

Street Moves:  
Top-rock, Up-rock, Freezes, and  
Airposes for the  
Dance Teacher



Presented by  
Dr. Mila Parrish,  
Sarah "SAZA" Dimmick,  
and Kelly Martell Scovel

Images collected from [www.urbandance.net](http://www.urbandance.net)

**Title: Street Moves: Top-rock, Up-rock, Freezes, and Airposes for the Dance Teacher**  
Developed by Dr. Mila Parrish, Sarah "Saza" Dimmick and Kelly Martell Scovel

Big Idea:

To understand and appreciate hip hop dance culture as an American art form with a rich history and deep roots.

Experience Overview: This lesson will address the history of hip hop dance by exploring the evolution of b-boying, locking, popping, and the current hip hop trends of today. The students will learn basic hip hop moves and then will execute what they have learned in a series of combinations.

Instructional Objectives:

**The students will:**

- Understand the history of hip hop dance
- Embody the movements and recognize the different characteristics of the three original street dance styles (b-boying, locking, and popping)
- Gain knowledge of and execute the most basic hip hop moves, including current popular moves
- Perform what they have learned in a series of combinations

National Standards for Dance Education:

NA-D.9-12.1 - Identifies and determines movement elements and skills in performance dance

NA-D.9-12.3 - Understands dance as a way to create and communicate meaning

NA-D.9-12.4 - Applies critical and creative thinking skills in dance

NA-D.9-12.5 - Understands dance in various cultures and historical periods

Introduction:

*Many of the moves you will learn today are used consistently in popular pop and hip hop music videos such as Britney Spears, Madonna, N'Sync, Mya, Missy Elliott, and Jay-Z. Most people just have no idea that these moves came from somewhere and have a deep history behind them. Anytime you see rolls and points in choreography – that came from locking. Anytime you see some of the top-rocking moves you'll learn today – that came from b-boying. When you see Usher glide across the floor – that came from popping. The challenge is to make sure that moves like these don't become generalized and taught within choreography with no reference or respect to where they came from.*

*As the visibility of this art form increases, so does the demand to learn it. Today, kids want to learn hip hop dance. It is offered at studios and in dance programs all across the nation. For a long time, hip hop was picked up on the streets and in clubs, learned through careful observation and practice, and mostly being a sort of "freestyle" movement, rather than "taught" in a formal class. B-boys didn't go to b-boy class.*

*These days, famous choreographers such as Wade Robson and Darrin Henson, choreographers for Britney Spears, N'Sync, and the Backstreet Boys, and Shane Sparks and Dave Scott from "You Got Served" are mixing their hard-edge hip hop style with jazz and modern technique learned in dance classes throughout the years. Mixing these*

*moves with the original hip hop movement vocabulary has created an evolved style that is today known as "hip hop dance".*

### **Warm Up:**

*As with any dance technique, a proper warm up not only helps warm the body, but helps to develop the correct skills for performing the movement and developing a good sense of rhythmic awareness. The same is true in hip hop. As you will see as we progress with the warm up, most of the exercises are basic dance moves that you already know, such as body isolations, ball-changes, and pas de bourrees, but with a hip hop flare! As you follow along with me, concentrate on just feeling the beat, loosening up, and just grooving! All right, lets.begin!*

Song: "Breathe, Stretch, Shake" by Mase and P Diddy

Time: 3:17 (40 counts of 8)

- 2 8's Feet in Second, bouncing to the rhythm
- 2 8's Lifting knees 2r, 2l, 2r, 2l repeat
- 4 8's Walk forward with hips (bouncing) for 8, Slide back R Jump feet together, repeat L, R, L
- 4 8's Knee, Knee, slide together
- 2 8's Slide, Ball-Change
- 2 8's Step, Behind, Step, Ball-Change
- 2 8's Step, Turn, Step, Ball-Change
- 4 8's Head Isolations, (Up-Down), (Right-Left), (Ear to Shoulder), 2 circles
- 2 8's Shoulder rolls back and forward
- 2 8's Rib Isolations R and L
- 2 8's Rib Isolations with Shoulders R and L, Then double hits to the R, L
- 2 8's Hip Isolations to the R and L, 4 circles, R, L, R, L
- 2 8's Rolling wrists, step L, cross right heel over, repeat R, L, R
- 4 8's Pas de bourree, bounce, bounce
- 4 8's Kick step tap

Keep kick step tapping as the music fades...

