

teacher resource guide

**schooltime  
performance  
series**



**beats,  
rhymes and  
tap shoes**

**with Maurice Chestnut**

**arts  
education  
njpac**  
discover. create. grow.

## about the performance

Explosive, rhythmic, soulful, and beautiful.

*Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes with Maurice Chestnut* is an innovative journey through tap dance, celebrating the music of the seminal rap group A Tribe Called Quest. Created by Newark, New Jersey native and dance impresario Maurice Chestnut, and with musical direction by Jerome Jennings, this interactive performance highlights the jazz sampling that is part of A Tribe Called Quest's DNA. The performance by tap dancers and a live band will also explore the social issues of today, which are present in the songs of this classic hip-hop unit.



## more on the performance

### Creator/Choreographer

Maurice Chestnut

### Musical Director

Jerome Jennings

### Cast

Brinae Ali\* (provided additional choreography)

Emma Bigelow

Kyle Wilder

Asha Griffith

### Voice

Mikimari Caiyhe

### Light Design

William Fitzgerald

### About Maurice Chestnut

Maurice Chestnut has been dancing since he was five years old, under the tutelage of local tap dance legend Alfred Gallman. At the tender age of nine, Chestnut joined New Jersey Tap Ensemble, his first professional dance company, where he is still involved as a principal dancer and choreographer.

His show-biz credits include a who's who of tap dance: He has performed with tap dance great Savion Glover in *Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk, Improvography,*

*Classical Savion, Tappin' Into Monk, Invitation to the Dancer,* and ABC-TV's *Dancing with the Stars*. He has danced at Carnegie Hall, the Apollo Theater (where he was named Top Dog Performer), the Playboy Jazz Festival, and throughout Europe as a featured soloist with Geri Allen, noted jazz composer, pianist and bandleader. He appeared on Sally Jesse Raphael's *My Kid's a Star*, was named a gold medalist in the NAACP's Act-So competition and was featured on the accompanying TV special. Off Broadway, his credits include *Shades of Harlem, The Wiz, and Bubbling Brown Sugar*.

In his performances, Chestnut evokes bygone hoofing greats, while infusing his classical rhythm tap training with hip hop, funk and soul.

### About Jerome Jennings

Jerome Jennings is a skillful jazz drummer who has played with some of the most prestigious musicians and institutions around the world – over 40 countries and counting. His musical output is grounded in traditional jazz swing, while also drawing inspiration from soul music and hip hop.

He graduated from Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts in 2004. In 2007, he earned a master's degree at the Juilliard School. In 2017, he became the resident director of the Juilliard Jazz Orchestra.

While at Juilliard, Jennings became the first Jazz Studies recipient of the Morse Fellowship, an educational program that enables fellows to teach two classes per week throughout the academic year at New York City schools. Jennings has been named an accredited jazz scholar at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

As an educator, Jennings teaches, leads clinics, and performs educational youth outreach with Jazz at

Lincoln Center's Jazz for Young People (JFYP) program. For Lincoln Center's JALCYO (Jazz at Lincoln Center Youth Orchestra) programs, he is an instructor and ensemble leader. For Jazz House Kids, a New Jersey community arts organization dedicated to educating children through jazz, he is also a drum instructor and ensemble leader. At NJPAC, Jennings is a teen mentor, ensemble coach and drum instructor.

As a drummer, he has performed at every major jazz club in the New York City area: the Village Vanguard, Birdland, the Blue Note, and Dizzy's Club Coca Cola. He has shared the stage with big-name performers including Sonny Rollins, Hank Jones, the Count Basie Orchestra, and Wynton Marsalis.

In 2016, he released his debut album, *The Beat*, which was named one of the top three jazz releases by NPR, garnered a four-star rating in *DownBeat Magazine*, and was nominated for the prestigious French "Grand Prix du disque" award for Album of the Year.

### About A Tribe Called Quest

A Tribe Called Quest (ATCQ) is one of the most storied, respected and admired hip-hop groups in that musical genre's history. Formed in 1985 by New York residents Q-Tip, Phife Dawg, Ali Shaheed Muhammad, and Jarobi White, ATCQ went on to revolutionize hip hop in the early 1990s by artfully combining skillful, intelligent rap lyrics with jazz and creative sampling, a marked difference from their peers in the rap game, which typically employed cookie cutter soul samples at the time. Many music critics and historians consider ATCQ to be a high point in hip-hop artistry.

