of self-expression. Moreover, this unit will strive to show students that African-American and Latino hip-hop artists have traditionally used hip-hop as a means of expressing political dissent and as a way of illuminating the problems that plague urban communities. "Many socio-political rappers...offer cogent analysis and commentary on race, poverty, and discrimination..." (Aldridge 1). As the unit progresses, students will come to understand the attitudes and the rhetoric that hip-hop artists inserted in their music about salient socio-political issues affecting their communities. They will come to realize that the lyrics to hip-hop music can transcend a focus on materialism, consumerism, and irresponsibility.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of exploring the study of social and political consciousness in hip-hop music is to raise student achievement, interest, and participation. I firmly believe that student interest can be captivated and maintained by reading about hip-hop music, which is a subject that is widely embraced and enjoyed by virtually all of the students that I teach. Consequently, students can engage in reading comprehension skills, critical thinking skills, and introspective/self-reflective thinking while studying a topic that they love and are familiar with. The study of social and political themes enveloped in hip-hop music lends itself to relevant academic goals and objectives that are in alignment with statewide TEKS objectives. The objectives that will be covered as students work through this unit are as follows:

- ELA.6.1.02 Participating in academic discussions, responding to divergent ideas and opinions, using higher-level thinking skills and content specific discourse
- ELA.6.1.10 Recognizing the diversity of experiences and re-examining his/her own beliefs/opinions/ideas
- ELA.2.16 Generalizing and representing main ideas
- ELA.6.2.22 Interpret, represent, and compare ideas, issues, and cross-cultural themes in text
- ELA.6.3.01 Write in creative and academic forms to address specific audiences and purposes using standard organization structures

RATIONALE

There is no disputing the fact that hip-hop serves as the soundtrack for the lives of young people in America and in many other parts of the world. Today, much of the hip-hop that boasts the greatest record sales and largest amounts of air play glorifies violence, alcohol/drug usage, materialism, and misogyny. However, many hip-hop artists strive to expose social problems such as poverty, corruption, racism, and injustice as a whole through their music. “Though often blamed for sullyng youth values and promoting anti-social behavior, hip-hop remains a fountain of inspiration and hope, a prominent vehicle used by young people to find their voice and place in the world” (Watkins 164). The musical genre of hip-hop is replete with lyrics infused with passion, strong emotion, and a push for social change and awareness. “...Hip-hop offers an especially lucid language of defiance and resistance to oppressive forces that Chicanos, blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other racialized communities alike have used to express their discontent with their environment...Lyrics about police brutality, racism, and harassment form the political core of rap’s social critiques” (Rose 42).

This unit will be taught in Language Arts sixth grade Regular Education and Pre-AP classes comprised of predominantly African-American and Hispanic students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Indeed, the artists and their messages will resonate strongly with this audience. Students may see many of the same issues that they feel strongly about themselves espoused in the lyrics of many of the hip-hop artists that will be studied in this unit. Students will also be encouraged to find parallels between the pictures that artists paint of their communities in their music and the communities that the students themselves live in. Unification between the Latino students and the African-American students will be fostered as students are encouraged to find similarities between how Latino and African-American rappers describe social and political issues in their communities.

I expect that this unit to last between 3-4 weeks. With block scheduling, I am able to see all of my students every day for 90 minutes for Language Arts. I believe that utilizing hip-hop as a method of teaching important skills will have long-lasting and far-reaching effects with this group of students.

UNIT BACKGROUND

The academic benefits to be derived from this unit are numerous. Students will practice summarizing and pinpointing assertions (i.e. claims or main ideas) of all the musical messages and critiques that will be studied within this unit. They will also analyze visual and auditory forms of communication as they listen to music critically and formulate their own opinions about social ills or political struggles within their own communities. Students will have the opportunity to write and perform their own poetry to music or perform a song that is relevant to this unit. Studying the lyrics in this unit also lends itself to incorporating mini-lessons on grammar, mechanics, syntax, and figurative language. The students will also be expected to write an analytical essay that explores the rhetorical devices and assertions expressed by a selected artist.