### **B-boying:**

*B-boying is what is commonly known as breakdancing. "Breakdancing" was a term coined by the media during its popularity in the 80's, but is not the true-name of this dance form. We will refer to it as b-boying or breaking. The "b" in b-boy and b-girl stands for "break," "Bronx," or "boogie." Contrary to popular belief, b-boying did not start in the 80's – it was born in the South Bronx, NY in the late 60's/early 70's. It was a time when the middle class families had been pushed out by the construction of an expressway built through the heart of the Bronx. Slumlords had taken over the mass produced apartment complexes leaving many empty and unkempt buildings. Crime, drug addiction, and unemployment were at an all-time high. Hip hop was a way for the young people to cry out and express themselves. B-boying was the physical expression of this generation. There are three main parts of b-boying: top-rock (the upright dancing*

before going to the floor), floorwork (self-explanatory), and freezes (the exclamation point on the b-boy sentence). When breaking first started, all the dancers did was dance "on top." The first thing I'm going to teach you is some basic top-rock moves. There are many different names for these moves – I'm teaching you the names that I learned from some of the forefathers of breaking from Rock Steady Crew.

### 1. Top-rock –

Like in all forms of dance, it is the dancer who incorporates their previous experience into their expression. Therefore, every b-boy's top-rock will be different and should be. But there are some basic top-rock moves to build upon. The top-rock is the first thing you do as you enter the circle to challenge someone. Right now, visualize yourself at a crowded block party and everyone's dancing. The DJ throws a record on that makes you go crazy. You find yourself in the middle of a circle of people challenging another dancer with your moves.

#### a. Basic – most basic top-rock

1. Start standing with your feet slightly apart.
2. Jump forward onto your right foot, crossing it over your left as your arms swing out to the side.
3. Jump back to the starting position, bringing arms back in.
4. Repeat with left foot.

#### b. Indian step – named from the sound that the feet make on the ground (not necessarily politically correct)

1. Start with your right foot in the air in front of you.
2. Jump onto your right foot just like the basic top-rock, but lift the left foot up behind you as you twist your body to the left.
3. Jump back to the starting position with the right foot in the air.
4. Jump and switch feet (now left foot is in the air).
5. Switch again back to the starting position and start over.

#### c. Sa-Sa - named from its salsa influence when the Latinos took to the dance

1. Kick your right foot out in front of you.
  2. Place the right foot back down next to your left foot.
  3. Step out to the left with your left foot, putting your weight onto it.
  4. Kick your left foot out in front of you.
  5. Place the left foot down next to your right foot.
  6. Step out to the right with your right foot, putting your weight onto it.
- \*Note: All this time keep your chest low and your legs bent.

#### d. Skate – used by b-boys to push people out of the way to get in the circle/cipher

1. Skip in place, side to side.
2. When skipping right, use your left arm to push the air away and vice versa.

## 2. Floorwork -

*A couple of years later, b-boys started taking the movement to the floor. It takes a lot of upper body strength to do floorwork, which makes it more difficult for girls. That's why you see more b-boys than b-girls. The first b-boys didn't break on cardboard. They danced on concrete. There was no cushion for them – they didn't have anything like that. They were getting cut up and bruised, doing what they loved, making up new moves everyday in their neighborhoods.*

a. Helicopter – *most basic floor move – also commonly known as the coffee grinder - perfecting this move helps with more difficult moves*

1. Crouch down on your left foot, with your right leg extended to the side. Your weight is on your hands in front of you.
2. Swing your right leg around counter-clockwise on a horizontal plane, moving your hands out of the way and then replacing them back in front of you.
3. Jump over the swinging leg with your left foot as the right leg continues counterclockwise until you return to the starting position.

*\*Note: This can be done on either side and backwards. Ideally, your swinging leg should never touch the ground.*

b. CC's/Russian Taps – *a variation of the "Russian"*

1. Begin in the same position as the helicopter, but with your extended right leg straight in front of you.
2. Place both hands on the right side of your right leg.
3. Put your weight on your hands as you twist your body to the right, lifting the left foot off of the ground while keeping it connected to your right leg.
4. Come back to the starting position and switch legs.
5. Repeat to the other side.