Q-Tip, a well-regarded soloist in his own right, is the group's main producer and an MC. Phife Dawg, who died in 2016 from complications of diabetes, was also the group's MC. He and Q-Tip would engage in dexterous, fluid vocal interplay as they rapped about love, relationships, capitalism, date rape, and other social issues. They complemented and contrasted against each other, as some music critics have said, with Tip bringing a mellow flow and Phife vibing more street-ready raps. Ali Shaheed Muhammad acts as DJ and co-producer, bringing a laid-back jazzy melodic backbone to their songs. Jarobi White was an early contributor before leaving for a successful cooking career. He was a member of the group for their debut album and contributed to their last album in 2016.

The band has released six critically acclaimed albums, most notably their first album, *People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm*, and others, *The Low End Theory*

and *Midnight Marauders*. ATCQ's debut was heralded as groundbreaking and revolutionary. They brought a laid-back, playful element to rap while widening the vocabulary and emotional landscape that rappers could inhabit. They did not have a tough-guy image compared to other groups and hip-hop artists at the time. The group was having fun and didn't seem to take themselves too seriously in songs like "I Left My Wallet in El Segundo." The group also brought in samples from jazz, R&B, and rock artists—like Lou Reed—who were not favored at the time, and spliced in ambient noise like frogs and a child crying.

Many music critics consider their second album, *The Low End Theory*, to be one of the best hip-hop albums of all time, and it still stands as a seminal influence on rap. The album's sound is spare, minimalist and utilizes bebop jazz. It has gone on to influence artists like Pharrell Williams, The Roots, Kendrick Lamar, Kanye West, Common, Frank Ocean, and many more. Throughout the years since its release in 1991, critics list it as one of the greatest albums.

ATCQ was part of the Native Tongues, a loose collective of hip-hop artists who came to prominence in the late 1980s and early '90s. The artists utilized Afrocentric lyrics and downplayed the harder edged, violent tone of hip hop and rap that were also popular at the time, i.e., gangsta rap. Groups like ATCQ, De La Soul, the Jungle Brothers, Afrika Bambaataa, and Queen Latifah are closely identified with Native Tongues. Some music critics called them alternative rap because the artists rapped about social issues, mundane events, keeping a positive attitude, being bohemian, or just chilling and goofing off with their friends, again a marked difference from harder-core rap.

### Maurice Chestnut

#### What inspired you to create a show centered on A Tribe Called Quest?

*Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes* was dedicated to the music of A Tribe Called Quest in honor of their contribution to hip hop but also due to bridging the gap between classic jazz music and hip hop. I also felt like their music was theatrical and thought that tap dance could bring it to life. We use about a half-dozen songs, like “Excursions,” “Buggin’ Out” and “Check the Rhime.”

I’ve attended many concerts of A Tribe Called Quest. I never met them, though. Their music is so listener-friendly, understandable and intergenerational.

#### How is the show structured?

The show is structured with five dancers, a five-piece band, a poet and visuals. I’ve known every collaborator for at least five years now. We do wear street clothes, but they’re “put-together” street clothes. Sometimes the audience claps their hands on cue to help us with certain songs and rhythms.

#### What are the connections you found between tap dance, jazz and hip hop?

Tap dance was created and evolved through jazz music. Tap dance is like the grandfather of a lot of American dance; it was the first mainstream dance. And tap dancers were the rappers of their time.

#### What are the main social themes referenced in the show?

We touch on social issues—race, police brutality and gentrification, for example—through classic hip-hop lyrics. In one part of the show, we speak to the negative stereotypes of tap dance’s “coon” image. For a black performer to perform, he had to wear blackface. Also, there was a “two-colored rule” that at least two black entertainers had to perform in front of a white audience. Bill Bojangles was the first to be able to step on stage before a white audience by himself. From this, tap dance adopted the stereotype of “coonage.”

It turned into something different, though. In hip hop, your main objective is to look tough. It was still “cooning” in a way that it made you think all black people sold drugs or were the toughest people alive; in the days of vaudeville, you had to smile. Nowadays, you just have to look like something you’re not. My thing is that it’s still minstrelsy. There are still remnants of it, especially in comedy and movies.

#### Do New Jersey and Newark have a rich tap dance history?

New Jersey has a special place in the dance world due to Savion Glover and Deborah Mitchell.

