

Kinnie Starr — Hip hop a la Canadiana

(Self-expression, creativity, literacy)

KNOW

About the Artist

Kinnie Starr



Kinnie Starr has been cutting trails for two decades as a professional artist; poet, beat maker, songwriter, activist, illustrator and producer. She raps and sings in French, Spanish and English, and was recognized as a pioneer in hip hop by Manifesto Hip Hop Summit, TO, 2011 for her genre-defying approach to rap. She is a Juno award winning producer for her work on Digging Roots: 'We Are', 2009, and was nominated for a Juno as Best New Artist in 2004 (she lost to Michael Buble). Kinnie's workshops inspire kids to think critically, get excited about writing and music, and dream big. Starr speaks frankly about the concept of "fame for fame's sake", and encourages the idea of wanting other 'things' from music than self glorification or winning a TV show.

About the Performance

The show is approximately 45 – 50 minutes in length. Kinnie breaks down music into; beat making with her guitar pedal, poetry, rapping and singing - 'telling it like it is' and encouraging kids to think of their *own stories* as relevant and worthy of reflection. Starr raps frankly about horses, being mixed blood (she is Mohawk and European), conflict resolution, home, WATER, food, and other simple topics ... *with big messages*. Her workshop consists of performance, interactive body movement, rhythmic exercises, free style opportunities and question-and-answer. She travels with her own sound system and her set up is quick. The only thing she needs from YOU is a table, and an extension cord!

About the Art Form

Hip hop is something many kids (and adults) enjoy, but the culture represented in most mass media can get boring, redundant and angry. Modern hip hop originated in North America as a voice for ghettoized peoples starting nearly 40 years ago, but still we forget the facts; hip hop has its roots in healthy competition, wordplay, storytelling, intelligence and style. The base of hip hop from Starr's perspective is creative conviction in the following; distinct body movements, flow and confidence, mic techniques, beat boxing, poetry and drawing. Starr teaches her own version of a hip hop roots culture – stories told simply, with rhythm and style. She discourages students from following MTV and pop video culture and using fake American accents. She promotes the ideology that songs and music are at every person's fingertips.

WONDER

Links to Curriculum

- **Social Studies:** looking at the history of violence against oppressed people, discussing the role of women in modern North American society, looking at the history of poetry and art in social resistance movements.
- **Music and Language:** understanding that language can be playful!

Pre-Performance Discussion Questions

- What do we really know about hip hop culture as a playful and expressive art form through dance? Let's look at personal confidence through dance/humour/clowning: <https://vimeo.com/63644618> (expletives, older students)
- What is the difference between pop music and rock? Hip hop and metal and country? Pow wow? Dubstep?
- What would you write about if you were going to write a song? What are the things about songs you like that you can relate to? Why?

Post-Performance Activities

- Practice walking with your own style and grace.
- See what happens if you make a beat with the things around you.
- Music can be made with the things around you, like this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmSbXsFE3l8>
- See if you can write a new verse for one of your favorite songs.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsDC5cNR9kc>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNPMB0Qy8bk>

LEARN

Post-Performance Discussion Questions

- What are some stereotypes that prevent hip hop from being taken seriously as an art form?
- Why is classical music training considered more 'appropriate' than hip hop?
- What is the difference between positive and negative hip hop? Rock? Pop?
- Why do we think we seek fame?
- Why is music important?