# ANTIRACISM AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING: ELEVATING STUDENT VOICE TO LEAD CRITICAL DIALOGUE ON RACE

By

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#### **Capstone Project Summary:**

This Capstone Project outlines the curriculum, and corresponding example lesson plans, for my upcoming high school, English elective course entitled "Me Against the World: Hip Hop, Identity, and Revolution". This course is written in the hopes of subverting the racist, traditional landscape of American schools in 2021 (Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017). Through this curriculum, I hope to uplift the voices of my students so that they can collectively lead dialogic spaces on the intersections of identity, race, and social change. This Capstone Project was written in the pursuit of answering my research question: *How can the implementation of culturally and linguistically responsive discussion protocols elevate students to lead critical conversations about race and identity in an English classroom*?

As an upcoming seventh year, seventh grade English teacher at Brooklyn Center Community Schools, I am thrilled to get this opportunity to apply my passions to a new elective course this upcoming fall semester. Primarily, this course is meant to serve the brilliant community I work alongside. This population boasts a student body that is over 92% students of color, serving over 94% of its learners who qualify for free and reduced lunch services. I have written this semester-long course curriculum to outline the English elective that I will facilitate for my incoming 9th and 10th grade students in the 2021-2022 school year with my learners specifically in mind. Outside of my direct instruction, this Capstone Project was written for the intended audience of any educator looking to embrace culturally sustaining pedagogy into the fabric of their classroom culture. Furthermore, this course may serve as a guide for instructors beginning the work of supporting student-led discussion following culturally and linguistically responsive discussion protocols. I hope that this course outline adds itself to the growing literature arguing culturally sustaining pedagogy as best practice, and affirms the notion that through student-directed dialogue, our schools can become places of antiracism, and long-overdue structural change.

My course design was broken up into six specific units of study. All six of these units highlight detailed formative and summative assessments that are rooted in culturally and linguistically responsive student-led discussion protocols. Each unit features a title, unit description, guiding unit question, duration of study, standard alignment, example formative and summative lesson with all resources, graphic organizers, and slideshow presentation linked, and a clear description of culturally and linguistically responsive discussion protocols--as well as how they operate as culturally sustaining with intentionality. The standards listed follow the Historically Responsive Literacy Model of Dr. Gholdy Muhammed, instead of state standards (Muhammed, 2020). As my Capstone Paper addresses, my course meets the state standards of Minnesota, but here I emphasize the historic Black literacy traditions upheld by Muhammed's work (Muhammed, 2020). The discussion protocols outlined are all modified from the work of Dr. Sharroky Hollie, in Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy (Hollie, 2017). Through this Capstone Project, I hope to better align my practice to meet the needs of my students, and enact culturally sustaining pedagogy with validity.

This work has been a fulfilling challenge. It taps into my personal and professional journey as a white educator striving to constantly reflect on my own positionality to best hold space for my students in radical dialogue and community-centered action. It is my deepest hope that through the feedback of my students, their families, and Brooklyn Center community members, I can continue to revise and build upon this curriculum outlined to better follow the voices of my learners, and lend myself to the work of toppling white supremacy in our schools, cities, and in the systems that govern an inequitable world.

Course Title: Me Against the World: Hip Hop, Identity, and Revolution

**Course Description:** This course uses Rap music to analyze our identities, radicalize our perspectives, and realize our voices in a world stacked against us. This class is for music lovers and students looking to advocate for themselves and a more equitable world. Here we will listen to music that moves us, analyze lyrics, and critically challenge systems of oppression through discussion, writing, and action.

Unit 1 Title: "All Eyez on Me"

**Unit Description:** Students interview their family members, tracing their family's music history. In this study, students begin to question how the music they grew up on and love impacts their identity.

Unit Question: How does the music we listen to inform who we are, what perspectives we hold, and what we know about the world around us?

