The Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies Outreach Program

Exploring the Arab Spring through Hip Hop

Grades	9-12
NCSCOS Common Core and Essential Standards	<u>English</u> **CCS Reading Literature Standard 2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. **CCS Reading Literature Standard 4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone). **CCS Reading Literature Standard 6:** Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. **CCR Reading Literature Anchor Standard 9:** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. **CCS Language Standard 5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. <u>Social Studies</u> **7.C.1.2:** Explain how cultural expressions (e.g. art, literature, architecture and music) influence modern society. **7.C&G.1.4:** Compare the sources of power and governmental authority in various societies (e.g. monarchs, dictators, elected officials, anti-governmental groups and religious, political factions). **WH.H.8.1:** Evaluate global wars in terms of how they challenged political and economic power structures and gave rise to new balances of power **WH.H.8.3:** Analyze the "new" balance of power and the search for peace and stability in terms of how each has influenced global interactions since the last half of the twentieth century. **WH.H.8.6:** Explain how liberal democracy, private enterprise and human rights movements have reshaped political, economic and social life in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, the Soviet Union and the United States.

Learning Outcomes	Students will be able to: • Describe the demands of those protesting in the Arab Spring • Define and recognize literary elements • Describe the authorial intent of figurative language • Use literary elements in original writing
Essential Questions	• What was the role of hip hop during the Arab Spring? • How do literary elements add meaning to lyrical texts?
Materials/Resources	• "Using Hip Hop for Global Literacy" PowerPoint, available as a PDF on the Consortium's website. To request an editable version of the PowerPoint, please email harver@email.unc.edu. • Arab Spring Vocabulary Sheet, found below • Music videos available on YouTube • Lyrics and guiding questions found below from Arab artists. Other lyrics are available on http://revolutionaryarabrap.blogspot.com/p/subtitled-videos.html • Lyrics and guiding questions of Arab American artists found below • Compare and Contrast Sheet for lyrics
Time Required For Lesson	This document contains lessons and activities that can be modified to last from one day to four class periods. These lessons can be adapted to have a social studies focus, or literary focus. Teachers can select from the guiding questions those that best match their subject and supplement when necessary.

LESSON/ACTIVITY #1: The Arab Spring and Hip Hop

Warm Up Idea

1. For beginning a new topic in class, put the beginning of a related quote on the board: for example, "A constitution imperiled justifies -----" (revolution), Edward Counsel, *Maxims*. Invite students to finish the quote with their own endings.

   Once they have had the chance to write down their responses, tell them the actual ending of the quote and discuss the meaning. This activity not only gets students prepared for the topic but also teaches new language and new quotations.

   Other quote examples:
   "If you want to change the world, ----" (pick up your pen and write). Martin Luther
   "(Education) ---- is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. Nelson Mandela

The Arab Uprisings

1. Explain the environment that prompted the Arab Spring. To do this, educators may use slides from the PowerPoint, "Using Hip Hop for Global Literacy" (applicable slides begin with slide 3 and end with slide 18). Have students take notes on the historical context. Go over basic vocabulary (vocabulary sheet found below), as well as the factors that led to revolutions during this time period. You can distribute the vocabulary sheet, or have students copy the words down from a projection.
2. How is hip hop related to the Arab Spring? Explain that music is a way that people around the world express themselves, and is a way to talk about issues people are confronted with in their daily lives. Hip hop provided an important method of communication during the protests. It created moral support and encouraged a spirit of resistance against regimes in the Arab World. Explain the themes commonly found in hip hop music from the time preceding and during the Arab Uprisings (slides 20 and 21).
3. Provide examples of Arab artists and their songs. Examples include El General of Tunisia, Deeb of Egypt, and Ibn Thabit of Libya (slides 23-26). Other examples can be found on this website: http://revolutionaryarabrap.blogspot.com/p/subtitled-videos.html. Artists are organized by country. *Note: while most of the lyrics are clean, a few songs do contain curse words. Additional lyrics with guiding questions already created can be found here: http://www.middleeastpdx.org/resources/hip-hop-and-the-arab-uprisings-resources-for-teachers/.
4. Divide students into small groups (3-4), and assign one song to each group. Instruct students to read the lyrics aloud together and answer the questions that accompany that particular song.
5. Once students are finished, ask each group to present their song to the entire class. Each group will share the following points, as well as other song-specific points.
    - Who is the artist? What country are they from?
    - What are the themes of the song?

    → ***Additional Ideas:*** If you have time, you can involve the music videos for the songs. You may show pieces of the videos as part of each group's presentation. You can also ask the students to watch the entire music video that accompanies the song for their group and have them write about the images and symbols presented.
6. As a class, discuss the commonalities between the different songs.