*(Savion Glover is a famous Broadway choreographer and tap dancer who was born and raised in Newark. Deborah Mitchell is the founder of New Jersey Tap Dance Ensemble.)*

#### Tell us about one of your mentors.

The No. 1 thing (about the late Geri Allen, an internationally acclaimed jazz pianist) was that she always gave back. She always encouraged you to keep your art form going. She was never afraid of innovation. Geri was not just a master jazz artist, she was a master teacher.

#### What aspect about tap dance do you love the most?

The aspect of tap I love most is that through dance you can actually make music at the same time. It’s percussion with movement.

#### What do you hope students take away from the performance?

I would love students to leave with a sense of their history and a fresh understanding of the art form of tap – also an understanding that hip-hop and jazz music come from the same place. It’s not about what’s being sold to you: American commercial success makes things different. The art runs way deeper.

#### What advice do you give to young people who express an interest in dance?

Follow your heart, heed what your voice tells you. Don’t try so much to be somebody else. You can’t move that way.

### Jerome Jennings

#### What interested you most about participating in this show? Did you learn anything new while working and prepping for this performance?

I have always had an interest in and love for working with dancers. Maurice is a friend, and the concept is awesome. What really hit home for me during this project is how closely dance and music are connected. It’s amazing!

#### From your experience, how is hip hop in general, and A Tribe Called Quest in particular, regarded in the jazz world?

I’m not 100% sure how the jazz community as a whole regards hip hop. Most of the players of jazz today (45 and younger) are of the hip-hop generation—myself included. Hip hop permeated and influenced every part of my life while growing up. I embraced every part of hip

hop, not only its music component. I didn’t need to learn hip hop. Jazz I learned from my elders. I embraced hip hop and jazz culture as a kid, and still do.

#### What are the connections you found among tap dance, jazz and hip hop?

Tap dance, jazz and hip hop are closely related. All three come from the African-American experience. Ironically, jazz music and hip-hop music have a dance component informing each art. If you look at tap, and dance techniques of dancers like John Bubbles and the Nicholas Brothers, you’ll have better grasp of the rhythms of bebop. Hip hop producers like Grandmaster Flash and Jazzy Jeff inform the dance and vice versa. Bottom line is jazz and hip-hop music are different branches from the same root.

#### As an artist/instrumentalist, what is it you love most about jazz and playing the drums?

The drums are all about rhythm. I love rhythm and that’s what the drum provides; communication through rhythms. Performing jazz music provides a platform to communicate using those rhythms.

#### Why is musical education important? Do you see this kind of performance as a way to foster an appreciation of jazz in kids?

Music education is crucial these days, particularly in public grammar schools. I am a product of music in public schools. Hopefully, we will be able to turn kids on to jazz music through this performance. Jazz is one of the only musical forms that come out of the American experience.

This is one of our cultural gifts to the world.

#### What do you hope students learn from the performance? What can kids do if they want to get into music but don’t know where to start?

Hopefully, the students will become more familiar with A Tribe Called Quest. I hope they would like to further explore jazz music and its great artists. Ultimately, I would like the kids to have a good time. Kids interested in music should go to their local music store and inquire about getting a music teacher for the instrument that they want to play.



