The proposed qualitative study aims to explore how Black adolescent learners engage with the implementation of critical Hip Hop pedagogy and literacies in learning spaces at the middle grades level.

Additionally, the ethnographic study will aim to extend the literature on critical Hip Hop pedagogy, literacies, and praxis. In addition, the proposed study will examine how critical Hip Hop pedagogy, literacies, and praxis affect literacy and cultural practices, identity formation, and genius and joy cultivation in Black adolescent learners enrolled in a semester-long after school program.

## Introduction

In the early 1990s, Hip Hop expanded from its respective social spaces and entered the world of academia. Scholars explored and analyzed Hip Hop literature as academic texts (McLaren, 2018; Rose, 1994; Smitherman, 1997). The teaching and learning pursuit gave rise to Hip Hop-based education (HHBE).

Since its inception, Hip Hop-based education has faced controversy in the realms of Hip Hop literature as academic texts and its explicit nature (Love, 2015; Stovall, 2006). These challenges are especially highlighted in the contexts of elementary and secondary education. However, many Hip Hop scholars and educators argue the notion that Hip Hop literature encompasses criticality and cultural relevance that transforms teaching and learning. Further, Hip Hop-based education and critical Hip Hop pedagogy in secondary literacy spaces affect literacy and cultural practices and identity formation in adolescent learners.

Akom (2009) articulates that "[Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy] starts from the premise that Hip Hop is an important lens for socio-political analysis and representation of marginalized communities, and that youth-driven research on hip hop and popular culture is an instantiation of reading and acting upon the world, that is, critical pedagogy" (p.55). In essence, critical hip hop pedagogy derived from Freirean critical pedagogy and critical race theory. Adjapong and Emdin (2011) define hip hop pedagogy as "a way of authentically and practically incorporating the elements of Hip Hop into teaching, and inviting students to have a connection with the content while meeting them on their cultural turf by teaching to, and through their realities and experiences (p.67). The origin and definition of critical Hip Hop pedagogy plays an integral role in describing the purpose and connection to Hip Hop-based education, praxis, literacy, and identity formation.

Essentially, critical hip hop pedagogy provides pedagogical approaches that encompass academic, social, and cultural components to impact student learning and being. Discourse surrounding Hip Hop-based education includes critical Hip Hop pedagogy as a form of literacy for freedom (Akom, 2009;Belle, 2016; Hill, 2009; Kelly, 2020). Hip Hop scholars and teacher-researchers design Hip Hop-based curricula that incorporate Hip Hop literature as critical academic texts (Belle, 2016; Morrell and Duncan-Andrade, 2002; Kelly, 2020; Petchauer, 2009). Hip Hop-based education in literacy spaces prompt critical dialogue ranging from the sociopolitical climate to questioning and reflecting on identities (Akom, 2009; Belle, 2016; Kelly, 2020).

# From Kwest to Victory Lap: Examining Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy in Learning Spaces A Prospective Research Proposal

## Purpose

The purpose of this ethnographic study is to examine how Black adolescent learners at the middle grades level engage with critical Hip Hop pedagogy and literacies. I will utilize the data to analyze how critical Hip Hop pedagogy shapes adolescent identities, cultural and literacy practices, and cultivate genius and joy.

# Research Questions

- 3. In what ways do critical Hip Hop literacies cultivate a liberatory space (freedom dreaming, genius, and joy) for Black additionscent learners?

## Theoretical Framework

Ladson-Billings (1995) defines culturally relevant pedagogy as a "theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (p. 469). Therefore, culturally relevant pedagogy operates as a theoretical framework to intersect academic success, cultural identity and competence, and development of critical consciousness.

Cultural Identity and Competence

### Culturally Relevant Pedagogy



Jasmyne K. Rogers, M.A.T.

Ph.D. Student, Department of Curriculum and Instruction College of Education, The University of Alabama

I. How does critical Hip Hop pedagogy shape the sociocultural and literate identities of middle school learners?

2. How does middle school learners' engagement with Hip Hop texts affect cultural and literacy practices?

Academic Success

Learning Frameworks Historically Responsive Literacy Model (Muhammad, 2023) Cultural Dimensions (Boutte, 2023)

Standards Alabama English Language Arts Course of Study (2021) • Social Justice Standards (Teaching Tolerance, 2016)

Pedagogical Approaches Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy (Adjapong and Emdin, 2011; Akom, 2009)

Curricular Units The two curriculum units will emphasize critical literacy, language literacy, and digital literacy.

 Themes surrounding both units include: social justice and advocacy, agency, language, identities, and joy.

Text Sets: "Youthful Expression," "Excursions," and "Jazz" by A Tribe Called Quest; "Never Let Me Down" and "Through the Wire" by Kanye West; "Victory Lap" and "Dedication" by Nipsey Hussle)



#### Research Design Qualitative, Ethnographic Study

Site

The study will take place at an after school program at a local middle school in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Participant Selection Selection will be based on enrollment in a semester-long Hip Hop literacy course that occurs twice a week at an after school program. I will identify approximately 20 Black learners to participate in the study based on enrollment.

#### Data Collection

- Class Dialogue (Whole Group/Small) Group Discussions)- Audio and Video Recordings
- Student Presentations/Projects (Individual/Group) - Video Recordings
- Student Work Samples All student work will be collected and copied with omission of personal identification.

 Pre and Post Course Interviews (Individuals/Group) - Interviews will occur before the first day of class and as a follow up after the class ends.

- Reflection Journals reflect weekly on class sessions.
  - Field Notes/Memos

# Summary of Topical Literature Review

	Hip Hop-based education for adolescent learners in middle school further aligns with Mead (1999) and Vygotsky's concept of self and identity because Hip Hop's
	origin served as a catalyst for identity formation for young people - specifically, Black and Latinx youth (Chang, 2005; Petchauer, 2015; Rose, 1994).
teracies	Critical hip hop pedagogy provides pedagogical approaches that encompass academic, social, and cultural components to impact student learning and being.
	Discourse surrounding Hip Hop-based education includes critical Hip Hop pedagogy as a form of literacy for freedom (Akom, 2009; Belle, 2016; Hill, 2009; Kelly, 2020). Hip
	Hop scholars and teacher-researchers design Hip Hop-based curricula that incorporate Hip Hop literature as critical academic texts (Belle, 2016; Morrell and
	Duncan-Andrade, 2002; Kelly, 2020; Petchauer, 2009). Hip Hop-based education in literacy spaces prompt critical dialogue ranging from the sociopolitical climate to
	questioning and reflecting on identities (Akom, 2009; Belle, 2016; Kelly, 2020).
and	Literacy is a tool to transform thought and experience (McCarthey and Moje, 2002; Bartlett, 2007; Moje, 2000). In the context of critical Hip Hop pedagogy in literacy
	spaces, adolescent learners enter learning spaces with their respective cultural and literacy practices - sanctioned or unsanctioned. These practices rely on various
	factors that include internal and external learning spaces. In the critical Hip Hop literacy space, learners' literacy practices will be based on three types of discourse:
	written discourses, body discourses, and oral discourses (Moje, 2000).
	Culturally relevant pedagogy and critical Hip Hop pedagogy operate as critical, emancipatory, and decolonizing pedagogies in learning spaces when
	implemented effectively. These pedagogies invite freedom dreaming and the envisionment of a different world to dismantle oppressive infrastructures that restrict and
	hold marginalized learners on the edges of academic success.
	Further, in the spirit of freedom dreaming and cultivating genius and joy, critical educators must design a curriculum that warrants a liberatory praxis. Belle (2016)
	designed a Hip Hop literacies curriculum that fuses freedom and literacy practices.