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VOICES OF HOPE

A Black History Celebration

Activity Guide
Hip Hop

MannCenter.org/VoicesofHope

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About Hip Hop



Photo of Chill Moody by Mark Wrice

Hip hop is a type of cultural art form, and it's a lifestyle that uses rap as a form of expression and integrates other art forms - like break dancing, graffiti, and DJing – into a cohesive style. Rap is a vocal (voice) technique that uses rhyme, rhythm, and personal stories in making this particular type of music. Rap is one of the most important forms of American popular culture and is an art that falls somewhere between singing and chanting. The ability to rhyme different words is the engine that drives a good rap song. Today we will learn a bit of hip hop history, learn the basics of building your own rap, and take a look at some of the dances that derived from the start of hip hop.

The history of hip hop culture and rap started in African American and Puerto Rican neighborhoods in New York City during the early 1970s. Rap music was a way to give a voice and identity to young people who felt like no one was listening to them. The first rapper was a Jamaican DJ named Kool Herc, who used two turntables, or record players, to create the sound for parties in New York. Some of the first major hip-hop acts from our city of Philadelphia were Schooly D, Will Smith, and DJ Jazzy Jeff, followed by The Roots, Meek Mill, Tierra Whack, and Eve. New hip hop artists coming out of Philadelphia include Reef the Lost Cauze, Jedi Mind Tricks, Outerspace, Viro the Virus, and this year's ***Voices of Hope*** artist, Chill Moody.


Photo of Will Smith and DJ Jazzy Jeff

DJing & Scratching

A disc jockey (DJ) is a person who mixes recorded music for an audience. Originally, "disc" referred to vinyl records. Today, the term includes all kinds of music playback, no matter the style.

There are several types of DJs: Radio DJs, also known as radio personalities, introduce and play the music broadcast on AM, FM, shortwave, digital, and internet radio stations. Club DJs select and play music in bars, nightclubs, parties, and even in stadiums where live sports and performances occur. Mobile DJs travel with portable sound systems and play recorded music at various events, including house parties, cookouts, and weddings. Some mobile DJs also serve as the MC directing the attention of attendees and maintaining a room-wide focus on what is included in the event's agenda.

Other types of DJs use musical performance techniques to be categorized as performing musicians, depending on the situation. Hip hop DJs not only select and play music using multiple turntables to back up one or more MCs/rappers, but they also perform turntable scratching to create percussive sounds.

Dance



Break dancing is an energetic form of dance that includes fast footwork and athletic moves such as spinning on the knees, hands, or head. Break dancing started out in New York City pulling from martial arts moves developed by street gangs. It is also associated with a particular style of dress that includes baggy pants or sweat suits, baseball caps worn sideways or backward, and sneakers (required because of the dangerous nature of many of the moves).
Popping tightens your muscles, but it is followed by relaxation that gives it the jerking appearance of popping. This style can even be done with stronger popping using the upper and lower body at the same time.
Locking is usually performed by stopping the fast movement that you are doing, locking your body into a position, holding it, and then continuing at the same.

At Home Activity

How to Write Your Own Rap: *(Grades 4 to 9)*

- **IDEAS** - To get started, write down every thought, idea, and emotion that comes to mind. Use this as your inspiration.
- **MAKE A CATCHY CHORUS** - Many rappers start writing the chorus first. This chorus is a hook that captures the theme of the rap, making it easy to remember. This will set the rhythm and flow of the rap.
- **WRITE LYRICS** – Use your chorus as a guide for what you are writing about and build onto your ideas. Keep in mind that you have to maintain a rhythm since rap is music and poetry, and both follow a beat. Some lyricists listen to a beat as they write to help keep their rhythm. Can you rhyme? (page/stage) (happy/ slappy) (snack/track)
- **ORGANIZE** - Once you have an idea of what you want to say, organize your thoughts. Break them up into verses while you keep in mind the layout for most basic raps. Lines rhyme in rap, but the words don't have to match precisely--it all depends on how you say them.
- **MEMORIZE AND SHARE!** Reciting your words from memory allows you to keep the flow and rhythm of your rap song, So practice, practice, practice! Play around with the tempo to see what sounds better with your style. Share your rap with your teacher and friends!!!!

