

Study Guide for Teachers

“Shakespeare: the Remix”

*A Collective Consciousness Production
Dexter Singleton, Director*



Young
Audiences
Arts for
Learning

Connecticut

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Explore the world of Shakespeare through the eyes of Shayla, a teenage girl. In this presentation, original text from Shakespeare’s plays collides with original rhymes.

The Remix is an introduction to all that is good, relevant and irreverent in Shakespeare and in hip hop.

Length: 45 minutes. Grades: 6 - 12



REMIX WORKSHOP:

As Shayla and Shakespeare jump in and out of scenes from Hamlet, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, and Merchant of Venice, it is the third character – the “ghost” audience of school kids watching and often participating in the show – that is left most wowed and inspired by the power of words.

The authors and actors of The Remix lead hands-on workshops in which the writing and acting techniques introduced in the play are broken down for students as they begin to write and perform their own sonnets, raps, monologues, and scenes.

OBJECTIVES

- Promotes writing to express oneself as an alternative to violence.
- Explores the ways in which Shakespeare and hip-hop play with, and invent, language.
- Teaches how to translate Elizabethan English into standard and hip-hop English!
- Demonstrates the universal resonance of emotions and dilemmas Shakespeare’s characters.
- Shows how Shakespeare and the best hip-hop share a knack for strong, human drama and important social themes.

VOCABULARY

Blank Verse: unrhymed iambic pentameter.

Iambic Pentameter: five beats of alternating unstressed and **stressed** syllables; ten syllables per line.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

- Read with the class scenes from Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, or Macbeth
- Discuss how that language is different from how we speak today.
- Listen to a hip-hop/spoken word song.
- Discuss how that language is different from how we speak today.
- Write a rhymed verse in iambic pentameter

AFTER THE PROGRAM

- Discuss the play.
- How did it differ from Shakespeare's writing style?
- How was it similar?
- Break into groups and write a hip-hop song about issues in the school.

CURRICULAR LINKS

Connecticut State Department of Education

Source: The Arts - A Guide to K-12 Program Development

- ✚ Goal 3: Responding in Theater
Students should select, observe, describe, analyze, evaluate and explain works of theater, film, television and video (content standard 7)

Source: The CT Framework – Language Arts

- ✚ Standard 3: Applying English Language Conventions
Students will apply the conventions of standard English language in oral and written communication.
- ✚ Standard 4: Exploring and Responding to Texts
Students will use the language arts to explore and respond to classical and contemporary texts from many cultures and literary periods.

RESOURCES

Hip Hoptionary TM: The Dictionary of Hip Hop Terminology (Paperback)
by [Alonzo Westbrook](#) (Author)

Andrews, John F. [William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influence](#). 3 vols. New York: Scribner, 1985.

Bevington, David, ed. [The Complete Works of Shakespeare—5th ed.](#) New York: Longman, 2003

Blake, N. F. [Shakespeare's Language: An Introduction](#). New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.

The Poetics of Hip-Hop, A lesson plan
<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3656/>
Flocabulary – Hip-Hop in the classroom
<http://www.flocabulary.com/teachers.html>
Folger Shakespeare Library
<http://www.folger.edu/eduLesPlanDtl.cfm?lpid=750>

COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS THEATRE

Under the able leadership of Dexter J. Singleton, Collective Consciousness Productions was formed to bring to light issues of social justice and civil rights.

Dexter J. Singleton began his professional theatre career as a company member with the world-renowned Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit. He is the former artistic director of the critically acclaimed Kalamazoo Youth Theatre and has worked with many schools and colleges. He currently is lead theater instructor at Regional Center for the Arts in Stratford, CT.

Additional Collective Consciousness programs include:

- ✚ “Little Brother”
- ✚ “No Lie”
- ✚ “I’m Just a Superhero”
- ✚ “Harriet Tubman”
- ✚ “Struggle for Freedom”

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