



Yale-New Haven  
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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2011 Volume III: The Sound of Words: An Introduction to Poetry

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## **Song of Myself: The Study of Hip Hop, Poetry and the Personal Statement in the Secondary English Classroom**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 11.03.04  
by Matthew S. Monahan

This unit explores the work of a number of established literary poets and considers hip hop as a relatively new subgenre equally worthy of analysis within the confines of the secondary English classroom. Although the writing of poetry is not a focus of this unit, these literature studies are ultimately used as a frame to aid senior English students in completing District Significant Task Number One, The Personal Statement.

By considering the works of artists as seemingly divergent as the twentieth-century poet W.B. Yeats and the likes of Jay-Z, students will develop a better understanding of their own positions in the academic communities they wish to inhabit and develop their voices so that they may gain access beyond the secondary classroom.

(Recommended for English, grades 11 and 12)

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