

STUDY GUIDE

DISCIPLINE:
LITERARY ARTS

ARTIST:
JUSTJAMAAL THEPOET



The following package is provided as a supplemental resource to enhance and support the artist’s visit.

It includes curricular connections, assessment strategies, and suggested classroom extensions. All materials are intended for use at the teacher’s discretion and may be adapted as necessary to suit the specific needs of the students.

THIS STUDY GUIDE

Discipline / Artist Example:

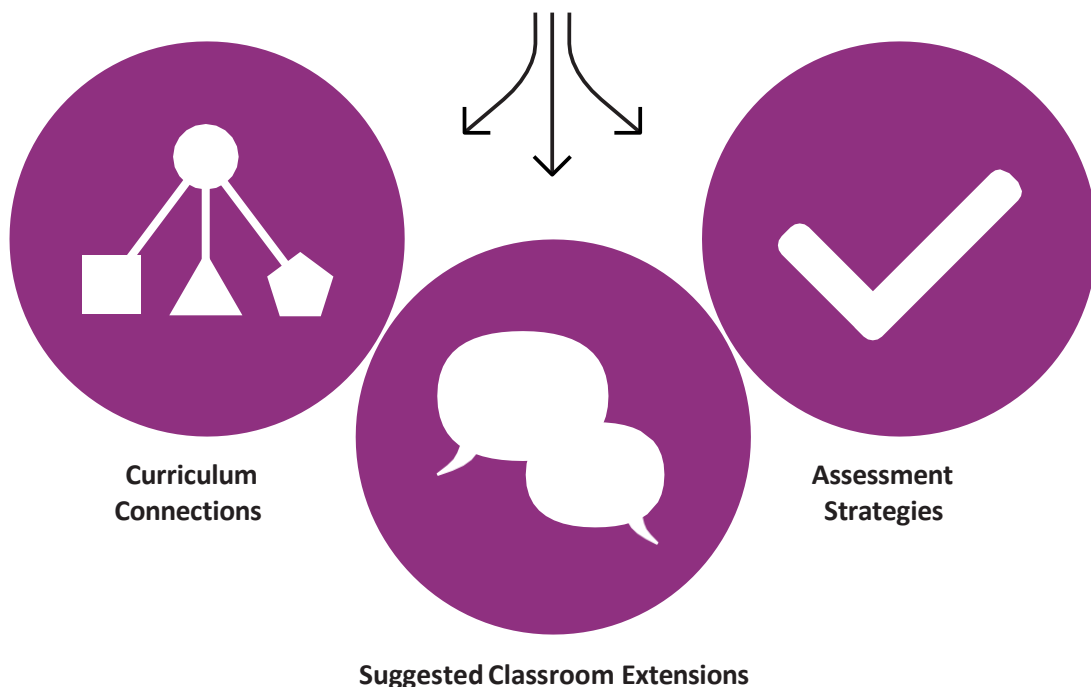


TABLE OF CONTENTS

STUDY GUIDE: LITERARY ARTS.....4

 Program Overview 4

 Curriculum Connections 6

 Extend the Learning (Discussion Prompts)..... 7

LITERARY ARTS OVERVIEW.....9

APPENDIX..... 10

 Vocabulary bank/glossary:..... 10

 Student Health and Well-Being 11

 Additional Resources 11

STUDY GUIDE: LITERARY ARTS

THE HISTORY OF HIPHOP

Program Overview

Artist Name: JustJamaal ThePoet

Artist Bio: JustJamaal ThePoet is an award-winning poet, educator, and performer who served as Ottawa’s poet laureate (2017–2019) and Carleton University’s Artist in Residence (2019–2020). Co-founder of Origin Arts + Community Centre, he connects deeply with audiences through workshops and performances on topics like emotional growth, parenting, and world issues. He lives in Ottawa with his wife and six children.

Program Description: The History of Hip Hop is a new JustJamaal ThePoet production that weaves music, storytelling, theatre and poetry in an educational and impactful presentation. Using his personal journey as inspiration, Jamaal shares his skills as a poet, songwriter and rapper while teaching the valuable lessons that are found in the four pillars of the global cultural phenomenon known as Hip Hop.