**Unit Duration:** 2 weeks

Standards: Literacy as Identity Meaning-Making (Muhammad)

Formative Assessments: Musical share partner discussions, Carousel discussion protocol,

walk and talk partner discussions, turn and talk partner conversations, silent appointment

partner discussions

#### **Example Formative Assessment Lesson:**

• Do Now:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wJdtb\_jFpzlZz-LAq07HWuaqyKfW2KO5h s2-AgH6-Bo/edit

- Musical Share Discussion Protocol
  - **Protocol description:** Students stand when they hear music with their prewritten, Do Now answers. They move freely and socialize while the music plays. When the music is paused, learners find a partner and share their answer for question one. This is repeated until all answers have been discussed.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** Learners are validated and affirmed through an exercise activating kinesthetic movement, sociocentrism, spontaneity, volume, learner-selected music, and communalism.
- Independent classmate music question generation:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wn\_lXezPh1VVPRCDcsz8iiWCS0\_j5SIptqt k6zSSiuO/edit

- Carousel Discussion Protocol
  - **Protocol description:** Students form two equal lines facing each other. The teacher shouts out various greetings for students to practice (shake hands and say hello like it is a job interview, dap up like you are seeing your favorite cousin for the first time in months, etc.) then learners ask the questions they

prepared for partners, taking time to answer fully before one line rotates and students face a new partner.

• **How is it culturally responsive?:** Students practice various formal and informal greetings, while being validated and affirmed through kinesthetic movement, sociocentrism, and peer-led student talk.

# • Independent journal exercise:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Q0kxJRcXXs6Q4\_d8BF6uDjK\_WZ2kkGE BSLh0sPRtSWQ/edit

- Silent Appointment Partner Discussion Protocol:
  - **Protocol description:** Students silently look around the room and use nonverbal hand and face gestures to find a partner, when they have confirmed with a peer that they are partnered up, students hold a hand gesture to indicate to others that they are ready. When the instructor says go, learners move to their partner and share their independent work to discuss and revise.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** This exercise validates and affirms nonverbal communication, and gives opportunity for students to self-select partners, get up and move, and lead academic dialogue.

# **Google Slide Show Presentation for Lesson Instruction:**

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ymUg34X2UHx1Q65hj7M483X3R\_BvaTw1HO OkKUPO\_rc/edit#slide=id.p

Summative Assessment: Reflective essay+Corresponding Playlist detailing family music

history, personal music history and taste, and reflection on how their music history reflects their own identity and worldview.

#### **Example Summative Assessment Lesson:**

# • Move-It-To-Improve-It Peer Review:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RUHyNzr1dBmXCRt28MnvDb9qHikzb0z6 6aOvWuQvcpU/edit

- Protocol description: Students leave their essay draft on their desk, and place their Move-It-To-Improve-It graphic organizer next to their essay. When the teacher plays a song, the students stand with a pencil, and move freely around the room socializing freely. When the educator pauses the song, students sit at a new desk, spending 3-5 minutes reviewing their peer's essay and leaving critical feedback on the graphic organizer. The teacher repeats until learners have reviewed multiple peer essays. When the exercise concludes, students review their essay notes, and spend 5 minutes conferencing with a person sitting next to them before transitioning to independent revision.
- **How is it culturally responsive?:** This activity balances student opportunity for spontaneous movement and socializing with independent reflection and partner talk. Students take the lead as peer reviewers and
- Independent revision work

**Google Slide Show Presentation for Lesson Instruction:** 

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1sXSbYLcExJyzHmajbMawevz1E0jqFFuTgiWn Lq8ktIc/edit#slide=id.ge674569f44\_0\_52

Unit 2 Title: "Pass me the aux"

**Unit Description:** Here student taste takes center stage. Learners get to share their favorite music, and explore an artist of their choosing, culminating their work in a multimedia presentation. Through discussion and student-led inquiry, learners deepen their understanding of how their identity intersects with their musical leanings.

**Unit Question:** How does my taste in music represent me? How can I learn more about myself by diving deep into the music that moves me? How can I learn more about my classmates and their perspectives through understanding the music they listen to?

Unit Duration: 2 weeks

Standards: Literacy as Identity Meaning-Making (Muhammad)

Formative Assessments: Racial affinity group discussions

Example Formative Assessment Lesson:

• Do Now:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\_iY9IuoErest4zPWBizAxFkD7-AEmjvVVIh

<u>eJ\_y2qUc/edit</u>

• Walk and talk discussion protocol

- **Protocol Description:** Students take their Do Now answers and find a partner before walking a lap around the school hallway. While walking, learners discuss their answers freely with their partner, before returning to class ready to share their ideas aloud.
- How is this culturally responsive?: Students are validated and affirmed through movement outside of the classroom confines, discussing and checking their ideas with a peer of their choice to socialize and learn.
- "Me Against the World" Tupac song independent close-read+Graphic Organizer: <u>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iQXGnNGViq6JSbdVyQIRsmA3gC2JARoa</u> <u>PdGSCQcIvAw/edit</u>
- Racial Affinity Group Discussion
  - **Protocol description:** Students are invited to move to various corners of the room to join groups of learners who share their racial background. In these racial affinity groups, students have unmonitored discussion based off of prompts, freely discussing their shared experiences, connections, thoughts and perspectives. Learners have the opportunity to share out, but the space remains safe and anonymous if the students wish.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** Learners are validated and affirmed to move and find community with peers while they analyze their intersecting identities through the lens of race in an entirely student-led dialogic space.