Arab Spring Vocabulary Sheet

Arab	A member of a Semitic people, originally from the Arabian Peninsula and neighboring territories, inhabiting much of the Middle East and North Africa. Arabs speak Arabic as their native language.
Muslim	A person who follows the religion of Islam, a monotheistic and Abrahamic religion based on the Qur'an.
Autocracy	A system of government in which the power to govern is concentrated in the hands of one individual.
Dynasty	A sequence of rulers from the same family who rule over a country for a long period of time.
Totalitarianism	The government constricts the rights and privacy of its citizens in a particularly severe and intrusive manner.
Checks and Balances	Features of the Constitution that limit a government's power by requiring that power is balanced among different governmental institutions. These institutions continually constrain one another's activities.
Rentier State	A country that obtains lucrative income by exporting a raw material or leasing out a natural resource to foreign countries. For example, a country that obtains much of its revenue from the export of oil or another natural resource.
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	An international organization headquartered in Washington, DC, of 188 countries that provides loans to countries experiencing balance-of-payment problems that threaten expansion of international trade. The IMF works to promote high employment and sustainable economic growth around the world.
Conditionality	Imposition of stipulations before the granting of loans by the IMF, World Bank, and other international financial institutions.
Neoliberalism	A strategy for economic development that calls for free markets, balanced budgets, privatization, free trade, and minimal government intervention in the economy. Control of economic factors is shifted from the public sector to the private sector.
Fiscal Austerity	Measures taken by governments to reduce expenditures in an attempt to shrink their growing budget deficits.
Patronage	The control of or power to make appointments to government jobs or the power to grant other political favors.
Human Rights	The basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are considered to be entitled, often held to include the rights to life, liberty, equality, and a fair trial, freedom from slavery and torture, and freedom of thought and expression.
Waithood	The trend that Arab youth are not able to enter the full phase of their adult lives. Due to unemployment, they are waiting for jobs, waiting for marriage and intimacy, and waiting for full participation in society.

El Général - Rais lebled (Head of the Country)

Released on November 10, 2010

Source: http://revolutionaryarabraptheindex.blogspot.com/2011/08/el-general-rais-lebled.html

Mr. President, here, today, I speak with you
in my name and the name of all people who live in misery.
It's 2011 and there's still a man who's dying of hunger.
He wants to work to survive, but his voice is not heard!

Go out into the street and see [how] people have become animals.
Look at the police with batons. Thwack-thwack-thwack!
They don't care!
There is no one to tell them the word "stop."
Not even the constitution or the law, put it in water and drink it

Every day I hear of someone prosecuted for a fake offense
Although the official knows that s/he is an honest citizen.
I see the police beat women for wearing headscarves.
Would you accept that if they did the same to your daughter? I know my words make the eye weep.
I know you're still a father. You would not accept evil being done to your children.

Alors! This is a message from one of your children who is telling you of his suffering. We are living like dogs!
Half of the people are living in humiliation and have tasted from the cup of suffering.

CHORUS
Mr. President, your people are dead, many people are eating from garbage cans.
Look at what is happening in your country!
Misery everywhere and people haven't found anywhere to sleep.
I speak here in name of the people who were wronged and crushed beneath the weight of injustice.

Mr. President, you told me to speak without fear.
I spoke here but I knew that my end would be palms.
I see so much injustice. That's why I chose to speak out - even though many people told me that my end will be execution.
But how long [must] the Tunisian live in illusions?
Where is freedom of expression? I have only heard the phrase! It is just words.
They named Tunisia "the Green."
Mr. President, you can see today that Tunisia has become a desert that's divided into two sides.
They steal in broad daylight, confiscate property, and own the land.

[Even] without me naming them, you know who they are!
So much money was pledged for projects and infrastructure:
schools, hospitals, buildings, houses.
But the sons of dog stuffed their pot-bellies with the people's money.
They steal, rob, kidnap and will not give up the seats of power.
I know there are many words in the people's hearts that don't reach you. Their voices are not heard.
If there was not this injustice, I would not be speaking out today.

Okay. The voice of the nation. El Général. 2011:
The same situation. The same problems and the same suffering.
Mr. President...Mr. President...
Mr. President!

Guiding Questions | Rais lebled (Head of the Country), El Général

Vocabulary

Mr. President - Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali
"Put it in water and drink it" - Arabic expression meaning that something is worthless
"My end would be palms" - slaps/beatings
Alors – French word for 'so!'

1. Who is the artist of this song? What country are they from?

2. Who is the artist speaking to? Why?

3. What does El Général say about the behavior of the police in his country?

4. Compare the political environment in the song to the United States. Do you feel that our rules and laws are enforced? Why or why not? How do you feel when you see a rule or a law not being enforced, or being applied differently to different people?

5. *External conflicts* can exist between two people, between a person and their environment, or between a person and a whole society. Conflicts can also be *internal*, involving opposing forces within a person's mind. Find examples of both internal and external conflict in the song.

