

TEACHER GUIDE



Making A Hip Hop Beat

With: Ray the Nihilist

Grade: 5/6

Date: March 19th

Artistic Discipline: Music

OVERVIEW

With all the new technological advancements in the last decade, music making has never been a more accessible art! Join Ray as he walks your class through some of the basics of hip hop beat-making using some simple browser-based programs your students can access in their own classroom. Learn to feel the rhythm and follow your intuition as you craft your own instrumental masterpiece!

CLASSROOM SETUP

Have your students seated at their desks with room to get up and move a little bit when needed.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Ray the Nihilist is an award-nominated Indigenous Hip Hop artist representing the Blood Tribe. Ray began his career in Hip-Hop Music after searching for something different from his earlier music endeavours. So far in his catalogue, Ray holds three E.P.S and various singles boasting self-produced instrumentals. Ray has collaborated with prominent artists such as Travis Thompson, Junk, Young Stitch & More, as well as opened for acts such as Snak the Ripper, Merkules, Rich Homie Quan, and Lil Windex.

MATERIALS

- Chromebooks/Laptops (1/Student ideally)
- The students will be looking around the room for 'found objects' that can make sounds. They can just use the objects already present but you can prepare some if you'd like as well.



Curriculum Outcomes & Indicators



Grade Five

CP5.5 Demonstrate increased skills and abilities in use of the voice and one or more instruments.	<i>d. Use traditional and non-traditional notational devices in music created and performed.</i>
CP5.6 Create sound compositions that draw inspiration from pop culture and demonstrate knowledge of: form, metre, tempo, rhythm etc	<i>b. Pose questions to initiate and guide inquiry into sound composition process.</i>
CH5.2 Compare traditional and evolving arts expressions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists from different regions of Canada, and examine influences of pop culture on contemporary arts.	<i>c. Investigate the influence of popular culture on contemporary First Nations artists (e.g., First Nations filmmakers and hip hop artists such as Eekwol).</i>

Grade Six

CP6.8 Investigate and manipulate elements of music and principles of composition including repetition and variety.	<i>b. Demonstrate how musicians and composers use principles of composition such as repetition and variety as tools to organize the elements of music</i>
CP6.8 Investigate and manipulate elements of music and principles of composition including repetition and variety.	<i>k. Use the Internet and other sources (e.g., guest musicians) to identify, analyze, and create repetition and variety in different styles of music.</i>
CH6.2 Identify ways that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists express cultural identity in contemporary work.	<i>c. Analyze and discuss how artists reflect cultural identity in their work.</i>

Workshop Vocabulary

Kick

The deep and loud sound that floor drum on a drum set makes. It sets the heartbeat of the music.

Snare

The sound you get when your drum stick hits one of the small circular drums.

Hi-Hat

The 'ts' sound that the two metal discs on a drum kit make when they clap together.

A Beat

The instrumental music that a rapper raps over top of.

Beatbox

When we use our mouth to make drum sounds

Pre Workshop Exercises



EXERCISE 1 - What is Rhythm?

- Use this call and response video to get them warmed up and using their rhythmic skills

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m23Q7HSZuqk>

- Have your students stand in a circle and then go around the circle with each student taking a turn to perform a rhythmic action (which could be just a clap, or a variety of things) that the rest of the circle needs to mimic.

- Show your students the video below and ask them how they would define each word (Beat, Rhythm, Melody & Harmony).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFnWrj_lbuA

EXERCISE 2 - Electronic Drums For Everyone

- Get your class a set of chromebooks/laptops and have each student experiment with the electronic drum kit at the link below:

<https://www.sessiontown.com/en/music-games-apps/virtual-instrument-play-drums-online>

- Let your students play around with the kit for a while. Encourage them to use their keyboard to play the different drum components.

- Put a song on for them and have them try to drum along to it. Ask them to focus on the 3 main components that Ray will talk about, the kick, the snare (or 'sticks') and the hi-hat.

- Introduce your students to their first drum machine, a hip hop beat maker's best friend:

<https://muted.io/lil-beat-maker/>

- The website above has 2 ways of visualizing and programming a drum beat, the circle and the linear graph. Start by showing them the circle. Click space to start the drum loop and show the students which colors correspond to which drum sounds.

- Once the students have experimented with that for a little while, have them use the linear graph at the bottom and do the same thing they were doing but with the different visual layout.

- Put a simple repetitive beat on your speakers, see if the students can copy the drum rhythm in it (make sure that the tempo is the same for all the laptops/beat on speaker).

Broadcast Program

00:00 – 00:05

Artist Bio Video + Introduction

00:05 – 00:10

Music, Culture & Identity Discussion

00:10 – 00:20

Rhythm, Groove & Production Fundamentals

- Tempo and feel
- Drum pattern structure
- How groove creates movement
- Quick interactive rhythm exercise

00:20 – 00:25

Sampling & Found Sound Exercise

- Demonstrate real-world sampling concept
- Students contribute sounds
- Layer a live groove
- Discuss creative decision-making

00:25 – 00:35

Professional Beat Breakdown

- Play full track
- Solo drums → explain programming
- Add bass → explain pocket
- Add melody → mood and texture
- Discuss arrangement and energy shifts
- Students give live creative direction

00:35-00:45

Basic Drum Machine Skills Exercise

00:45 – 00:50

Industry & Creative Pathways/Q&A

- Music production careers
- Content creation
- Live performance
- Independent artist strategies



Post Workshop Exercises



EXERCISE 1 - Beepbox

- This next tool is one that can be used in the browser of any laptop/chrome book. This program makes every note land in-key so that students can focus on making the kind of melodies and rhythms they imagine.
- The name of the website is Beepbox: <https://www.beepbox.co/>
- I would recommend watching the beginning of this video to familiarize yourself with the basic program. The first 4 minutes of this video might even be appropriate for your students to watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QP6QFV1wqDY>
- Have each student choose their instrument under the 'Type' option on the right. Explain how the notes work visually, that the higher you put the note the higher the pitch is and the lower notes have lower pitch. Explain how the cursor will move from left to right, just like reading and will play whatever note you've highlighted.
- Have each student create their own first unique melody.
- Now have the students create their second layer of instrumentation. Have them click on the yellow '1' at the bottom of the screen (they can return to their original melody by clicking on the blue '1'). Have them choose a new instrument in this new section and make another melody. When they click play they should hear both melodies at the same time.
- If they want to change the feel of their song they can change the key of notes they can play in on the right. If they want to save their creation all they need to do is copy the URL of their webpage and it saves their project.
- See what other people have created here: <https://twitter-archive.beepbox.co/>

EXERCISE 2 - Indigenous Hip Hop

- Show your students the first minute of this mini-documentary (feel free to show them more if you feel there is more there that is appropriate for your grade level): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GblLAU2uQYE>
- Ask your students to try and identify what different art forms were happening in that video. Ask them what they know about powwow's and powwow drumming. Show them this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrC_LkSjM14
- Ask your students how Ray's hip hop can be an expression of his Indigenous identity.
- You can show your students this music video by Ray as he explore his roots on his reserve. (there is one use of the word 'shit' in the song, show it at your discretion of your class) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyPW-wzPiEU&list=RDeyPW-wzPiEU&start_radio=1

Additional Information

Upcoming Workshops

Apr. 15-16 Kamisha Alexson – Visual Arts (Designing the 12 Tipi Teachings)

(French/English) May 5-7 Gabrielle Dufresne – Theatre (Puppetry)

You can find out more about Ray on his website:
<https://raythenihilist.wixsite.com/raythenihilist>