**Google Slide Show Presentation for Instruction:** 

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cbGRiqJgUI-Zkh-Q9FaPIYHOBhM5QbDrtMt\_

vxwjJ1g/edit#slide=id.ge6094ccfd6\_0\_55

**Summative Assessment:** Students create and share a presentation highlighting a deep-dive into an artist, album, or influential song they love.

**Example Summative Assessment Lesson:** 

- Independent work to finish presentations
- Gallery Walk to display and discuss presentations
  - Protocol description: Students are split into two groups, group A and group B.
    Group A sets up their digital presentations spread up around the room, with students standing by their individual presentation. Group B peruses the presentations, adding their feedback to their independent graphic organizers while they ask questions and discuss the presentations with group A. After 15 minutes, the groups switch and group B presents to group A.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** This activity validates and affirms student movement, inquiry, and discussion. It leverages learners as the leaders and experts in the summative learning experience, inviting them to express their knowledge gained through peer-to-peer presentation and dialogue.

**Google Slide Show Presentation for Lesson Instruction:** 

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1KsoKBF4IyU3wdyBhl4DJJtuqHmS6H3XOFTC oQFzBRKY/edit#slide=id.ge689da12ef\_0\_161 Unit 3 Title: "I Treat this like my Thesis"

Unit Description: In this unit, learners will hone their skills as writers and creators. Students will close-read prose, analyze music critiques, memoir, and nonfiction text, and get space to play with their own interests. Learners will be challenged to create songs/poetry of their own, a music blog, album critique, or piece of cultural criticism.

Unit Question: How can music inspire us to create, critique, or change?

Unit Duration: 2 weeks

Standards: Literacy as Skills (Muhammad)

Formative Assessments: Campfire discussions

**Example Formative Assessment Lesson:** 

- Creative writing warm-up challenge: Blackout poetry
- Gallery walk:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lfKG\_siQOD-51vGw3E5wECsvfoiiD45w8Jq

gLAWVHsM/edit

• **Protocol description:** Students are grouped and placed at various stations around the room to analyze a quote or respond to a prompt. Groups are encouraged to collectively discuss and then all individually respond to the station, before the instructor rotates groups until each team has responded to all of the prompts.

- **How is it culturally responsive?:** This exercise validates and affirms kinesthetic movement, communalism, sociocentrism, and student autonomy, while building and bridging to academic writing targets.
- Independent creative writing guided work time
- Campfire group discussion protocol:
  - **Protocol description:** Students are grouped into teams of 4-5. They place a piece of paper in the middle of a table with a campfire drawn on it, and each learner receives a stack of Post-Its. The teacher puts a prompt on the board, and starts a 90 second timer, learners all write their answer quietly on a Post-It, and then stick their answer on the campfire. When the timer goes off, students grab a different Post-It than the one they wrote before taking turns reading each answer aloud and discussing.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** Students are validated and affirmed through collaboration and placing equal value on each learner's ideas being read aloud and discussed. The discussion balances academic turn-taking, written response, and free flowing, learner directed discussion.

# **Google Slide Show Presentation for Instruction:**

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1blLiM\_rtWqx9YHEvDIWUd-NyAgYi7AO5kr57 vsOrrCs/edit#slide=id.ge6535814db\_0\_304

Summative assessment: Students create and present a song, piece of prose, music blog, album

### critique etc.

#### **Example Summative Assessment Lesson:**

- Independent work
- Open mic:
  - Protocol description: Classroom desks are rearranged to face the front of the room where learners are invited to present their work freely. Students are reminded to "clap for the performer, not the poem", meaning this is a celebration of each other and our hard work, not a critique of the piece. Learners are invited to snap and encourage freely verbally throughout the performances.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** This activity elevates and celebrates student voice and work, learners move, discuss, and cheer freely, validating and affirming individual work, classroom community, and patterns of volume and conversation that are nonlinear, loud, and overlapping joyfully.
- ItsLearning submission: (students upload their creative work onto our classroom digital platform, ItsLearning. After submitting, learners are invited to comment on 3-5 peers' works by submitting written comments, or video comments to support and challenge their peers' work).