Brief Historical Synopsis

To begin a study of the awareness of the social and political issues manifested in hip-hop music, students must have an understanding of how hip-hop first came into being. They will read an article that documents the origins and the history of hip-hop music. The article will explain that hip-hop was born in the Bronx, a neighborhood in New York City. It is a cultural movement started by mostly African-Americans and Latino inner-city youth in the early 1970s. Its main components can be broken down into rapping (MCing), DJing (musical production and scratching), breakdancing, and graffiti. The main historical eras include the “old school” hip-hop

era (1970 to 1985), the golden age of the hip-hop era (1985 to 1993), and the modern era which gave rise to gangsta rap, hardcore hip-hop, and underground hip-hop (“Roots of Hip-Hop”).

The first mainstream commercial hip hop recording was “Rapper’s Delight” by the Sugarhill Gang in 1979, which became a smash hit nationwide. Golden age hip-hop and modern hip-hop will serve as the primary focus of this unit (Price 13). Early hip-hop recordings rarely addressed issues beyond the daily experiences of inner-city youth. Most of it was “party music” created to help the young people escape the realities of urban life such as low-wage jobs and poor urban school systems that failed to meet the needs of its students (Forman and Neal 372-373).

In 1982, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five released “The Message,” which focused on the rise and the impact of the Reagan administration on the poor, working class communities from which many minorities hailed. Melle Mel, the lead MC, expressed a sense of hopelessness coupled with the strong lure of materialism that compels many young black men to become involved in illicit and illegal underground economies, such as the sale of drugs and thievery. Melle Mel hints at how inner-city schools fail to prepare kids to face the reality of what awaits them in society. Melle Mel also indicates that the prison system does not rehabilitate prisoners, and instead promotes rampant sexual violence among the male inmates. In the end, the character featured in “The Message” commits suicide to escape imprisonment (Neal 372-373). “The Message” was perhaps one of the earliest recordings where a hip-hop artist addressed some salient issues and the oppression that many minorities still face within our nation. Since then, many hip-hop artists have strived to reveal the subtle and at times, overt injustices that still plague our nation and our world in their musical lyrics. “The intersection between hip-hop and politics has empowered a generation of youth to believe that they not only have a right but maybe an obligation to make a difference in their world” (Watkins 164). The theme of this unit is to get students to pay attention to the social and political injustices discussed in select hip-hop artists’ music. My hope is that such a realization will encourage students to think critically about how we as a people can overcome the obstacles presented in the music as they are manifested in our lives.

Unit Guiding Questions

I will select a collection of clean, edited lyrics from selected songs, read relevant articles and biographical sketches, and read relevant documentaries from African-American hip-hop artists of the late 80s to present day. The list of artists and songs to be considered includes artists such as 2 Pac, Geto Boys, Kanye West, Michael Franti, and Ludacris. Relevant Latino artists to be included are Sergio Mendes, South Park Mexican, and Aggravated.

Several guiding questions will serve as the backbone for the development of this unit:

- What were the community issues that hip-hop artists exposed in their music?
- What attitudes and opinions do the artists have about law enforcement in their neighborhoods?
- What attitudes did these artists express about the judicial/governmental system as a whole?

The lessons will be presented with the aim of addressing each of the three guiding questions. The goal of these lessons is to provide background information to the students about the history of hip-hop music itself. Students will learn where and when hip-hop began, the circumstances (socially and economically) that led to the creation of hip-hop, and how it was successfully used as a form of expression that resonated strongly with its predominantly African-American and Latino audience. Students will listen to a collection of songs and pay special attention to the ways that hip-hop artists use the music as a vehicle to express their attitudes and feelings about social and political issues within their communities. They will realize that hip-hop artists represented problems specific to minorities in their music lyrics. The class will listen to songs and lyrics where the artists illustrate themes through their music such as the hopelessness and frustration of poverty and few opportunities to prosper or leave the ghetto, the problems that

result from the proliferation of drugs and alcohol, and the illegal immigrants' experience. Students will see how male artists illuminated problems specific to women in their music such as single motherhood, mothers on welfare, young girls who experience abuse at the hands of male figures in their life, unwanted teen pregnancies, and how dysfunctional families force young girls to leave home and resort to street life. As they explore how artists feel about law enforcement in their neighborhoods, students will also see how artists speak out against the racial profiling of African-Americans and Latinos and police brutality in their communities. When they listen to music and read the lyrics to hip-hop with politically salient messages, they will identify how artists spoke out about how the government fosters poverty and violence in minority communities nationally and worldwide. The unit will be formed around the music that the students will be listening to and the goal of each lesson will be to get students to come up with their own answers to each of the guiding questions listed above.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson One What is Hip-Hop?

