

Syllabus-ness: HIP HOP LITERACIES

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English 846 // Janice Sapigao HIP HOP LITERACIES

Reading & Writing Connections Skyline College / Center for Innovative Practices through Hip Hop Education & Research (CIPHER) Learning Community

About this course:

This is a reading/writing development workshop designed to introduce you to the conventions of university-level academic composition and help you as a reader, writer, and critical thinker. The course content uses hip hop as a lens that you will use to improve what you already know about reading and writing. Discussing hip hop literacy will help you improve your scholarship, writing, and ability to actively participate in its culture.

Required Textbooks:

1) [NONFICTION/MEMOIR]

Laymon, Kiese. *How To Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*. Evanston: Agate Publishing, 2013.

2) [NONFICTION/HISTORY]

Chang, Jeff. *Can't Stop, Won't Stop: A History of the Hip Hop Generation*. New York: Picador Publishing, 2005.

3) [MUSIC/AUDIO]

Hill, Lauryn. *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*. Sony Records, 1998. CD. (or YouTube)

Course Description:

This course will provide students opportunities to grow as readers and writers in a student-centered environment. Through reading, writing, and discussing a range of complex issues across disciplines, they will experience reading and writing as interrelated processes. Although there is substantial guidance in the writing process, instruction in essay writing assumes a basic understanding of sentence and paragraph structure. Introduces students to college-level reading and writing, covering thesis construction, organization, development, sentence skills, text-based writing, and effective reading strategies to improve comprehension, analysis and vocabulary.



Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:

1. **ESSAYS:** Write focused, organized, well-developed, and text-based essays appropriate to the developmental level using effective paragraphs, which support a clear thesis statement, and demonstrate competence in standard English grammar and usage.
2. **CRITICAL ANALYSIS:** Demonstrate critical reading, writing, and thinking skills through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of important ideas.
3. **SOURCES:** Effectively evaluate and integrate relevant sources and document them according to MLA guidelines.

Instructional Methods:

We will experience, critique, and write about a variety of interdisciplinary media and text. Through lectures and discussions, small group work, readings, peer editing, student presentations, conferences, exams, in-class writing, journal writing and rigorous engagement with text, you will deepen your understanding of yourself and your writing or storytelling process.

Unit one – “R.A.P.: Rhythmic American Poetry”

We'll discuss hip hop poetics, sound, rhythm, social justice theory, critical thinking, critical reading, and critical writing. We'll also gear up to discuss pre-writing, pre-reading, and writing processes.

Unit two – “Holler At Your Girl”

What roles and responsibilities do women take on in hip hop? We'll discuss, feminism, black womanism, third world and women of color feminisms, male allyship, and critical liberation. We'll also work on MLA citation, refining paragraph and essay structure, and note-taking.

Unit three – Youth Culture Can't Stop, Won't Stop

If we empower our youth, what happens? Hip hop is, was, and will be dependent on the power of youth. We'll begin working on research projects, discussing methodology, and analysis.

Unit four – Welcome to Where I'm From

Does where we're from influence or pre-determine our sound, styles,

production, and/or our lives?

[Download a PDF of the entire syllabus here.](#)

See the rest of our back-to-school feature [Syllabus-ness here.](#)