6. What imagery does the artist use to show the living conditions in the country?

7. El Général uses the metaphor of a father figure in the song. He states that President Ben Ali has failed to be a "good father" for his country. Why do you think that El Général uses this metaphor? What is its effect?

8. El Général's music led to his arrest in January, 2011. Why do you think that the government chose to arrest him?

9. What are the themes present in this song?

Deeb ft. Edd Abbas - Stand Up, Egyptian!

Released on August 5, 2011

Source: http://revolutionaryarabrap.blogspot.com/p/subtitled-videos.html

Egypt is always calling on you

VERSE 1 (Deeb):
The people have regained the pie.
The stock market has been put out of commission.
The old slogan is back: "The police are in the service of the people."
The situation was tough, but today is better.
We can make our desert green.
We got rid of Hitler's rule, a pharaoh.
In the age of Twitter and Facebook the Egyptian walks confidently using the language of righteousness.
They used to tell us no.
It made no difference to them even if God wished the earth to split open.
Our revolution is a popular, peaceful, national revolution.
We have demanded freedom, dignity, and social justice.
The people were controlled with an iron fist,
business contacts and personal interests.
They treated us viciously
They appeared on satellite TV channels and issued provocative statements
We won on February 11, the joy of millions
Ululate oh Egypt, the Beautiful! We have achieved freedom.

CHORUS:
(Edd Abbas): The revolution is not over yet; it has only just begun.
It looks like our turn has come; and you're still in bed!
C'mon, get up! You'll brush your teeth later.
C'mon, get up! Move, your regime is bad for you!
The revolution is not over yet; it has only just begun.
It looks like our turn has come; and you're still in bed!
C'mon, get up! You'll brush your teeth later.
C'mon, get up! Move, your regime is bad for you!
(Deeb): Rise up, O Egyptian: No revolution finishes in a night and a day.
Bear with it a little. Have endurance and tolerance.
Don't be afraid of the cycle of production: there should be a revolution of the self.
Tomorrow is better than the past.

VERSE 2 (Edd Abbas)
The man was a dictator in a democratic country.
Living on clouds, he was comfortable and carefree.
What is prohibited was permitted for him because he was friends with a judge.
He turned a blind eye to drugs so that his people would remain unaware.
So that his people would remain high, busy laughing.
Because they aren't conscious, it is easy to control them.
The police have a green light. You couldn't report them.
If they are suspicious of you, of the way you look, they would hang you.
Thirty years: he ruled longer than any other president
He even broke the record of Mr. Nabih Berri.
In Egypt, they say, "It's okay. Misfortune is my son.
I will check what is left over from yesterday, to feed him."
To whom will I complain? My situation, like that of millions, is bad.
C'mon, let's go straight to Tahrir Square!
On February 11, we witnessed the departure of Hosni, who has been working as an agent all these years against me!

VERSE 3, PART 1 (Edd Abbas):
I am a civilian. I wave my pen like it's my flag.
With my sweat, I water my work like it's my thirst.
What's good about my Arab country is that there is spontaneity inside me.
If I am angry, I have my freedom of expression.
There are no limits holding me back.
You see me in Tahrir Square and in downtown Beirut, not for the sky to become blue again.
But to topple the regime that has robbed us of our freedom.

VERSE 3, PART 2 (Deeb):
A transitional period. A commercial break. Tea and Cleopatra.
Yellow faces staying up at night to follow the newscast.
A penalty. The audience is waiting for the goal
every day in newspapers. We read news about a dog who looted the country.
Stop! You must return the gold!
Weren't you in charge of the country's media?
False statements, odd expressions.
The hard part is over and history has been written.
Don't think the people are exhausted!

Guiding Questions | Stand Up, Egyptian!, Deeb ft. Edd Abbas

Vocabulary

February 11: The date that Hosni Mubarak resigned as President of Egypt: 11 February 2011
Ululate: Howl or wail as an expression of strong emotion
Mr. Nabih Berri: Speaker of the Parliament of Lebanon

1. Who is the artist of this song? What country are they from?

2. Who is the artist speaking to? Why?

3. President Mubarak resigned on February 11, 2011 but this song was released in August, 2011. What does the song tell you about life in Egypt after his departure?

4. In the first verse, Deeb says "in the age of Twitter and Facebook the Egyptian walks confidently using the language of righteousness." What does he mean? Do you feel that social media provides an avenue to express yourself?

5. Deeb describes life before the revolution, "the people were controlled with an iron fist." Provide three examples from the text that demonstrate the environment.