Expected instruction time – 2 class periods that last 90 minutes each

TAKS/ TEKS Objectives (same for each lesson in the entire unit):

ELA.6.1.02 - Participating in academic discussions, responding to divergent ideas and opinions, using higher-level thinking skills and content specific discourse

ELA.6.1.10 - Recognizing the diversity of experiences and re-examining his/her own beliefs/opinions/ideas

ELA.2.16 - Generalizing and representing main ideas

ELA.6.2.06 - Defining and analyzing important literary elements

ELA.6.2.22 - Interpreting, representing, and comparing ideas, issues, and cross-cultural themes in text

Materials Needed

- CD player
- Pre-Reading Survey
- Two condensed articles about the origins of hip-hop
- “Rapper’s Delight” song and printed lyrics by the Sugarhill Gang

Key Terms and Vocabulary

- Rapping / MCing
- DJing
- Breakdancing
- Graffiti
- “Old school” Hip-Hop
- “Golden Age” Hip-Hop
- “Modern” Hip-Hop
- Tone
- Mood

Activities

1. Warm-Up – As they come in, students will pick up a pre-reading activity handout to test their prior knowledge about hip-hop music.
2. Students answer pre-reading questions in pairs to test how much they know about the subject of hip hop music. They will be given a survey sheet that asks them these questions:
 - a. What is hip-hop music?
 - b. What are the four major components of hip-hop culture?
 - c. Who are some hip-hop artists that you know or listen to?
 - d. When and where did hip-hop begin?
 - e. How did hip-hop come to be (i.e. what circumstances led to its birth)?
 - f. What was the first smash hit recorded song for hip-hop?
 - g. What are some of the issues that hip-hop artists talk about in their music?
3. The class will discuss the answers that the students came up with to the survey questions and then students will read two condensed articles about the origins of hip-hop.
4. After reading these articles, students will then provide the actual answers to the seven survey questions for an individual open-book quiz grade.
5. The class will listen to “Rapper’s Delight” and identify the tone and mood of the song. I will define these two terms for the students as students write down the definitions in their notebooks. Students will be told that an author’s **tone** describes how the author feels about whatever he or she is speaking about or describing (i.e. the subject). The **mood** simply means how you feel (emotionally) as you read a particular text, watch a piece of media, or listen to a song. Students will be asked to describe how the Sugarhill Gang feels about the things that he is rapping about in the song and two or three words that would best describe the mood of this song (i.e. lighthearted, playful, fun).
6. Student volunteers will practice saying the introduction to “Rapper’s Delight” or “battling” to see which student can say it the best. Second, all students will have to make up an eight verse rhyme to the beat of rapper’s delight about a random topic that will be given to them (such as school or summer vacation) in either pairs or trios. Those who are brave enough and willing to perform in front of the class will be encouraged to do so for extra credit. These activities demonstrate how young people in New York often “battled” each other with rhymes and words to settle disputes in their neighborhoods. It also gives students a chance to engage in this music in a very fun, light-hearted way, and to stretch their creative and artistic muscles.

Assessment

Using the condensed articles that the class will read aloud, the students will answer the seven aforementioned questions to be turned in for a grade. Also, the students who are brave enough to volunteer to rap will be given an extra twenty additional extra credit points added to their lowest grade for the current nine weeks. All students, performers and non-performers alike, will have to turn in their eight verse rhyme for a grade at the end of the week.

Lesson 2 What community issues are presented in hip-hop?

Expected instruction time – 5 class periods spanning a 90 minute time frame each

Objectives – Please refer to Lesson 1

Materials Needed

The following songs and their printed lyrics:

- “The Message” by Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five

- Brenda's Got a Baby," "Keep Your Head Up," "Dear Momma," "Trapped," and "To Live and Die in LA" by 2Pac Shakur
- "Runaway" by Ludacris
- "The World is a Ghetto," "Crooked Officer," and "Street Life" by The Geto Boys
- "Free World" by Aggravated aka Most Hated
- "Loose Ends" by Sergio Mendes
- "Diamonds from Sierra Leone" and "Crack Music" by Kanye West
- "When the Devil Strikes," "Penitentiary Flow," and "The System" by South Park Mexican
- Graphic organizer for note-taking
- 2Pac's Bio Sketch and Discussion Questions
- Ludacris Bio Sketch and Discussion Questions
- South Park Mexican's Bio Sketch
- Kanye West's Bio Sketch
- CD player