# Google Slide Show Presentation for Lesson Instruction: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1OsyEhaieo28J2dwqsDmWxXgpG2eSbVynfsH8\_ bU0JI4/edit#slide=id.ge68895e1cf\_0\_5

Unit 4 Title: "You can't tell me nothing"

Unit Description: Students study critical literature surrounding hot button issues in hip hop.

Here learners will sharpen their rhetorical skills, using textual evidence to express nuanced

argument and hold spirited debate.

Unit Question: How do we contend with the history of hip hop today, and how music

intersects with systems of misogyny and violence in our society?

**Unit Duration: 3** 

Standards: Literacy as Intellect (Muhammad)

Resources: Selected chapters from The Hip Hop Wars by Tricia Rose

Formative Assessments: 0-100 (modified 4 corner/shades of agreement full class discussion)

Example Formative Assessment Lesson:

• Do now:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HgYVzhAI9lbROHby\_-9vArTJvRu9d72Tu-iTq BptZ24/edit

- Close-reading of "Just Keepin it Real" from *The Hip Hop Wars* by Tricia Rose
- 0-100 group discussion protocol
  - **Protocol description:** Teacher presents a divisive statement on the board, students read it, and move to a corner of the room that represents their shade of agreement with the statement (corner 1: 0% agree, corner 2: 25% agree, corner

3: 75% agree, corner 4: 100% agree). Once students select and move to their corners, they discuss with partners or small groups why they hold that belief. After a minute of discussion, the teacher yells, "0-100!", and students call back "Real quick!" (in reference to the popular Drake song, 0-100). When the class quiets down, the teacher facilitates as representatives from each corner share their thoughts with the whole class. Once each corner has had a chance to share, the teacher goes to the next slide, and students move again.

• **How is it culturally responsive?:** This exercise validates and affirms students through movement, partner conversations, and whole class dialogue. Learners also participate in a call and response exercise.

#### **Google Slide Show Presentation for Instruction:**

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jqd8Ma3kvjHVJbuQiNIj9VwfZ-ldJ7-niI4CjAB

HBmc/edit#slide=id.p

Summative Assessment: Student debates

**Example Summative Assessment Lesson:** 

• Debate Prep:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PY5-2JXgfUbGNAlWucS04VuWhfQZlF8N

5QbeUkb36mU/edit

- Debate discussion protocol:
  - **Protocol description:** Students divide into two sides of the room representing

their opinion on the topic of debate. Learners are free to go back and forth,

taking care to allow space for all to share, and minimize interruptions, as they share spirited opinions and textual support. The discussion is entirely student directed.

• How is it culturally responsive?: This protocol assess student learning through discussion that is entirely student-led. Learners are encouraged to practice academic dialogue and English performance standards through a free-flowing conversation that emphasizes spontaneous discussion, debate, and the exchange of ideas.

# **Google Slide Show Presentation for Lesson Instruction:**

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cFnQrlgQOc9YzWqAosGkp1UwYsj1xsIoFSVee VanSYw/edit#slide=id.ge472e5c7b0\_0\_106

Unit 5 Title: "The revolution will not be televised"

Unit Description: Here we will view social movements, uprisings, and protest through the lens of music. Our study will take us from the history of the Civil Rights Era to the Black Lives Matter Movement of today. Students will join a group that will collectively study an album about revolution. In this inquiry, learners will read assembled nonfiction texts surrounding their album of choice, and extend their exploration with independent research culminating in a socratic seminar.

Unit Question: How can music radicalize and reframe our understanding of social movements

in the past and present?