How to Write Your Own Rap: *(Grades K to 3)*

What is a rhyme? When we say words that sound the same, we make a rhyme.
Here are some rhymes: Cat – Hat -Bat / Day – Play - Clay
Ok, it's your turn, let's try to rhyme, practice on these words:

Toy_____

Pin _____

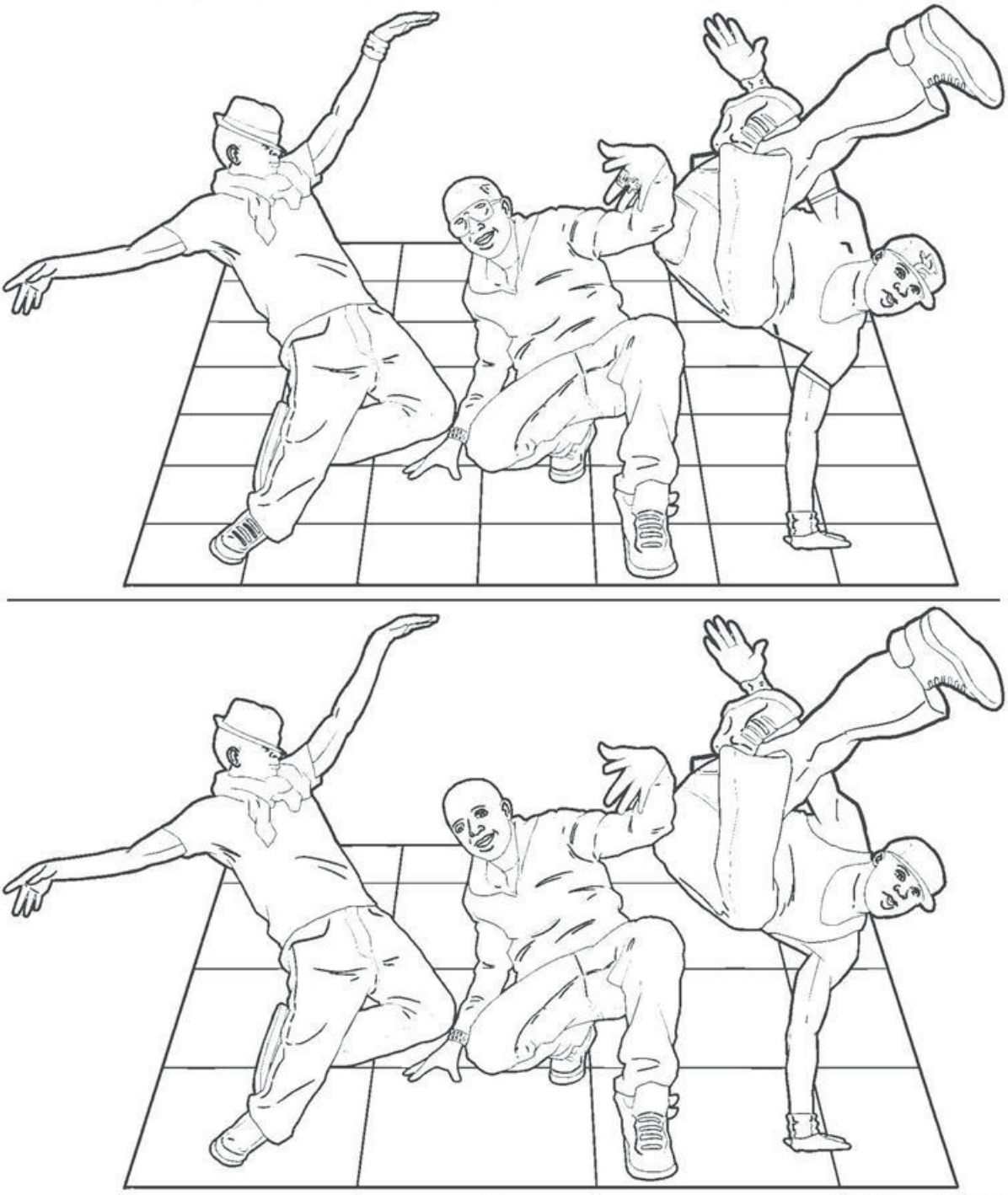
Sit _____

Great Job: I like to play every day with my pink clay!

TO DO AT HOME: Now that you are a master rhymer, take your rhyming words and say them to a beat. With a parent or guardian's permission, record your rap and send it to your teacher!

DIFFERENCES?

The two pictures below have 10 differences. Can you find them all?