Artistic Discipline: Literary Arts, Music

Recommended Grade Levels: 7 – 12

Session Logistics: In person or online



Cultural Context: Black Legacy, North American History

Vocab bank/glossary: [Click here](#)



THE HISTORY OF HIPHOP

Curriculum Connections

Learning Themes:

- Strand A – Creating and Presenting
 - Apply the creative process to create and perform music for a variety of purposes, using the elements and techniques of music. (Grades 7-8)
 - Apply the creative process to dramatic play and process drama, using the elements and conventions of drama to communicate feelings, ideas, and stories. (Grades 7-8)
 - Apply elements of music when performing notated and improvised music and composing and/or arranging music. (Grades 9-12)
 - Use a variety of presentation techniques and technological tools to enhance the impact of drama works and communicate for specific audiences and purposes. (Grades 9-12)
- Strand C – Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts / Foundations
 - Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of musical genres and styles from the past and present, and their social and/or community contexts. (Grades 7-8)
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the history of some musical forms and of characteristics of types of music from around the world. (Grades 9-12)

THE HISTORY OF HIPHOP

Extend the Learning (Discussion Prompts)

Here are optional discussion prompts to extend the artist session in the classroom. These are recommended and are not mandatory. Please use what is best for your classroom. You can also find suggested activities in the additional resources package.

GRADES
7-8

Pre

- What do you know about the origins of hip hop culture?
- In what ways do music and poetry help tell personal or community stories?
- How can creative expression, like rapping or dancing, be a response to challenges in society?

During

- What are the “four pillars” of hip hop that Jamaal introduced?
- How did Jamaal use his own story to explain the power of hip hop culture?
- What connections can you see between poetry and rap?

Post

- Which part of the presentation made you think differently about hip hop?
- How can hip hop be used as a tool for change, education, or healing?
- If you were to write your own piece (poem, rap, or story), what message would it share?

Pre

- How do you define hip hop; as a genre, a culture, or a movement?
- What social or political issues have been addressed through hip hop music?
- How can artistic forms like poetry and music reflect identity and resistance?

During

- How did Jamaal demonstrate the connection between spoken word, rap, and storytelling?
- What role do the four pillars of hip hop (DJing, MCing, breaking, graffiti) play in youth culture today?
- How did Jamaal use rhythm, rhyme, or movement to communicate his message?

Post

- How does hip hop provide a platform for underrepresented voices?
- What is the difference between “commercial” hip hop and the original cultural values of the movement?
- How could you use one of the hip hop elements to express your own experiences or beliefs?

LITERARY ARTS OVERVIEW

Literary Arts education consists of storytelling, poetry, and creative writing and is foundational to developing literate, reflective, and critically engaged members of society. By engaging with diverse stories, students gain insight into complex perspectives and histories, fostering inclusion and emotional resilience. Writing and sharing stories also supports mental health and builds a sense of community and belonging.

The creative and critical analysis process guide students in imagining, crafting, and reflecting on literary work. These frameworks align with MASC's core values and, when paired with artist-led sessions, empower students to become thoughtful creators and engaged learners.

Literary arts naturally support cross-curricular learning. In social studies, students explore historical context through narrative; in science they use writing to explain concepts. These interdisciplinary links help students see knowledge as interconnected and relevant to real-world applications.



APPENDIX

Vocabulary bank/glossary:

- **Hip Hop:** A cultural movement that began in the 1970s in the Bronx, combining music, dance, art, and activism.
- **Four Pillars:** The four main elements of hip hop: DJing, MCing (rapping), breakdancing (breaking), and graffiti art.
- **MC (Master of Ceremonies):** The person who raps or speaks rhythmically over a beat, often telling stories or sharing messages.
- **Spoken Word:** A form of performance poetry that emphasizes wordplay, emotion, and rhythm.
- **Rhythm:** The beat or flow of music and speech, especially in poetry or rap.
- **Flow:** The way a rapper or poet moves smoothly from one word or idea to another.
- **Graffiti:** Visual art, often spray-painted, used to express ideas in public spaces, tied closely to hip hop culture.
- **Breakdancing (Breaking):** A dynamic street dance style that is physically expressive and deeply rooted in hip hop.
- **Freestyle:** Improvised rapping or poetry, created on the spot without preparation.
- **Cultural Expression:** Using art to share beliefs, identity, or lived experiences.

Student Health and Well-Being

How did today's activity make you feel (body and mind)?

- Choose a colour to describe that feeling. Use one word to describe how your energy changed after the activity.

Mini-Activity: Feelings Freeze Frame (Tableau)

- Ask students to create a freeze-frame (tableau) that shows how they're feeling right after the activity.
- Then, they can:
 - Share it with a partner or small group
 - Draw their freeze-frame in a journal
 - Write or talk about what made them feel that way

Additional Resources

- Assessment Guide
- Cultural Protocol/Sensitivity Guide
- Evaluation Document
- Resource Database for Further Learning