

# Study Guide for Teachers

## Hip Hop Fundamentals **CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS:** *THE POWER OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE EYES OF DR. KING*

presented by  
Young Audiences New Jersey & Eastern PA  
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[www.yanjep.org](http://www.yanjep.org)



### **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

*CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS* focuses on student involvement in the American Civil Rights Movement as seen through the eyes of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The show uses dance, audience participation, and a variety of activities to explore the social conditions that gave rise to the movement, the heroic work necessary to end segregation, and the critical role that young people played in winning equal rights for millions of Americans.

### **LEARNING GOALS**

Students will learn how to define Racism: Racism = Racial Prejudice + Power.

They will also learn some of the ways in which leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks, as well as and regular citizens, stood up non-violently against racial segregation until laws were changed in 1968. This includes sit-ins at lunch counters, protest marches, and youth and adults willingly going to jail in order to bring awareness to the problem of segregation.

By the end of the assembly, student will understand

- The historical conditions that led to the Civil Rights Movement.
- Various historical episodes and key figures in the Civil Rights Movement.
- The nonviolent direct action taken to confront racism and segregation.
- The importance of youth participation in bringing about change.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

Hip-hop is a cultural movement that began among urban youth in New York City, and has since spread around the world. Elements of the hip-hop arts include dance, rap (music, rhythm, and poetry), and graffiti art. Hip-hop began in the mid-1970's as inner-city Black and Latino youths began to develop new styles of music, dance, and painting that emerged from their urban environment.

This assembly uses Hip Hop to develop understanding about core Civics and Social Studies themes. Performers tap into multiple literacies of the student body as they build connections between Hip Hop culture, the fight for equality, social responsibility, and community involvement. During the assembly, students engage history directly through a variety of activities in which they explore prejudice, segregation, non-violent direct action, and the power of cooperation. The lesson stresses creativity and real-world connections, as the audience is empowered to analyze social conflict and work together to find solutions.

## **BEFORE THE PROGRAM**

### **Discussion questions/writing prompts:**

- What is racism? Why is it bad?
- What is segregation? Why might the government have thought it was a good idea? Why is it not a good idea in reality?
- How does diversity make America (or any country or community) stronger?

### **Activities:**

What are some popular dances of today's era? What are some Hip Hop dance styles or dance moves that you know? List, describe, and/or demonstrate them.

## **VOCABULARY WORDS**

**Racism:** When people in power restrict access to resources for another group of people based on race. Racism = racial prejudice + power.

**Segregation:** Laws that separate groups of people based on race, often treating people of color as second-class citizens.

**Non-Violent Direct Action:** Non-violent ways that groups of people can change a system.

**Boycott:** Refusing to financially support institutions that benefit from systems of racism (or unjust laws).

**March:** A large group of people gathering or walking together to draw attention to an issue.

**Protest:** Actions (usually taken by large groups of people) used to call attention to injustice.

## **RESOURCES**

*Mighty Times*, a documentary focusing on the Children's Crusade. (Note: This film contains powerful imagery, some violence, and racially insensitive language.)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT-QkNkMZjk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT-QkNkMZjk)

[ducksters.com](http://ducksters.com): A good resource for basic knowledge on the Civil Rights Movement for young children.

[www.ducksters.com/history/civil\\_rights/african-american\\_civil\\_rights\\_movement.php](http://www.ducksters.com/history/civil_rights/african-american_civil_rights_movement.php)

History for Kids: A website with simple language describing Civil Rights leaders.

[www.historyforkids.net/civil-rights.html](http://www.historyforkids.net/civil-rights.html)

A playlist of music connected with the Civil Rights Movement from the era:

<https://youtu.be/TsziXdKfOsE>

## **AFTER THE PROGRAM**

### **Discussion questions/writing prompts:**

- List and describe the tactics of non-violent direct action that were outlined in the program. Would these same tactics be efficient today?
- Are there any laws in America right now that you feel are unjust and need to change? If so, how could you change them without hurting anyone?
- Why is racial and cultural diversity important to all Americans, not just minorities? What are ways in which diversity can lead to strength?

### **Activities:**

Dance Creation: Students and youth who were jailed often sang songs and comforted each other while imprisoned. Create short dances in small groups about how it might feel to be one of the young children who willingly went to jail. They may have felt lonely, afraid, and exhausted, but also proud and powerful.

Get the Music Teacher involved! Play examples of music from the Civil Rights Movement. How did these songs help to support the movement and help tell its story? Are there songs today that try to do the same things?

## **ARTIST INFORMATION**

Hip Hop Fundamentals are a diverse group of professional dancers dedicated to teaching youth empowerment, social issues, and academic content through Breaking/B-Boying, the world's first Hip Hop dance. We firmly believe that youth learn best when they are having fun. Our dynamic and interactive performances and workshops are guaranteed to empower, engage, and educate youth of all ages.

Since 2004, the company has performed hundreds of shows across the United States. They were featured in Columbia University's collective 2014 book *Advocating Creatively*, as well as articles in *Dance Studio Magazine*. In October 2013 Hip Hop Fundamentals presented at the TEDx conference in Bermuda, lecturing on the power of creative education and Hip Hop as an educational tool.