

## Eve – “Love is Blind”: Literature and Personal/Social Development

This lesson will help students analyse Eve’s “Love is Blind” (1999, Ruff Ryders Entertainment) with a particular focus on the theme of love. It will incorporate Marc Lamont Hill’s approach to the use of Hip Hop in the classroom. Some techniques that I will include are, journal writing and sharing, group reading to ‘enable the students to hear the lyrical complexity of...the texts’<sup>1</sup>, and reader response to ‘help facilitate a richer engagement with the course texts’ (Hill, p. 26). All of these devices that encourage discussion will be combined with the formal application of literary devices. However, because the text is a non-canonical piece, it will ‘prevent alienation from schooling practices’ as well as ‘promoting literacy’<sup>2</sup> with the students, due to the texts’ contemporary nature. Not only will the lesson develop students’ formal literary analysis, however by debating issues of murder and domestic violence in relation to love, it will ‘help youths interrogate social problems and develop a civic consciousness’ (Hill, p. viii).

### Learning Objectives:

- Closely read and understand “Love is Blind”
- Pick out key literary devices in the text
- Discuss the wider themes in the text (love, domestic violence, murder) through a class debate

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<sup>1</sup> Marc Lamont Hill, and Gloria Ladson-Billings, *Beats, Rhymes and Classroom Life: Hip Hop Pedagogy and the Politics of Identity*, (New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University, 2009), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Travis L. Gosa, and Tristan G. Fields, ‘Is Hip-Hop Education Another Hustle? The (Ir)Responsible Use of Hip-Hop as Pedagogy’, *The Cultural Practice and Critical Pedagogy of International Hip-Hop*, (2012), 1-25 (2).

Questions/Tasks:

1. I will read out the first four lines of the text, then another student will voluntarily take on the next four lines, and so on until we have all read the text together.
  
2. Students will informally write down what they think the piece is about- similar to Hill's journal writing technique. This example of initial reader response was used by Hill 'in order to clarify and articulate ideas, share insights, and organize thoughts (Hill, p. 25-6). We will bring our ideas back together to form a class discussion in order to make sure everyone fully understands the text. Here are examples of questions students can answer:
  - Have you, or anyone you know, been involved in an abusive relationship?
  - How do you feel about the text?
  - What story is the narrator telling?
  - What themes is it addressing, and how is it portraying the theme of love in particular?
  
3. The class will then closely read the text, perhaps break off into smaller groups and tackle a verse each, and pick out all the literary devices that they can find. Some may include: rhyme scheme, foreshadowing, simile, rhetorical questions etc. Students must link all the devices that they have chosen to the theme of love – how does it portray

love, what alternative forms of love are present in the text e.g. the love between friends, how does it challenge traditional notions of romantic love.

4. I will then organise a class debate on the wider themes in the text, particularly looking at the final verse, where the narrator kills the abusive boyfriend. Half the class will debate whether this was the right decision to make, and the other side will argue against the murder. Students will be encouraged to link all points to the theme of love in their justifications – this is the point where students will engage in personal and social development, in discussing issues of morality, domestic violence, and murder whilst developing their public speaking, rationalizing and debating skills.

#### Bibliography:

Gosa, Travis L., and Tristan G. Fields, 'Is Hip-Hop Education Another Hustle? The (Ir)Responsible Use of Hip-Hop as Pedagogy', *The Cultural Practice and Critical Pedagogy of International Hip-Hop*, (2012), 1-25.

Hill, Marc Lamont and Gloria Ladson-Billings, *Beats, Rhymes and Classroom Life: Hip Hop Pedagogy and the Politics of Identity*, (New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University, 2009)

Appendix:“Love is Blind” Lyrics – Eve

Hey yo I don't even know you and I hate you  
See all I know is that my girlfriend used to d ate you  
How would you feel if she held you down and raped you?  
Tried and tried but she never could escape you  
She was in love and I'd ask her how? I mean why?  
What kind of love from a nigga would black your eye?  
What kind of love from a nigga every night make you cry?  
What kind of love from a nigga make you wish he would die?  
I mean shit he bought you things and gave you diamond rings  
But them things wasn't worth none of the pain that he brings  
And you stayed, what made you fall for him?  
That nigga had the power to make you crawl for him  
I thought you was a doctor be on call for him  
Smacked you down cause he said you was too tall for him, huh?  
That wasn't love, baby girl you was dreamin'  
I could have killed you when you said your seed was growin' from his semen

[Chorus: x2]

Love is blind, and it will take over your mind  
What you think is love, is truly not  
You need to elevate and find

I don't even know you and I'd kill you myself  
You played with her like a doll and put her back on the shelf  
Wouldn't let her go to school and better herself  
She had a baby by your ass and you ain't giving no help  
Uh-huh big time hustler, snake motherfucker  
One's born everyday and everyday she was your sucker  
How could you beat the mother of your kids?  
How could you tell her that you love her?  
Don't give a fuck if she lives  
She told me she would leave you, I admit it she did  
But came back, made up a lie about you missing your kids  
Sweet kisses, baby didn't even know she was your mistress  
Had to deal with fist fights and phone calls from your bitches  
Floss like you possess her, tellin' me to mind my business  
Said that it was her life and stay the fuck out of it  
I tried and said just for him I'll keep a ready clip

[Chorus: x2]

I don't even know you and I want you dead  
Don't know the facts but I saw the blood pour from her head  
See I laid down beside her in the hospital bed  
And about two hours later, doctors said she was dead  
Had the nerve to show up at her mother's house the next day  
To come and pay your respects and help the family pray

Even knelt down on one knee and let a tear drop  
And before you had a chance to get up  
You heard my gun cock  
Prayin' to me now, I ain't God but I'll pretend  
I ain't start your life but nigga I'mma bring it to an end  
And I did, clear shots and no regrets  
Member cops comin' in, watch me going to jail  
Nigga whatever my bitch, fuck it my sister  
You could never figure out even if I let you live  
What our love was all about  
I considered her my blood and it don't come no thicker

[Chorus: Repeats]