Jerome Jennings

# inspired ideas in the classroom

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	Teacher Focus	Student Activity	NJ Student Learning Standards
<b>Prepare for the performance</b>	<p>In <i>Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes</i>, the performers use jazz, tap and hip hop to pay homage to A Tribe Called Quest. Let's start by learning about A Tribe Called Quest.</p> <p>Read the group's biography on their Facebook page: Go to <a href="https://facebook.com/ATribeCalledQuest/about">facebook.com/ATribeCalledQuest/about</a> and under Biography, click on "See More."</p> <p>Print copies of the biography for your students OR make the Facebook page accessible to them.</p> <p>Also, prepare to show them the "Can I Kick It?" music video, available at the following link: <a href="https://youtu.be/O3pyCGnZzYA">youtu.be/O3pyCGnZzYA</a> (You'll be looking at lyrics later. If you want to read the lyrics now, go to <a href="https://azlyrics.com/lyrics/tribecalledquest/canikickit.html">azlyrics.com/lyrics/tribecalledquest/canikickit.html</a> )</p> <p>Use <b>Activity Sheet #1</b> to enhance reading comprehension.</p>	<p>Read about A Tribe Called Quest and watch the music video for "Can I Kick It?" Based on what you see in the video, what makes A Tribe Called Quest unique? Do their lyrics or style reference any social issues? Answer these questions and more by completing <b>Activity Sheet #1</b>.</p>	<p><b>Social Studies</b> 6.1.12.D.14.f 6.2.12.D.5.c</p> <p><b>English Language Arts</b> NJLSLA.R1. NJLSLA.R2. NJLSLA.L4. NJLSLA.SL1.</p>
<b>Experience the performance</b>	<p>Take your class to NJPAC to see <i>Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes</i>. The show will likely feature a remake of "Can I Kick It?" Listen for it and help students recognize it.</p>	<p>Go to NJPAC to see <i>Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes</i>. The show will likely feature a remake of "Can I Kick It?" Do you recognize it? How do you recognize it? In other words, how is it the same as the music video? What's different? Does the show make you think about any social issues?</p>	<p><b>NJ Arts Standard</b> 1.4 Aesthetic Response &amp; Critique</p>
<b>Reflect, respond and read</b>	<p>Facilitate a discussion of the show by focusing on "Can I Kick It?" The performers used live instrumentation, a recorded sample, tap shoes, and a mic to create their own version. Help students reflect on what effect those changes had. Also, help them reflect on social issues the performance may have addressed.</p>	<p>Did you hear the remake of "Can I Kick It?" How was it similar or different from the original? What did the performers add? Did the performance make you think about any social issues? If so, which social issues?</p>	<p><b>NJ Arts Standard</b> 1.4 Aesthetic Response &amp; Critique</p> <p><b>English Language Arts</b> NJLSLA.SL1.</p>
<b>Focus</b>	<p><i>Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes</i> blends elements of many Afrocentric cultural forms, namely jazz, hip hop and tap dance. Visit <a href="https://azlyrics.com/lyrics/tribecalledquest/canikickit.html">azlyrics.com/lyrics/tribecalledquest/canikickit.html</a> to print copies of the lyrics to "Can I Kick It?"</p> <p>Notice dated references. For example, Mr. (David) Dinkins was the mayor of New York City from 1990-93, and "snug glove" references the O.J. Simpson trial. Also notice the phrasing and syntax. Crowd call-and-response ("Can I Kick It? Yes you can! Well I'm gone then. Go on, then."), a staple of early hip hop, is rarer now in popular music.</p>	<p><i>Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes</i> blends elements of many Afrocentric artistic forms, including jazz, tap dance and hip hop. All three forms have been developed in large part by African-Americans.</p> <p>Read the lyrics to "Can I Kick It?" How do the lyrics celebrate African-American/black culture? Remember, the song was released in 1990. How do you know it's from that time period? Discuss with your class.</p>	<p><b>NJ Arts Standard</b> 1.2 History of the Arts and Culture</p> <p><b>English Language Arts</b> NJLSLA.R2. NJLSLA.R4. NJLSLA.R5. NJLSLA.R6. NJLSLA.R7. NJLSLA.L3. NJLSLA.SL1.</p>
<b>Originate</b>	<p>Next, your students will rewrite the lyrics to make their own version of "Can I Kick It?" Decide beforehand if they will work better on their own or in small groups. Also prepare any additional guidelines they may need. Optional: Use <b>Activity Sheet #2</b> to help students think about their own cultural influences.</p>	<p>Think about your own culture and history. What are you about? What do you want to celebrate?</p> <p>Work alone or in small groups to rewrite one verse of "Can I Kick It?" to celebrate yourself, your cultures and/or your class.</p>	<p><b>NJ Arts Standard</b> 1.1 The Creative Process 1.3 Performance</p> <p><b>English Language Arts</b> NJLSLA.W4 NJLSLA.SL6.</p>
<b>Rehearse</b>	<p>Guide students in finishing and practicing their verses. You may want to model positive reinforcement to encourage students, especially those who may feel shy in sharing their work.</p> <p>Identify any students who can provide accompaniment – either with instruments or beatboxing. Encourage them to create accompaniment to enhance the song.</p>	<p>What makes a good performance? Brainstorm criteria and aspire to it as you rehearse. Encourage one another by recognizing the positive in what each person or group does.</p> <p>Put your verses together to create a class version of "Can I Kick It?" In between each verse, do the refrain ("Can I Kick It? Yes you can! Well I'm gone then. Go on, then.") As you share with your groups, think about adding percussion or musical instruments. Try incorporating additional tracks. Try creating percussion with parts of your body. If you have computers, you can use programs like Garage Band to record each track and mix them.</p>	<p><b>NJ Arts Standard</b> 1.1 The Creative Process 1.3 Performance</p> <p><b>English Language Arts</b> NJLSLA.SL1.</p>
<b>Make magic</b>	<p>Schedule a time to share your students' work with the rest of the school at an assembly. Pick a student to introduce the work and give the performance context. Help students reflect afterward by asking how they felt sharing it and what feedback they got.</p>	<p>Perform your song for your peers at a school assembly. Reflect on the experience afterward. (If you are too shy to perform it live, you can record yourselves using smartphones or computers in a one-shot music video.)</p>	<p><b>NJ Arts Standard</b> 1.3 Performance 1.4 Aesthetic Response &amp; Critique</p>

