

create a math rap

activity 1

Adapted from: <http://www.edutopia.org/math-rap-hip-hop-how-to>

Step 1: Identify Your Concept

What do you want your students to learn? Successful math raps have been written on concepts such as fractions, negative and positive numbers, and integers.

Step 2: Find Your Rhymes

Write out all the key words related to your concept. For a rap about the order of operations, Kajitani lists operations, order, parenthesis, exponent, multiply, divide, add, and subtract.

Then find what rhymes with these words. Kajitani recommends going to www.rhymezone.com and plugging in your word: "Divide" brings up 147 results. He chooses the rhyming word guide.

Not every word needs to rhyme perfectly. Kajitani also uses words and phrases that sound similar, such as exponent and "own it," to form a rhyme. If you are writing a four-line rhyme, the second and fourth lines should rhyme.

Step 3: Craft the Hook

A catchy hook -- a rhyme repeated at the beginning, middle, and end of the rap, like a refrain -- is essential to a good math rap. It quickly explains what the rap is all about.

Using the rhyme he found on Rhymezone.com, Kajitani shows how to craft a hook that explains the order of operations:

Parenthesis then exponents,
Multiply and divide,
Then add and subtract
PEMDAS is your guide.

Step 4: Back It up with a Beat

No rap is complete without the musical beat behind the words. Free music licensed through Creative Commons can be found at: <http://timcushman.com/multimedia.html>

Kajitani suggests sampling some background music and practicing lyrics to different songs until you find a combination that feels right. Any music software will allow you to shorten the beat's track -- Kajitani notes that a math rap doesn't have to be long -- to fit the length of your math rap. (One option is the free, cross-platform Audacity Sound Editor.)

Step 5: Perform

Kajitani says you might start a math lesson with your new rap. Or you may want to record your voice into a computer and bring a recorded version into class. Your students might also enjoy performing the rap.

Now that you have a new learning tool, it's time to show it off.