



# Knowledge Organiser Key Stage 3

Subject: Music Year: 7

Topic Title: Hip Hop



## Lesson 1

### Key Facts from this lesson

- Hip hop is a musical culture that first emerged in 1970's New York, created by African-Americans. It originated in "block parties", events where a DJ (Disc Jockey) would play funk and soul records for people to dance to. DJ's started to *loop* the breaks (instrumental sections) of songs, and an MC (Master of Ceremonies) would speak over the records, often in rhyme, which eventually became the vocal style we know today as Rapping.
- The musical style developed and spread worldwide over the following years, peaking in the "golden age" of Hip Hop in the 1990's. Golden age Hip Hop artists include De La Soul, Public Enemy and Run DMC.

### Key words and definitions from this lesson:

- ★ **Loop** – A short recording of music, normally a drum beat, that can be played over and over again (on a loop)
- ★ **Rhyming couplet** – A pair of lines of lyrics with a rhyming word at the end of each of them
- ★ **MC (Master of Ceremonies)** – The host at a block party, who talks on a microphone and raps over the music.

### Diagrams to support learning:

#### **Rap about Rap**

This rap was written, to give you some **time**  
To learn how to say lots of words in one **line**  
You can rap about anything that is on your **mind**  
As long as the last word in the row is a **rhyme**

#### **GarageBand instructions:**

- Open the *loop browser* and choose a drum loop
- Drag it into your project, making sure it starts precisely in line with beat one.
- Use Alt+drag to make copies of it, making sure each copy starts precisely on a bar line.
- When you have made four copies, enable looping from the transport window.
- Adjust edges of loop zone to make sure it plays continuously.

#### **How to save your work**

- Click File and then Save As...
- Set the target to Desktop from the drop-down menu
- Type in "YOUR NAME Rap Project"
- Click Save.

#### **Performance success criteria**

- There is an emphasised syllable on beats 2 and 4.
- The lines are all the same or close to the same length in syllables (5-7)
- We are projecting our voices loud enough to be heard over the drum track.



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### Lesson 2

#### Key facts from this lesson

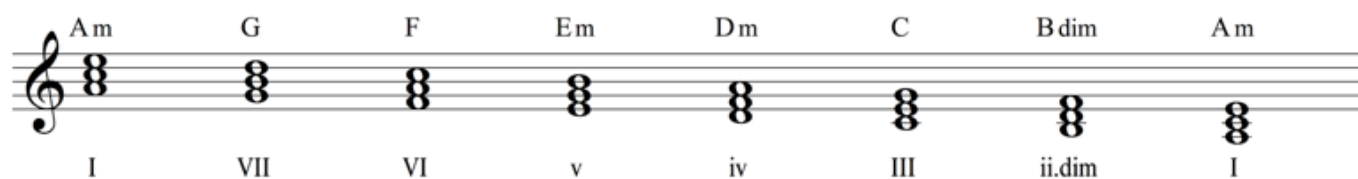
- Hip Hop music comes from inner cities, and it's lyrics reflect the life and struggles of people who live in cities. Lyrics are often about poverty, hardship and oppression, and sometimes discuss the racism the writers face in their day-to-day lives. Although this is common, not all rap lyrics are on this theme, and songs can also be about love, friends and having fun.
- A verse in a rap song is normally 16 bars in length, or 16 counts of four beats. This means when we are writing out verses, we should make them go on for 16 lines.

#### Key words and definitions from this lesson:

- ★ **Chord** – a combination of three or more pitches played at the same time. Chords can be major or minor, as we learned last term.
- ★ **Verse** – the section of a song that “tells the story”. In a rap song, it will be 16 bars, and each verse will have a different set of lyrics.
- ★ **Bar** – a “unit” of music. In most rap songs, we use bars of four beats, meaning we count the beats by counting to four and then starting again from one.