# curriculum standards

## NJ Arts Standards

### 1.1 The Creative Process

All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

### 1.2 History of Arts & Culture

All students will understand the role, development, and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.

### 1.3 Performance

All students will synthesize skills, media, methods and technologies that are appropriate to creating, performing and/or presenting works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual art.

### 1.4 Aesthetic Response & Critique

All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment and analysis to works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual art.

## National Arts Standards

- 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experience to make art.
- 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

## FIND THE STANDARDS

For more detailed information on the standards, visit these websites:

NJ ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

[state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela](http://state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela)

NJ SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

[state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss](http://state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss)

NJ WORLD LANGUAGE STANDARDS

[state.nj.us/education/aps/cccs/wl](http://state.nj.us/education/aps/cccs/wl)

NJ ARTS STANDARDS

[state.nj.us/education/cccs/2009/1.pdf](http://state.nj.us/education/cccs/2009/1.pdf)

NATIONAL ARTS STANDARDS

[nationalartsstandards.org](http://nationalartsstandards.org)

# new jersey student learning standards

## English Language Arts

### NJSLSA.R4.

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

### NJSLSA.R5.

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

### NJSLSA.R6.

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

### NJSLSA.R7.

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

### NJSLSA.L3.

Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

### NJSLSA.W4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

### NJSLSA.SL1.

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

### NJSLSA.SL6.

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

## Social Studies

### 6.1.12.D.14.f

Determine the influence of multicultural beliefs, products (i.e., art, food, music and literature), and practices in shaping contemporary American culture.

### 6.2.12.D.5.c

Assess the influence of television, the Internet, and other forms of electronic communication on the creation and diffusion of cultural and political information, worldwide.



# cultural connections

Like many of America's cherished art forms (jazz, hip-hop, country, rock, etc.), tap dance was created by resourceful poor people who wanted to entertain themselves. Dance scholars have studied how tap came into being: It was born in the crowded urban neighborhood of the legendary Five Points district in 19th century Manhattan, where free African Americans lived cheek by jowl with Irish immigrants and other recent European arrivals. From this milieu, dancers from all ethnicities observed each other's form of dancing, especially during dance contests. These were extremely popular among people during the mid- and late-1800s and would feature the best. Along the way, dancers studied each other's techniques and incorporated them, remixing them in such a way as to create a new form, tap dance, a propulsive percussive dance with roots in African tribal movements, Irish jigs and English clog dancing.

The father of tap dance is considered to be Master Juba (birth name William Henry Lane), who was born in 1825 and died in 1852. He was such a skilled dancer that he got top billing over white performers in minstrel shows. He developed the foundation of tap by incorporating African dance, Irish jigs and English clog dancing. He won many dance contests in Five Points and became well known in Manhattan for his hoofing skills. He toured England with a minstrel troupe in 1848. He was forced to perform in blackface as well. But his unique dancing caught the imagination of the English and started to make an impact on dance there and in Europe. He settled in England but died an early death in his late 20s.

Since Juba's time on stage, tap dance has continued to evolve into a dynamic living art form. Tap dancing as we know it today didn't come about until the Roaring 20s, when dancers started nailing metals to their shoes to create more percussive sounds.

In the early 20th century, vaudeville variety shows became popular with the public. These shows typically featured comedians, trained animals, magicians, acrobats, and of course dancers. Tap dancing spread even further as a cultural force due to these traveling vaudeville shows.

Notable tap dancers in history include Bill Robinson, who was known to tap dance in Shirley Temple movies and for being a black person in show business who was making a considerable amount of money.

Gregory Hines, an actor and dancer, brought new relevance to tap in the late 20th century by hoofing in a bold, masculine, assertive style that didn't rely on nostalgia. He danced to contemporary music, ushering the art form into the modern age, and introduced his moves through popular entertainment like films and television.