Key Terms and Vocabulary

- Theme
- Point-of-View
- Imagery
- Diction
- Misogyny

Activities

1. Warm-Up – As students enter the classroom, they will pick up a graphic organizer that allows them to categorize each hip-hop artist and song presented and annotate each song based on the content. The graphic organizer will be broken down into six categories for students to take note of:
 - Name of song, name of artist
 - Subject – What the artist is talking about
 - Tone – How does the author feel about the subject matter itself that is being described in the song? What feelings does the artist communicate about the topic within this song?
 - Theme – The message or life lesson that can be learned from the song
 - Author's purpose – The student will offer an opinion to explain why he or she thinks that the author wrote the song.
 - Point-of-view – 1st person – the person writing the song is the subject or main character and uses pronouns like "I," "me," "we," "us," and "our" or third person. The person writing the song is describing the experience of another person and not themselves.
 - Imagery – is descriptive language that appeals to the five senses and helps the reader/listener to mentally visualize the scene that is being described by the artist or author
 - Diction – simply means an author's word choice and what may be revealed about his or her opinion about something as a result of word choice. For example, an old woman can be described as wise and mature (denoting respect) or as a hag (denoting a demeaning, disrespectful attitude toward the old woman).

2. To introduce this week's lessons, I will explain to the students that they will be listening to and reading lyrics to songs by 2 Pac, the Geto Boys, and Ludacris. I will ask the students if they know these artists and to name some songs that they know of or enjoy by these artists.
3. After this discussion, the students will read a biographical sketch of 2 Pac, one of the featured artists of this unit.
4. After the biographical sketch has been read, the students will answer questions based on the biographical sketch.
5. Students will spend the next two class periods listening to clean versions of "Brenda's Got a Baby," "Keep Your Head Up," "Dear Momma," "Trapped," "To Live and Die in LA" by 2Pac Shakur. 2Pac's songs "Brenda's Got a Baby," "Keep Your Head Up," "Dear Momma," and Ludracris' song "Runaway" speak about the loss of innocence, the sexual abuse of young women, and the fears and lack of support that teenagers experience from unplanned pregnancies." "Keep Your Dead Up" and "Dear Momma" encourage respect for women while discouraging misogyny. These songs also expose the struggles of single mothers. As they read the accompanying hard copies of the lyrics and listen to the songs, students will be instructed to fill out their charts to analyze the theme, tone, point-of-view, subject, and author's perspective on the subject. The chart will serve as a basis for class discussion of each song and for the final project.
6. The students will repeat this same process with the Geto Boys songs "The World is a Ghetto" and "Street Life". Also, 2Pac's songs "Trapped," "To Live and Die in LA," "The World is a Ghetto," and Aggravated's "Free World," and Grandmaster Flash and Furious Five's "The Message" all address the issues of gangs, violence, the unjust prison system, and an underlying theme of feeling trapped and unable to prosper within the ghetto.

Assessment

The chart will be turned in after students have had the opportunity to listen to all of the aforementioned songs and students will have two additional assignments. Each student will choose of one of the themes studied within these lessons (hopelessness and frustration of being impoverished, the ill effects of drugs and alcohol, abuse, teen pregnancy, feeling trapped and imprisoned in the ghetto). They will be required to write about how two artists that we studied in this particular lesson used diction and imagery to convey their attitudes about this particular theme. Also, as a homework assignment, students read the biographical sketch of the South Park Mexican and turn in the accompanying questions for a homework grade.

Lesson 3 What attitudes and opinions do the artists have about law enforcement in their neighborhoods?

Expected Instruction Time – 2-3 Class periods each spanning a 90 minute time frame each

Objectives – Please refer to Lesson 1

Materials Needed

The following songs and their printed lyrics

- "Crooked Officer" by the Geto Boys
- "The System" by South Park Mexicans
- Key concepts and terms crossword puzzle
- Article on Latinos and Blacks in the prison system
- CD player

Key Terms and Vocabulary

- Racial Profiling
- Police Brutality

Activities

1. Warm-Up – Students will pick up a crossword puzzle as they enter the door and spend the first few minutes of class locating the key concepts and vocabulary terms of this unit.
2. After students complete the warm-up, the class will discuss their understanding of racial profiling and police brutality. After the students have had an opportunity to demonstrate their own understanding of these terms, the teacher will define police brutality and racial profiling for the entire class.
3. Students will listen to “Crooked Officer” by the Geto Boys. The lyrics of “Crooked Officer” convey a message of anger, resentment, and strong distrust toward the racism and cruelty that minorities experience at the hands of police officers.
4. Students will also read an article about the number of Latino men and African-American men in the prison system.