#### Diagrams to support learning:

##### Chords in A Minor



Am – A, C, E

G – G, B, D

F – F, A, C

Em – E, G, B

Dm – D, F, A

C – C, E, G

Bdim – B, D, F

##### My chord progression

|  |  |  |  |
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## Lesson 3

### Key facts from this lesson

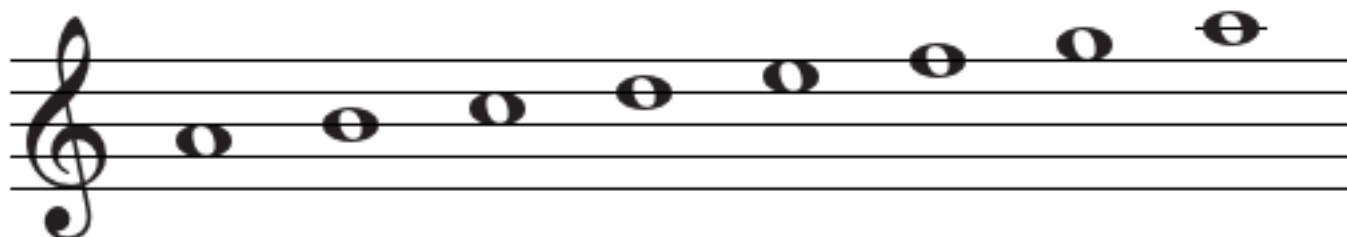
- Rap songs are normally structured like this; intro (4 bars), verse (16 bars), chorus (8 bars), verse (16 bars), chorus (8 bars), outro (4 bars). The second verse will often be performed by a *feature artist*, who will be a guest of the artist releasing the song.
- Like most music designed to be played at parties, rap music sounds great with a loud, prominent bassline. The bassline is played at a very low pitch, and through a good sound system turned up loud enough, you can feel it in your body just as much as you can hear it.

### Key words and definitions from this lesson:

- ★ **Bassline** – A low pitched melody that supports the harmony in a song. It can be played on a bass guitar or a bass synthesizer.
- ★ **Chorus** – A section of a song that is repeated multiple times. It uses the same lyrics every time it is heard, and is normally the most memorable part of the song.
- ★ **Hook** – The lyrical part in the chorus of a song that “hooks” the listener in. It normally includes the name of the song.

### Diagrams to support learning:

#### A Minor scale



A B C D E F G A





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### Lesson 4

#### Key facts from this lesson

- Hip Hop music was originally made from looping short musical phrases, and largely remains that way today. Because the music is quite repetitive, we can keep the listener interested by adding and removing little parts along the way. This could include removing the drums for a bar when the MC delivers a particularly powerful lyric, or adding an additional layer of percussion during the chorus to give it a “lift”.
- When a rap song features two people, they will normally both feature on the chorus, and have a verse each. When one MC delivers their verse, the other will contribute to the music with doubling and adlibs.

#### Key words and definitions from this lesson:

- ★ **Adlib** – A type of backing vocal in a rap verse, in which a second MC contributes an occasional word, phrase or noise in the background.
- ★ **Doubling** – A type of backing vocal in a rap verse, in which a second MC says a word at the same time as the main MC, to give it emphasis. It is normally done on a rhyming word.
- ★ **Texture** – The amount of, and interaction between, parts or layers in a piece of music. If we add a new layer, we make the texture *thicker*. If we remove a layer, it becomes *thinner*.
- ★ **Contrast** – The difference between two sections. We can achieve contrast by adding or removing layers, or by using different chords/melodies, among other things.

#### Success criteria:

- In both verses, words to be doubled are highlighted.
- Adlibs are written in brackets at the end of each line.
- The chorus section features an additional layer of music

### Lesson 5 & 6

#### Track checklist

- Intro (4 bars) – drum loop, bassline and chords
- Verse 1 (16 bars) – drum loop and bassline, with parts dropping out in certain places if desired.
- Chorus (8 bars) – drum loop, bassline, chords and one new element (ideally percussion)
- Verse 2 (16 bars) – as verse 1
- Chorus (8 bars) – as first chorus

#### Rehearsal process

- Check that the backing track follows the checklist above
- Rehearse the choruses first, and make sure we are both in time
- Rehearse verses, and go over any difficult parts multiple times
- Rehearse entire song

#### Performance success criteria

- We are both in time with the backing track
- We are projecting our voices and can be heard over the track
- We are using the lyrics sheet only when absolutely necessary



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Verse 1:

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Chorus:

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Verse 2:

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Chorus:

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