In the 1980s and '90s, Savion Glover, a Newark native and tap dance savant, emerged as a seminal figure in contemporary tap dance. His unique take on tap took influences from hip-hop and funk music and was distilled in his Tony Award-winning show, *Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk*. He is known for his ingenuity, precision and skill. He has performed with stars like Gregory Hines and Barbra Streisand.

# vocabulary

## Bebop

A type of jazz originating in the 1940s and characterized by complex harmony and rhythms. It is associated particularly with Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk and Dizzy Gillespie.

## English clog dancing

A form of dancing popular in England and Wales, where people dance wearing wooden shoes or clogs. Dancers tap their clogs against the floor to create a percussive rhythm.

## Five Points

A famous 19th century neighborhood in Manhattan that was a large melting pot, filled with free blacks and European immigrants, such as the Irish. The name referred to the intersection of Park, Baxter and Worth streets. The district was infamous as a crowded, crime-ridden slum.

## Gangsta rap

Hardcore hip hop that prominently features themes about the “gangsta” lifestyle. Came into being in the mid-1980s and became extremely popular in the early 1990s. Rappers would openly discuss their affiliation with criminal gangs, like the Bloods and the Crips, in hip-hop lyrics. Music critics have said gangsta rap is violent, encourages negative social behavior, is anti-women, and feeds into a sordid minstrel aspect, by playing up negative stereotypes of the black American experience for a majority white audience.

## Hip hop

Also called hip-hop or rap music, it is a music genre consisting of a stylized rhythmic music that commonly accompanies rapping, a rhythmic and rhyming speech that is chanted. Hip hop can also refer to the larger culture surrounding rap music, which includes deejaying, breakdancing and graffiti writing.

## Irish jig

Folk dancing commonly associated with Ireland. A step dance that features rhythmic jumps and lively skipping, usually set to bagpipes and a fiddle. Special shoes with hard soles are worn to make a percussive sound when dancers tap the floor.

## Jazz

A music genre that originated in the African American communities of New Orleans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and with roots in blues and ragtime. Since the 1920s Jazz Age, jazz has become recognized as a major form of musical expression.

## Minstrel show

A racist form of entertainment that came into being in the early 19th century. White performers would dress up like African Americans and put on “blackface” makeup, then pretend to be black by acting stupid, lazy and engaging in other racist stereotypes about African Americans. A show would be made up of skits and musical dance numbers. A few black performers worked in these shows under white managers.

## Native Tongues

A loose collective of hip-hop artists who came to prominence in the late 1980s and early ‘90s. The artists utilized Afrocentric lyrics and downplayed the more violent aspects of hip hop and rap in their lyrics. Sometimes called alternative rap, the artists rapped about social issues and more positive-minded messages.

## Rap

A style of popular music, developed by disc jockeys and African Americans in the inner city in the late 1970s, in which an insistent, recurring beat pattern provides the background and counterpoint for rapid, slangy and often boastful rhyming patter glibly intoned by a vocalist or vocalists.

## Sample

The act of taking a portion, or sample, of one sound recording and reusing it as an instrument or a sound recording in a different song or piece.

## Tap dance

A distinctly American dance art form where a dancer taps their shoes to make a percussive sound, like drums. The dance form has its roots in African tribal dance, Irish jigs and English clog dancing. Tap dance was born in the mid-19th century in the urban neighborhood of Five Points in Manhattan. Tap was distinctly different from the other step dances mentioned here (which tended to be more rigid in form and favor dancers performing as a group) due to tap’s virtuosity, syncopated rhythms, improvisation, looser movements, and emphasis on solo performances.

## Tap shoes

Tap shoes used to have wooden soles to produce the dance’s distinctive sound. Nowadays tap shoes have metal plates to create the percussive sound element of this art form.