Assessment

In a two to three paragraphs, students will explain to their best ability the answer to the guiding question for this lesson. They will be asked to discuss the attitudes espoused by the Geto Boys and South Park Mexican about the law enforcement. Once they have done this, the students then need to discuss some possible reasons that may have influenced these artists’ beliefs about law enforcement in their neighborhoods. They must include at least two quotes to support their assertions – one from the song and one from the article that we read. Students will answer questions about this article and turn them in for a grade. They will also try to think of reasons why so many blacks and Latinos are behind bars (i.e. socioeconomic system, biased penal system, racism, etc.) and ways that young Latino and African-American men and women can avoid being locked behind bars.

Lesson 4 What attitudes did these artists express about the judicial/governmental system as a whole?

Expected Instruction Time – 2-3 Class periods each spanning a 90 minute time frame each

Objectives – Please refer to Lesson 1

Materials Needed

- CD player
- The following songs and their printed lyrics:
 - o “Loose Ends” by Sergio Mendes
 - o “Diamonds from Sierra Leone” and “Crack Music” by Kanye West
 - o “Rock the Nation” by Michael Franti
 - o Graphic organizer

Key Terms and Vocabulary

- Mutilation
- “blood diamonds”
- Penal system
- Sierra Leone

Activities

1. Warm-Up – Students will be asked to answer questions to probe their prior knowledge about the artists being featured (Kanye West and Sergio Mendes).
2. Students will listen to Kanye West’s “Diamonds from Sierra Leone,” which is a song about the violence, mutilation, and bloodshed suffered by Africans in search of finding and selling diamonds to rich, developed countries like the U.S. They will also listen to “Crack Music” where West raps about the ill effects of crack cocaine in the communities and his belief that the government enables the sale of this drug. West also implies that the penal system punishes the users of crack (predominantly Black and Latino) more severely than those who use the more expensive drugs (predominantly Anglo).
3. Students will read a biography about Kanye West and answer discussion questions about this article.
4. Students will also listen to “Loose Ends” by Sergio Mendes, which features hip-hop artists that address a variety of the daily struggles shared by the working class minorities, such as high gas prices and even the debate over illegal immigration. They will also listen to Michael Franti’s “Rock the Nation” which is a protest song against violence and an economic system that enables minorities in the ghetto to remain impoverished.

Assessment

Students will turn in the discussion questions that accompany Kanye West’s bio sketch for a grade. Also, as a final project, students may do one of the following two activities:

Choice A

Students who select choice A will have to choose one song that they have heard (not studied in class) by a hip-hop artist that discussed one of the issues that we focused on in this lesson. The song must somehow relate to a message about human struggle and social injustice. For example, the song could be about family problems, poverty, the ill effects of drugs/alcohol, violence, gangs, or law enforcement and imprisonment. They will be asked to explain the following in a 1 page essay for a grade:

- a. the song’s message
- b. the phrases from the song that really supported this message
- c. what they believe was the author’s purpose in writing the song
- d. why they liked the song

Choice B

Students write their own poem (or song) about human struggle and social injustice. For example, the song could be about family problems, poverty, the ill effects of drugs/alcohol, violence, gangs, or law enforcement and imprisonment. They may turn it in for a grade or perform it for extra credit on top of their grade.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Works Cited

Aldridge, Derrick. “From Civil Rights to Hip-Hop: Toward a Nexus of Ideas.” *The Journal of African-American History*, Vol. 90 (2005): 32-37.

This article offers a both a good social commentary and historical synopsis of hip-hop.

Forman, Murray and Mark Anthony Neal. *That’s the Joint! The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

This book features a variety of essays that define hip-hop, explain its history, and analyze cultural and political messages.

Houston Independent School District. *Project CLEAR Objectives*. 6th Grade Language Arts. Houston, TX: Houston Independent School District, 2006-2007.

I referred to relevant objectives from CLEAR to serve as a guide to ensure that the unit is in alignment with HISD's expectations.

Price, Emmett III. *Hip Hop Culture*. Santa Barbara CA: ABC-CLI, 2006.