6. What is a "revolution of the self"? Why would a revolution of the self be important/ impact a political revolution?

7. The artists use the metaphor of drugs. The Egyptian people weren't actually on drugs, what is the artist describing?

8. Edd Abbas raps that his writing is his expression of freedom. If you were writing your own lyrics, how would you describe freedom? What imagery would you use to talk about a lack of freedom?

9. Didactic writing teaches a specific lesson or moral, or provides a model of correct behavior or thinking. Would you consider these lyrics to be didactic? Why or why not? Cite evidence from the text to prove your answer.

10. What are the themes present in the song?

Ibn Thabit – Lookin' for Freedom

Released on December 7, 2010

http://revolutionaryarabraptheindex.blogspot.com/2011/08/ibn-thabit-looking-for-freedom-december.html

HOOK: Libya is the story of knights and men - you see them everywhere!
Libya is the nation of Qur'an memorizers. Wherever you go, you hear the call to prayer.
Libya has many peoples and tribes but they all] raise the same flag.
Libya has a bright future, a future you couldn't have imagined in your dreams.

If you wonder about Gaddafi, know that his days are numbered.
He wants to sow fitna but he doesn't have the means.
No regionalism! No racism! No tribalism!
Here, I'll make it clear for you in the Amazighi language:

**the few lines of lyrics in the Amazighi language are not available in translation*

We have different looks and different colors but we are all Libyans
and whoever insults one among us insults millions.
He says there are no Amazigh when they have lived here for years.
A quick question: so where do these words come from?

HOOK

If we can only be rid of the The Geeda, I said this long ago
and purify the land of the Saad-Sheen who are like rats

Just knock twice on the door of his headquarters - they won't welcome you!
But it's fine. We'll disperse the spies and put them in prison afterwards.
And Libya, as it once was, will return to being the apple of our eyes.
The 2000 kilometers along the ocean is the property of the Libyan people,
and if you don't like it, Saif, you can answer to the millions.

Those who are with you are disbelievers, and they worship the tyrant.
We will bring them in one by one, from Kufra to Nalut.
No crime will pass us by - it's not far off!
And we will make you pay - this is certain!
Zawiya and Zuwara: we will rebuild them
and help is coming from Tarhuna and Bani Walid.
The 1st of September, which you called the Eid,
in Tripoli that street [named after that date] will be renamed Martyr's Street.

HOOK

The nation has united once again, God be praised.
Didn't we say the blood of martyrs will not go in vain?
Now the sweetest days, God willing, will come next.
We will camp out for 42 years.
Couscous, Burdeem, Bakbuki, Bazeen.
We will serve you a list of dishes longer than limousines.
God be with loved ones. O martyrs, don't be afraid!
We don't forget that we have ten thousand Mohammad Nabbous-es.
Their children are not orphans, consider it over.
Just knock on any door if you are missing something:
these words I have heard more than once,
as many times as I heard, "Gaddafi, get out of here!"
This is an important responsibility that is obligatory upon us.
There is nothing called "too much."
We accept what God has written for us.
God be praised for the goodness there is within us.

HOOK

Guiding Questions | Lookin' for Freedom, Ibn Thabit

Vocabulary

Fitna: Arabic word for strife among the Islamic community
Amazigh: adjective of Amazigh, or Berber: a non-Arab, ethnic group indigenous to North Africa
The Geeda: Muammar Gaddafi
Saad-Sheen: spies
Saif: Arabic for 'Sword'. Usually kept as the name of a male child by Arab or Muslim parents
Kufra and Nalut: Regions of Libya
Zawiya, Zuwara, Tarhuna and Bani Walid: Cities and towns in Libya
1st of September: the day Gaddafi came to power in 1969
Eid: The name of two festivals in Islam. The more important one, Eid ul-Fitr, is celebrated at the end of Ramadan.
Couscous, Burdeem, Bakbuki, Bazeen: Libyan food
Mohammad Nabbous: a Libyan blogger and civilian journalist who was killed by Gaddafi forces for publicly opposing the Gaddafi regime

1. Who is the artist of this song? What country are they from?

2. Who is the artist speaking to? Why?

3. What does Ibn Thabit mean when he refers to the Saad- Sheen as rats?

4. Why does Ibn Thabit stress that Libya is a nation of "Qur'an memorizers"? Describe characteristics of a religious citizenry.

5. The theme of religion is present throughout the song. What does the artist call those who "worship" Muammar Gaddafi?

6. What words does the author use to create an image of unity among the Libyan people?

7. A 'martyr' is a person who is killed because of their religious or other beliefs. What are the beliefs of the martyrs in the song?

8. What is the effect of the repetition of different towns in Libya? How might this make the people who live in those places feel?