# resources

## Websites

A Tribe Called Quest (ATCQ)  
[atribecalledquest.com/home/](http://atribecalledquest.com/home/)

ATCQ Facebook page  
[facebook.com/ATribeCalledQuest/](https://facebook.com/ATribeCalledQuest/)

ATCQ NPR story links  
[npr.org/artists/15713304/a-tribe-called-quest](http://npr.org/artists/15713304/a-tribe-called-quest)

ATCQ’s Phife Dawg Dead at 45  
[rollingstone.com/music/music-news/a-tribe-called-quests-phife-dawg-dead-at-45-109271/](http://rollingstone.com/music/music-news/a-tribe-called-quests-phife-dawg-dead-at-45-109271/)

ATCQ’s Jarobi White & Chef Marcus Samuelsson on Cooking, Hip-Hop & Julia Child  
[billboard.com/articles/columns/hip-hop/7709381/a-tribe-called-quests-jarobi-white-marcus-samuelsson](http://billboard.com/articles/columns/hip-hop/7709381/a-tribe-called-quests-jarobi-white-marcus-samuelsson)

Maurice Chestnut Facebook page  
[facebook.com/mauricechestnuttaps/](https://facebook.com/mauricechestnuttaps/)

For a Dancer Making His Way, It’s All Tap, All Day, Maurice Chestnut (*The New York Times*)  
[nyti.ms/2HDWryM](http://nyti.ms/2HDWryM)

Jerome Jennings website  
[jeromejennings.com](http://jeromejennings.com)

Jerome Jennings – *The Beast*, album review  
[jazziz.com/jerome-jennings-beast/](http://jazziz.com/jerome-jennings-beast/)

Tap Dance in America: A Short History  
[loc.gov/item/ihas.200217630/](http://loc.gov/item/ihas.200217630/)

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## Videos

Beastie Boys talk about Native Tongues, Bambatta on the turntables  
[youtu.be/2WMBDM-DJk4](http://youtu.be/2WMBDM-DJk4)

Doing Their Own Thang – Best of Native Tongues  
[youtu.be/TMVRn5ZF-1c](http://youtu.be/TMVRn5ZF-1c)

A Tribe Called Quest – “I Left My Wallet in El Segundo”  
[youtu.be/WILyWmT2A-Q](http://youtu.be/WILyWmT2A-Q)

A Tribe Called Quest – “Can I Kick It?”  
[youtu.be/O3pyCGnZzYA](http://youtu.be/O3pyCGnZzYA)

A Tribe Called Quest – *People’s Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm* (Full Album)  
[youtu.be/-1FdFiloZgA](http://youtu.be/-1FdFiloZgA)

A Tribe Called Quest – *The Low End Theory* (Full Album)  
[youtu.be/L1Zqol7ARck&t=2209s](http://youtu.be/L1Zqol7ARck&t=2209s)

A Tribe Called Quest – *Midnight Marauders* (Full Album)  
[youtu.be/CVKrrs5K9v0](http://youtu.be/CVKrrs5K9v0)

Tap Dancer Maurice Chestnut  
[youtu.be/0aupE4bZYj0](http://youtu.be/0aupE4bZYj0)

Maurice Chestnut @ Jazz @ Lincoln Center  
[youtu.be/VDo2lX0hTNw](http://youtu.be/VDo2lX0hTNw)

*Beats, Rhymes and Tap Shoes* – Maurice Chestnut  
[youtu.be/VQrGSLuaNxU](http://youtu.be/VQrGSLuaNxU)

Jerome Jennings “The Beast” (Full Length) EPK  
[youtu.be/AZP-nWOPsKA](http://youtu.be/AZP-nWOPsKA)

Jerome Jennings group performs “The Beast” live in NYC  
[youtu.be/qj2LYpnbKas](http://youtu.be/qj2LYpnbKas)

Jerome Jennings “Feel’n Good” solo  
[youtu.be/ppqdEikxJJg](http://youtu.be/ppqdEikxJJg)

## Books

O is for Old School: A Hip Hop Alphabet for B.I.G. Kids Who Used to Be Dope  
James Tyler and Ella Cohen, Wide Eyed Editions, 2018

When the Beat Was Born: DJ Kool Herc and the Creation of Hip Hop (Coretta Scott King – John Steptoe Award for New Talent)  
Laban Carrick Hill and Theodore Taylor III, Roaring Brook Press, 2013

The Rap Year Book: The Most Important Rap Song From Every Year Since 1979, Discussed, Debated, and Deconstructed  
Shea Serrano, Abrams Image, 2015

Chuck D Presents This Day in Rap and Hip-Hop History  
Chuck D, Black Dog & Leventhal, 2017

Can’t Stop Won’t Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation  
Jeff Chang, Picador, 2005

What the Eye Hears: A History of Tap Dancing  
Brian Seibert, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016

The History of Jazz  
Ted Gioia, Oxford University Press, 2011

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(partial listing)

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