

Music and African American History: From Spirituals to Hip-Hop

Blackademics overview:

Blackademics is an innovative workshop that incorporates interactive lecture, creative writing, music/lyrics and coded language analysis, group discussion and live performance while looking historically at African American music (particularly Hip-Hop) and popular culture in the Black freedom struggle.

The workshop will encourage critical and historical thinking, help students develop an understanding of the historical context from which African American music emerged, explore the relationships between Hip-Hop and other forms of African American music and challenge students not only to listen to and analyze music, but also understand music in relation to history and culture.

Blackademics objectives:

Develop a fundamental understanding of Spirituals

- a. Political/historical significance
- b. Coded language
- c. Lyric analysis (listen to recordings)

Develop a fundamental understanding of mid-20th century freedom songs

- a. Political/historical significance (and relationships to Spirituals)
- b. Coded language
- c. Lyric analysis (listen to recordings)

Outline the elements of Hip-Hop history

- a. Historical overview
- b. The four elements of Hip-Hop, beat box
- c. Live examples of Djing, Emceeing, Graffiti and Beat Box

Develop an understanding of the significance of Hip-Hop in the 20th and 21st centuries

- a. Political/historical significance (and relationships to Spirituals and Freedom songs)
- b. Coded language
- c. Lyric analysis (listen to recordings plus LIVE performance)
- d. Creative writing

Additional objectives

- a. Explore relationships between different eras/genres of Black music
- b. Bridge a generational gap between Jazz lovers and Hip-Hop heads
- c. Encourage students to create music and write lyrics of their own

Equipment:

- a. Stereo system with iPod (RCA input) connection
- b. Chalk/Eraser board
- c. DJ table (any table with enough space for two turn tables and a mixer)
- d. Pen and Paper (for the students)