9. Many Arab countries have experienced food shortages. How is this represented in the song?

10. What themes are present in the song?

LESSON/ACTIVITY #2: Students will learn about Arab American Hip Hop artists

Arab American Artists

1. Explain that there are many Arab American hip hop artists. Others are popular within the Arab American community, while others are less widely known. Examples include Omar Offendum, The Narcycist, Native Deen, Miss Undastood, among others (slides 30-32). More examples are available on this website: http://arabsinamerica.unc.edu/arts-music/hip-hop/.
2. Divide students into the same small groups of 3-4, and assign an Arab American song to each group. Have each group answer the guiding questions that accompany the song.
3. Using the "Comparing Arab lyrics with Arab American lyrics" worksheet, have students compare and contrast the American lyrics with the lyrics of the Arab artist that they studied. Discuss as a class: How are the themes similar? How are they different?

Stand Alone - Native Deen

Source: http://nativedeen.com/more/lyrics/#n03

Chorus:
I am not afraid to stand alone.
I am not afraid to stand alone. If Allah is by my side
I am not afraid to stand alone. Everything will be alright
I am not afraid to stand alone. Gonna keep my head up high

Single mother raising her children
Now she's a Muslim
Started praying and wearing a headscarf
Was a healing for her heart
Struggling with no one to lean on
But with prayer she would be strong
Got a job but then she was laid off
Got a better education and it paid off
Got a call for a job that she dreamed of
Close by, great pay -she was in love – they said…
They brought her in, said she's the number one pick
"You got the job, but you gotta lose the outfit"
It's a tough position that they put me in
Cause I've been struggling with my two children
But I'll continue looking for a job again
My faith in my religion now will never bend

Chorus

Peer pressure, they were insisting
And I was resisting
Some days I felt I would give in
Just wanted to fit in
I know when I'm praying and fasting'
They be teasing and laughing
So I called to my Lord for the power
For the strength every day, every hour…
Then one day there's a new Muslim teacher
Single mom and the people respect her
Just seeing her strength I get stronger
They can break my will no longer
You don't see me sweating when they're jokes're cracking
Never see me cussing' with my pants saggin'
I ain't never running yo' I'm still standing
I ride with Allah to the very end

Chorus

I am not afraid to stand alone…
Now, I'm a tough one, who can bear their blows
The rest play dumb, they don't dare say no
Scared of being shunned, but it's clear they know
I ain't never gonna run, I ain't scared no more.
Man, these sisters be resolute
Never stressed when the rest say they wasn't cute
And they get the respect of the other youth
Come best with the dress yo' and that's the truth
These sisters are strong gonna hand it down
So me I'm a brotha gotta stand my ground
I ain't gonna shudder, when the gangs around
Peer pressure whatever, it's my planet now
Others may fall, I'mma hold my own
With Allah's help I'll be strong as stone
And I'mma be brave and let Al Islam be shown
Cause you I know I not afraid to stand alone

Chorus

Guiding Questions | Stand Alone, Native Deen

Vocabulary

Allah: Arabic word for 'God'
Fasting: One of the Five Pillars of the Islamic faith is fasting during the month of Ramadan

1. The group Native Deen aims to highlight issues confronting Muslims living in America through their hip hop. Write down two examples of issues Muslim Americans face from the song.

2. Why do the artists feel like they are alone? Pick another group in society and describe how they might have the feeling of "standing alone."

3. What do these lyrics say about Islam?

4. In the first verse, the artists use couplets that show cause and effect, "Struggling with no one to lean on/ But with prayer she would be strong, Got a job but then she was laid off/ Got a better education and it paid off."

5. The lyrics follow the story of the mother throughout the song. How does she serve as a symbol of strength?

6. Describe the author's tone of this song.

7. The chorus repeats the line "I'm not afraid to stand alone." What is the effect of this repetition?

8. Most hip hop in the United States does not have a religious connection. How is this song different than other songs that you hear on the radio?

P.H.A.T.W.A. – The Narcicyst

Source: http://genius.com/The-narcicyst-phatwa-lyrics/

[Hook]
C-I-A-F-B-I
Enter and spy
When we fly, denied
From planes landing into NY (why?)
C-I-A-F-B-I
Sentenced our lives (P.H.A.T.W.A.)
I'll get deported somewhere to die

[Verse 1]
What kind of life is this?
Out of sight, out of mind with divisiveness
Get your head right, we're betrayed and gone wrong, hold on
Arabs get their roll on like backgammon with souls lost
Rap's Khalil Gibran, puffin' cedar trees
Cuffed on the lawn of the White House
Right now they (pump pain and oil while they murder)
Some things you never heard of
Bodies get blasted back, tagged and taxed
Beef served cheap eating vats of fat
On the other side, brothers wearing bags for hats
Orange jumpsuit steez, standing back to back
Party in the heat now, (everybody)
We living dead, huh? Give him a phatwa
Bless god
(I get deported somewhere to die)
Feds like, "c'mon let's talk."