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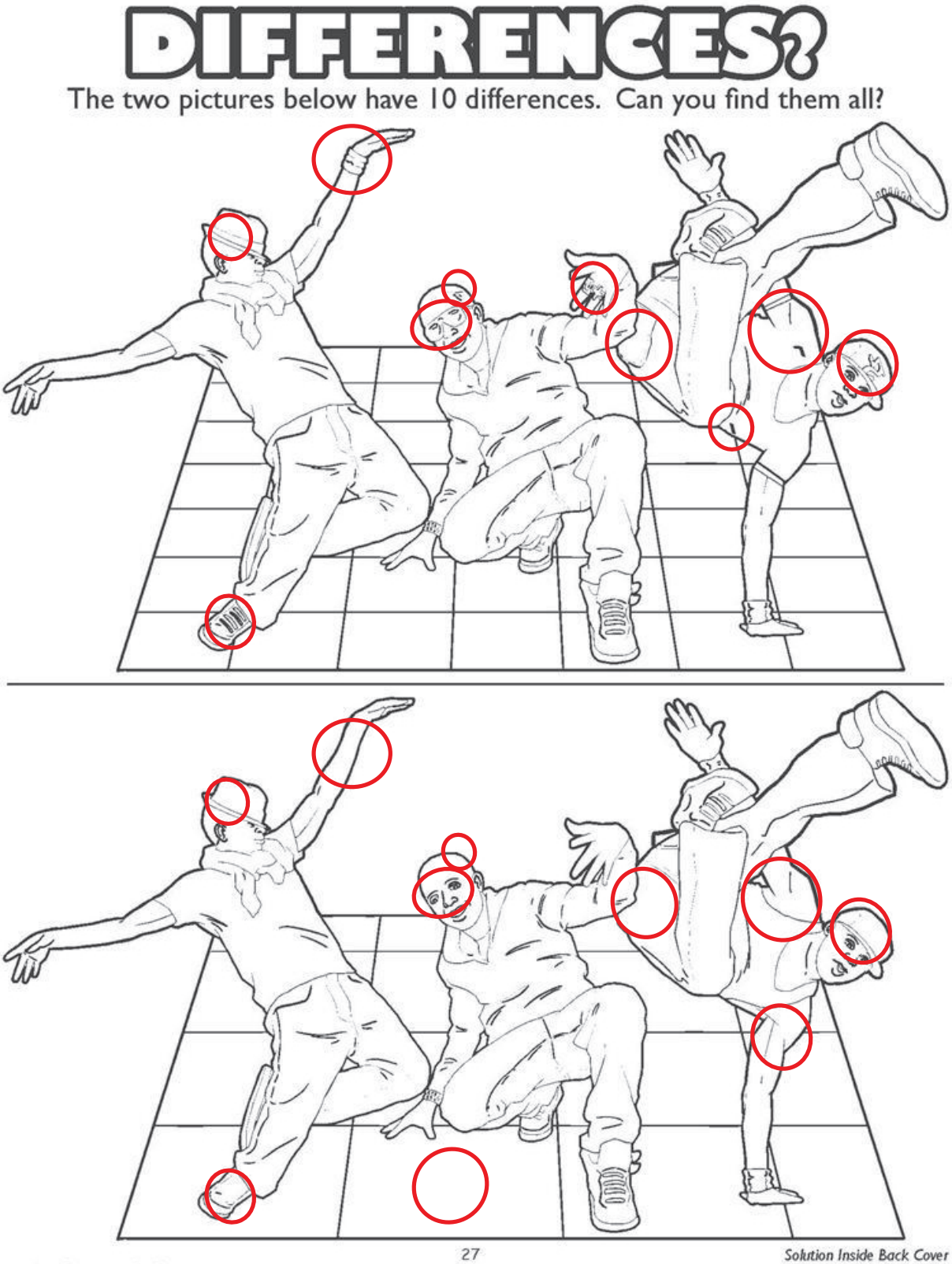
Answer Key:



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Chill Moody cemented his status as one of the top lyricists & performers to hit Philadelphia in years when he won Best Rapper in Philadelphia Magazine's annual Best of Philly Issue. He was also named Philadelphia's Music Ambassador by Councilman David Oh, due to his tireless efforts to "put the city on" as well as his local & national accomplishments over the years. A West Philadelphia native, his lifestyle brand "nicethings" now includes clothing line, consulting firm, a record label (nicethingsMUSIC), and even a line of craft beer (nicethingsIPA, a collaboration with Dock Street Brewery). He recently partnered with Philly R&B singer, Donn T, to start a new group called "&More". Moody is currently in the midst of another #MoodyMonday campaign, releasing new music every single Monday.

Performance link