This is an excellent book because in addition to including information about the rise of hip hop, this book includes 47 short biographical sketches about people and artists that have made significant contributions to hip hop music. It also has an extensive timeline on hip hop culture.

"Roots of Hip Hop." *Wikipedia*, the Free Encyclopedia online. 4 April 2007.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hip_hop_history#Roots_of_hip_hop>.

This website features an informative, straight-forward, easy to read historical background about hip hop that may be good for the students to read at the beginning of this unit.

Rose, Tricia. *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1994.

This article offers a good critique on the social and political messages embedded in hip hop music.

Watkins, S. Craig. *Hip Hop Matters: Politics, Pop Culture, and the Struggle for the Soul of a Movement*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003.

SUPPLEMENTAL SOURCES

Books and Articles

De Leon, Arnaldo. *Ethnicity in the Sunbelt: Mexican Americans in Houston*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001.

This book is a good source to consult to understand how Mexican Americans are influenced by hip hop music.

Fricke, Jim and Charlie Ahearn. *The Experience Music Project Oral History of Hip-Hop's First Decade*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2002.

This is another good informative source on hip hop's history.

Gener, Randy. "Bling or Revolution: Hip-Hop's Theatrical Avant-Garde and Intellectual Coming of Age." *American Theatre*, Vol. 21 (July 2004): 8-10.

This article implies that hip hop is a form of art that expresses messages worthy of study.

George, Nelson. *Hip Hop America*. New York: Viking, 1998.

This book offers a very good social commentary on the history of hip hop and how it used as a commodity to impact every aspect of popular culture.

Kelly, Ragan. "A Separate But Parallel Story: Chicanos in Los Angeles Hip Hop." In Brian Cross' *It's Not about the Salary: Rap, Race, and Resistance in Los Angeles*. London & New York: Verso, 1993.

This essay is a good source to look at and even share with the students because it highlights the struggles and obstacles that Latinos face in modern society. It links these struggles to hip music and also to similarities that Latinos share with Blacks.

Lomax, John Nova. "Hip Hop, Tejas: Latinos Take on Rap Music and Make it Their Own." *The Houston Press*, December 4.

This is another article that may be shared with the students to point out how hip hop is embraced and adapted as a vehicle of expression by Latinos.

McFarland, Pancho. "Here is Something You Can't Understand...": Chicano Rap and the Critique of Globalization." In Arturo Aldama & Naomi H. Quiñonez, eds. *Decolonial Voices: Chicana and Chicano Cultural Studies in the 21st Century*. Bloomington: Indian Press, 2002.

Patiño, Jimmy. *Where Aztlan Meets the Dirty South: Chicanas/os and Houston Hip-Hop*. Thesis. The University of Houston, 2004. The University of Houston Dept. of Sociology, 2004.

This thesis is a good resource because it focuses on how Latinos use hip hop to address issues that racially marginalized groups share such as police brutality, poverty, drug-infested neighborhoods, and various other frustrations here in Houston.

Rodriguez, Richard T. "The Verse of the Godfather: Signifying Family and Nationalism in Chicano Rap and Hip hop Culture." In Alicia Gaspar de Alba, ed. *Velvet Barrios: Popular Culture and Chicana/o Sexualities*. NY: Palgrave, 2003.

This is a good reference for teachers seeking to gain and understanding about how hip hop music influences the culture and family dynamics of Latinos.

Albums

The following is a list of the songs, albums, and artists featured in this unit. Hard copies of lyrics can be accessed via the Internet.

2Pac. *Greatest Hits*. Death Row Records, 1998.

Aggravated aka The Most Hated. "Free World," Jam Down Records, 1997.

Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. "The Message." *The Message*. Sugarhill Records, 1979.

The Geto Boys. *Uncut Dope: Greatest Hits*. Rap-a-lot Records, 2002.

Ludacris. *Release Therapy*. "Runaway Love." Def Jam Records, 2006.

Mendes, Sergio. *Timeless*. "Loose Ends." Concord Records, 2006.

South Park Mexican. "Penitentiary Flow." *When the Devil Strikes*. Dope House Records, 2006.

South Park Mexican. "System." *Never Change*. Universal Records, 2001.

Sugarhill Gang. "Rapper's Delight." *Sugarhill Gang*. Sugarhill Records, 1979.

West, Kanye. *Late Registration*. "Diamonds from Sierra Leone," "Heard 'Em Say," and "Crack Music". Roc-a-Fella Records, 2005.