[Hook]

[Verse 2]
Security's, rarely irrelevant
Impurity in the scale of my element
The lies make me mo' sad like Israeli intelligence
Barely a militant
Humans pale in benevolence
Rap's Salman Rushdie, outlandish
No sound scan push me
Ballads outstanding, how candid!
(Pump pain and oil while they murder)
Some things you never thought of
I'm feeling very amped, this music is so soothing
Spit so funny skitzo, runnin' hits go dunny!
Trying to git mo' money
Like a Cuban military camp funded by sick folks
And the list goes... (everybody)
Trying to speak out for peace, deleted, believe it
(I'll get reported somewhere tonight)
Still undefeated

[Hook]

[Verse 3]
We went from supported to subordinate
Can't afford it, ordered
My motherland smothered and mortared
Morbid, at borders
I'm sorted out from beardless cats
That boarded the plane as I was boarding
Then detained, I can't call it
Mic check when they search my Jordans
It hurts like mourning so...
(Pump pain and oil while they murder)
Some things I'm unsure of
Like an Arab man at an airport
When you wonder what he's there for, therefore
I stand up for lands stuck, near war in tandem
Passport control, where I'm picked at random
Damn son!
(Everybody)
Feels safer than we do
Your plots are see through
(I get recorded, somewhere they spy)
Get the truth EQ'd

[Hook]

Guiding Questions | P.H.A.T.W.A., The Narcycist

Vocabulary

P.H.A.T.W.A.: Phonetic spelling of the Arabic word, fatwa, an Islamic ruling or judgment. According to the album liner notes, P.H.A.T.W.A. stands for Political Hip-Hop Attracting The World's Attention.
Backgammon: A board game of strategy and luck, backgammon was developed in the Middle East about 5,000 years ago
Khalil Gibran: A Lebanese-American poet, most well-known for writing *The Prophet*
cedar trees: a symbol of Lebanon: they appear on the national flag of Lebanon
"mo'sad like Israeli intelligence": Referring to MOSSAD, the Israeli intelligence service
Salman Rushdie: A British-Indian writer. His 1988 novel The Satanic Verses was deemed blasphemous by some Muslim leaders and was banned in a number of countries.
git mo': A play on Gitmo, the shorthand name of the Guantanamo Bay

1. The title of this song contains a play on words. What is the *fatwa,* or ruling/ judgement, that the artist feels that the US government has pronounced about Arabs?

2. The Narcycist refers to himself as "rap's Salman Rushdie." Using the information about Rushdie in the vocabulary box, why do you think he makes this comparison?

3. The artist, like many Arabs, is upset about the prejudice he faces because of his heritage. What connotations do you associate with the word militant? Why does The Narcycist choose this word?

4. As an Iraqi-Canadian, the Narcycist discusses the struggles he faces living with juxtaposing cultures and a hybrid Arab-North American identity.

5. How does the artist describe the relationship between the U.S. and Iraq?

6. The theme of airport security weaves throughout the song. He can't call it a mic(rophone) check when they search his (Michael) Jordans

7. Explain the oxymoron, "I'm feeling very amped, this music is so soothing."

8. Hip hop has been a way to link Arab diasporic communities in the West with those in Arab countries. Relate the line, "trying to speak out for peace, deleted, believe it" with the experience of the hip hop artists in Arab countries during the uprisings in 2011.

9. Explain the irony presented about safety in the lyrics.

First World Problem – The Narcicyst

Source: http://genius.com/The-narcicyst-first-world-problems-lyrics/

Verse 1:
Free Trade Coffee
First world Problems
My Rings Hurt Golem
My Verse Surf Word Columns.
Internet Flow, Give and Let Go
Live and Let Live where everything's retro-
Graded from the get go
Hated the fact that I was jaded at Rap
And Loved to Fake it at the next show...
Expect the UnAccepted, Accept the UnExpected
Raise My son respectful until he's running reckless...
See Daddy had to make a living off of rhyming..
That's why you'd see me leaving all the time and...
Some fathers fight wars, how will their children live
without them? How to write an Album. My First
World Problem

Verse 2:
Organic Tea Leaves
More Panic TVs
Sneakers Chinese Sweet
Everybody Tweet Deep
Nothing Like Free Speech, It made us Speak Cheap
Hit Me on the Celli, Be Careful what you send me
They are watching what you tell me this is really
overwhelming. When I was younger all the hunger
built up in my belly
Peanut Butter Skin they want to mix it with the jelly...
Before they go to War they want to show you what
they're selling
Third Place Offer, Third Wave Coffee, Brown Sugar
Toffee, I wonder if you got me? Doesn't really matter
you'll be force fed it often, who cares about an album?
First World Problem!

Guiding Questions | First World Problem, The Narcycist

Vocabulary

My rings hurt Golem: Reference to *Lord of the Rings*. Golem, ironically, is also voiced by Andy Serkis, whose father was Armenian Iraqi.