Unit Duration: 4 weeks

**Standards:** Literacy as Intellect (Muhammad)

Albums to analyze:

- To Pimp a Butterfly by Kendrick Lamar
- What's Going On by Marvin Gaye
- Lemonade by Beyonce
- A Seat at the Table by Solange
- Me Against the World by Tupac

Formative assessment: I Got This! Group discussions

Example Formative Assessment Lesson:

• Do Now:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/19wmHzoZhBcZc6qwGSTdb-OK0FOSkq5El

VO-CZ0YBQfY/edit

- Group close-reading of nonfiction article pertaining to their album of choice:
- I Got This! Group discussion answer sheet:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tAoHNAEBzZEpJcPkSn85y-9zD6POzH\_M

# ptxKytRFM-s/edit

• I Got This! Group discussion questions:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aa7O\_O-dcXMejIawTIFf\_TX7v07JqbgPir Wmz9lKkVQ/edit

- Protocol description: Students are grouped into teams of 4-6. Students vote on who should be the group leader, or student facilitator. Every person in the group receives a answer sheet, and the group leader receives the pre written questions. The leader reads the first question, and all of the group members, including the leader, independently write their answer to the question. When the leader notices the group is done, they facilitate a group discussion on the question. After discussing, the leader moves the group onto the next question.
- **How is it culturally responsive?:** This discussion protocol validates and affirms learners to fully lead their own academic dialogue. The collective exercise validates sociocentrism, overlapping conversational patterns, and communalism.

**Google Slide Show Presentation for Instruction:** 

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1VpXGuIuYArU7\_nSFol9MdH-t-fhoAPMo5DpD

M2fkxUk/edit#slide=id.p

Summative Assessment: Socratic seminar

**Example Summative Assessment Lesson:** 

# • Socratic Seminar Prep:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/11ifl4m29JdQS042-REhf1ld7-bRDWZn7NTF O4vvkuIs/edit

- Socratic Seminar discussion protocol:
  - **Protocol description:** Students make a large circle where everyone can see and hear each other. Students all read their prepared opening statement one at a time, before discussion is opened up to freely share insights, questions, and critical thoughts surrounding the topic of choice.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** This exercise invites learners to lead through dialogue, putting the power in the learner's hands to express themselves and learn through sociocentrism and communalism.

Google Slide Show Presentation for Lesson Instruction:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1TKqXRX1eOoHwRzg0naMFE8q2rSy9E4KArx g5VUvVkHE/edit#slide=id.ge686a5d88c 0 55

Unit 6 Title: "The Bigger Picture"

Unit Description: Students pull themes from the course and form coalitions to create action-research projects enacting change in the BC Community. This unit concludes with student-led Town Hall presentations where class coalitions present their work and proposals for community development, and receive critical feedback from their classmates. Unit Question: How can we identify themes from this course and apply them to demanding

systematic change in our Brooklyn Center community?

Unit Duration: 4 weeks

Standards: Literacy as Criticality (Muhammad)

Formative Assessment: Fishbowl discussion

**Example Formative Assessment Lesson:** 

- Independent fishbowl discussion prep: <u>https://docs.google.com/document/d/11Q4e16859S6pbnIaY\_F\_O94lBBLiy\_pA12P</u> <u>2cSaf5Ks/edit</u>
- Fishbowl listener and reflection notes:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OGyBhmmnCT8KJbByghhngQaveeLc7Nj-i

kVXhaHl2JA/edit

- Fishbowl discussion protocol
  - **Protocol description:** Students are placed into two groups. Group 1 makes a center circle of desks facing each other, and group 2 sits outside the inner circle to watch group 1 and complete their listener notes. Group 1 holds a student-led discussion using their fishbowl prep notes. After a predetermined amount of time, the teacher asks group 1 and 2 to switch places, and group 2 leads their discussion. After both groups complete their discussion, the whole class completes their discussion reflection.

• **How is it culturally responsive?:** This activity is culturally responsive because it validates and affirms learners through movement, sociocentrism, communalism, overlapping patterns of discussion, and student autonomy.

# **Google Slide Show Presentation for Instruction:**

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1dnEqickB72c623RDL4IJUVwBCQO7UZ2V61II

YO76Tdg/edit#slide=id.ge668915856\_0\_236

Summative Assessment: Town Hall Discussion

**Example Summative Assessment Lesson:** 

- Town Hall Group Prep
- Town Hall discussion protocol:
  - **Protocol description:** Student coalitions move to the front of the room to present as a group. After the student group concludes their presentation, the class has space to offer questions, critiques, concerns, and support for the presentation. After each comment from the students in the audience, the coalition presenting has space to respond.
  - **How is it culturally responsive?:** This exercise offers students a real-world application to lead through dialogue, elevating their voices to actualize change in their communities. This protocol validates and affirms student movement, sociocentrism, realness, and communalism.

Google Slide Show Presentation for Lesson Instruction:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1dkzKueOW\_E1kndwQNRftpaByxgbxaaPx1U-T

fI4lPrA/edit#slide=id.p

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