Brown Sugar Toffee: A reference to the color of his skin

1. What does the author mean by the phrase, 'First World Problem'? What is his 'First World Problem'?

2. Explain the chiasmus, "Expect the UnAccepted, Accept the UnExpected."

3. *Confessional Poetry* is a twentieth century term used to describe poetry that uses intimate material from the poet's life. How could this song be considered to be confessional poetry? Cite evidence from the text in your answer.

4. What is the artist saying about the effects of social media on society when he says; "Everybody Tweet Deep, Nothing Like Free Speech, It made us Speak Cheap." Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

5. The Narcycist references being literally hungry when he was a child. What kind of hunger is he experiencing as an adult?

6. The artist writes about surveillance. Do you believe that we have a high level of surveillance in our country? Why or why not?

7. What do the lyrics expose about the author's character?

8. What themes of the song might apply to people living in the Middle East?

Crying Shame – Omar Offendum

Source: http://genius.com/Omar-offendum-crying-shame-lyrics/

Now they say Syria's confusing
Can't decide which of the sides
They really should be choosing
Here's a thought:
How 'bout you recognize that we're all losing
And there's nothing civil about a war
Where kids are stabbed to death and mothers smothered
On a kitchen floor, or by the kitchen floor
Collapsing from a barrel bomb
Conspiracies we've carried on
Like baggage from our colonizers
Unified by our ability to seek the wrong advisers
Money hungry evildoers, power hungry presidents
Using hunger as a weapon to destroy the residents
Patronizing marathons of half-truth on the news:
These bloody Arabs
Headlines, or punchlines?
Come on man... two for one, I'm not amused
They yell, somebody tell these anchormen
It's best to keep it classy
Burgundy's the color of our blood
That's flooded in the `āṣi
Civil disobedience flow within our veins
Our fathers went against the grain
While Hitler hid inside a lion's mane

[Hook:]
A crying shame
A crying shame
A crying shame the way the boy was crying wolf
And they believed him
Using War on Terror rhetoric while murdering the peaceful
Crying shame, say it with me, crying shame
Crying shame, say it with me, crying shame
A crying shame the way the boy was crying wolf
And they believed him
Using War on Terror rhetoric while murdering the peaceful

[Hook variation]

I pray my people take these words as a call to the conscience
Syria's now the bottleneck of all our region's conflicts
Shi`a-Sunni, Turkish-Kurdish, religious and secular
Imperialist and anti-this, to levels that are molecular
99 percent of all matter is empty space, so nothing's real
'cept the scars and smiles on a child's face, just let 'em heal
Egos aside, this ain't a tit-for-tat
While the opposition kept on bickering, shabiha laughed
Not to mention, these crazy fanatics who took advantage
From all over the planet, uh
Growing percentage of this havoc and this pain
Causing damage to our revolution and tarnishing its name
Not to mention Allah's name in all His mercy and compassion
Beheading people left and right for not following their fashions?
It's tragic. So many fingers in the pot, cooking this fatal fatteh
What a waste. The people of Syria can't even taste a sip of mate
A disgrace

[Hook variation]

[Outro:]
See it all comes down to choices
Most Syrians have none left
That's why a former business owner has to resort to gun theft
That's why a girl named Shams may never see the sunset
That's why I can't help but feel guilt when I see a plate of mansaf

Four years in
Four million refugees
Two hundred and twenty thousand people killed
Over a million wounded
And over twelve million men, women, and children inside Syria
In dire need of help
Please, give, and give generously
And think about the people of Syria
It's the place where the very first alphabet was recorded
The very first musical notation
Some of the first mosques, churches, and synagogues in this world
Syrian history is world history

Guiding Questions | Cryin' Shame, Omar Offendum

Vocabulary

`āṣi: 'rebellion' or 'insurgency' in Arabic
shabia: Groups of armed militia in support of the Ba'ath Party government of Syria, led by the Al-Assad family. In Arabic, shabia is loosely translated "spirits" or "ghosts."
fatteh: a Jordanian dish that uses flatbread as a foundation for adding various ingredients
mate: a traditional South American caffeine-rich infused drink
Shams: the Arabic word for Sun, a girl's name in Arab countries
mansaf: A traditional Jordanian dish of lamb. It is the national dish of Jordan

1. A Syrian-American artist, Offendum incorporates his heritage into his songs by singing about current events in Syria, as well as politics in America. What is this particular song a response to?

2. What does the artist think about the media's representation of Arabs?

3. Who is the artist addressing in the song?

4. What imagery does Offendum use to describe war?

5. Why does the artist make an allusion to Hitler?

6. An *elegy* is a poem of mourning traditionally written in response to the death of a person or group. Would you consider this song to be an elegy? Why or why not? Cite evidence from the text in your answer.

7. Why does the artist feel guilty?

8. At the end of the song Offendum makes a plea. Why does he say that Syrian history is world history?

9. Offendum points out that Syria is home to some of the first mosques, churches, and synagogues. Why does the author mention three different religions?

Comparing Arab lyrics with Arab American lyrics

	Arab Hip Hop	Arab-American Hip Hop
What is the author's purpose for writing lyrics?		
What are the themes presented in the lyrics?		
What are the ways the artists use imagery?		
Do the artists write about politics? If so, what words and/or tone do they use to convey messages about politics?		
Are the artists requesting something in their lyrics? What do they want?		

LESSON/ACTIVITY #3: Students will write their own poetry or hip hop song, using literary elements

1. The teacher will explain the structure of a hip hop song using content from Flocabulary.com, most of this information has been adapted from https://www.flocabulary.com/warp/hip-hop-songwriting/:

   Almost every hip hop song consists of three basic parts: intros, hooks (choruses) and verses.

   Most songs begin with a few instrumental bars, which are typically followed by a verse, although some do start with a hook. Very few songs begin with rapping. Usually the beat plays for 4 or 8 bars before the artist comes in.

   After the introduction, most songs contain two to four verses of 16 to 32 bars each. The verse is the largest section of a song and usually contains the bulk of the information.

   Hooks: What are they and why are they so important?
   After the first verse comes the hook, which is the most memorable (and often most important) part of many hip hop songs. There are two types of hooks: rapped or sung. Many hooks incorporate both of these techniques. As your students are writing their hooks, remind them that they have these options.

   It's important to have the hook accomplish two things. First, it must be fun to listen to, because it's the part that listeners are going to hear the most. Some hooks can be fun and catchy. The second thing most hooks should do is advance the main idea of the song. Often, the best hooks do this without being obvious. Take this example from Jay-Z on a track where he basically just brags:

   Can't touch the untouchable, break the unbreakable
   Shake the unshakeable (it's Hovi baby)
   Can't see the unseeable, reach the unreachable,
   Do the impossible (it's Hovi baby)

   He doesn't use the hook to come out and just say, "I am awesome," but that is the message. → Teachers can choose a different song of their choice to demonstrate different hooks and their meaning. What are your students listening to? Students should always come back to the hook once they've written the whole song to see if they can improve it.
2. Explain the literary elements that you want your students to use in their songs. For example, one example of personification, metaphor, hyperbole, etc. You could also provide a list and ask students to select three elements out of the five. A listing of AP Literary Terms can be found here: http://www.gertzresslerhigh.org/ourpages/auto/2013/3/13/60886679/AP%20LITERARY%20TERMS.pdf.
3. Choose a **Topic**
   Have your students brainstorm a subject of their song or poem. As the lyrics of the Arab Uprisings were highly politicized, students can be instructed to think of a political or

social issue that they are passionate about. Students can think of something related to their school, their local community, the state, or the country as a whole.

4. Choose a **Beat**
   For students who are interested in using a beat, have them pick the beat before writing the lyrics. It can be hard to make their lyrics fit to music afterwards. Flocabulary.com has several free beats available online that students can use (for non-commercial use only). https://www.flocabulary.com/warp/beats/
   → To keep things simple, you can play one beat in class and have the entire class write over it. If you have the time, however, it is generally better to have each student choose their own beat that reflects their mood and style.
5. Sketch out an **Outline**
   Have your students sketch out their song using a graphic organizer, teacher's choice (several free graphic organizers for planning and writing here: http://www.dailyteachingtools.com/free-graphic-organizers-w.html). Using the writing organizer, students will divide their content into verses that make sense. Verses are often of equal length, such as 16 bars each. However, they can also have different lengths.
6. Ready, Get Set, **Write!**
   Teachers can provide a basic list of rhyming words to spark the rhyming. You may provide access to a thesaurus to help students come up with rhymes.

Homework Assignment: Have your students complete their lyrics at home.

LESSON/ACTIVITY #4: Students will perform their own poetry or hip hop song

1. Remind students of your classroom rules before any performances. Remind students about respecting each other while they share their songs or poems.
2. Give your students the chance to **Perform**
   Performing art in front of others is an empowering experience for students. For some students, getting a chance to rap in class is a way to contribute as they never have before. Invite students to present their songs in front of the class. Have them share the subject, as well as themes of the song.

Assessment
Student Performance Assessment: Observation of each student participating in the group reading activity, and in the presentation to the rest of the class. Group Assessment: Group presentation and explanation of their assigned song(s). How well does the group work together? Evaluation of the students' lyrics: Does the product reflect that the student has understood the basic content of the Arab Spring/ appropriate ELA standards? Does the product discuss an appropriate topic?