*\*Note: Never let your rear touch the ground. Progress to using only one hand.*

## 3. Freezes –

*Freezes are like the exclamation point at the end of a b-boy sentence. It's the climactic point where the b-boy stops a poses for a second or two. The more difficult and awkward a freeze is, the more respect the b-boy will earn, but it doesn't necessarily need to be hard.*

a. The Baby – *the most basic freeze*

1. Start in a squat position.
2. Place both hands parallel to one another on the ground to the right side of your body. Your left elbow should line up with your "knee pit," and your right elbow should stick into your hip if bent.
3. Slowly bend your elbows so you begin to tilt to the right. Keep going until your feet naturally lift off the ground and you lower yourself so the right side of your face is resting on the floor. Your knees should be resting on your left elbow.

*\*Note: It's not about strength – it's about counter-balance. Make sure you reach out with your head, not straight down. Experiment with different ways to hold your legs once you're comfortable.*

Now let's go back in time and over to the west coast – Southern California. Locking and popping are called the "funk styles." They are both danced to funk music and were developed during the West Coast Funk Era. This was before the time of hip hop. These dance forms were adopted into hip hop under the umbrella of street dance, but have purely funk roots. Funk music was first introduced to the world at Woodstock in 1970 (Sly and the Family Stones). Up until then, African Americans had been represented by soul music based on 8 beats to the bar. Funk created a "groove" by fragmenting the beat – it was based on 16 beats. Basically, it's great dance music!

### Locking:

Locking was created by a man named Don "Campbellock" Campbell in the late 60's in South Central Los Angeles. The area was still a mess from the uprising of 1965, which left the community in shambles. A young Don Campbell was trying to learn to do the funky chicken when he literally stumbled upon this new dance form that uses falling, sliding, and pointing. Many of these moves were accidents, but people loved it. This dance would take off because of a little show called, "Soul Train," which brought Campbell and his group, "The Lockers," into the living rooms of people all over the US. Everything in locking is exaggerated (looks, points, etc). "The true beauty of the dance lies in pure improvisation, not a series of pre-planned, sequenced dance moves."

1. Contraction/Locking Exercises – these are done first to familiarize students with the "feeling" of the lock
  1. Stand with your feet together, slightly turned out if you like, with your elbows into your sides with your forearms extended diagonally and your hands in loose fists. Arch your back slightly.
  2. Contract your chest, replacing your elbows with your fists (your arms should look like chicken wings) and pop on of your heels up, bending that leg.
  3. Come back to starting position and repeat to the other side.
2. Lock– the main move of locking
  1. Start with your feet together, slightly turned out if you like, hands to your side. Bend your elbows and throw your hands (in loose fists) up to ear level.
  2. Bring them back down to your sides.
  3. Step 2 of the contraction exercise.
3. Wrist Rolls/Uncle Sam Points – One thing used a lot in locking is rolls of the wrists and pointing in different directions. The pointing name originated from the Uncle Sam "We Want You" posters for recruiting soldiers.
  - Wrist rolls are done mostly by the ear.
  - A point can be done in any direction by itself or consecutively
4. Campbell Walk – a transitional or moving step
  1. Start by stepping on your right heel. Left arm in running position.
  2. Lift your left foot and place it next to the right as you plie in first position. Arms switch – right arm comes up. Repeat.

\*Note: Drop your chest on step 2.

5. Locker Handshake – *locking handclap game. There are many ways to do a locker handshake. Here are the directions for the handshake used in this lesson with counts..*

Stand facing a partner.

- 1 Wrist roll with your right hand near your ear.
- 2 & Slap right hands with your partner, front and back.
- 3 Right wrist roll.
- 4 & Lift your right knee and pound it twice with your right fist.
- 5 Right wrist roll.
- 6 & Hit both hands of your partner simultaneously twice.
- 7 Right wrist roll.
- 8 & Jump out and plie in second position pounding both fists on both knees simultaneously twice.
- 1 Right wrist roll.
- 2 Grab right hand of your partner.
- 3, 4 Look right, then back at your partner
- 5, 6, 7 Grab your partners left hand on top of your right hands. Then grab right, then left.
- 8 Still hold hands drop down to a squat.

\*Note: Once you have the hands part down, add a bounce or walk to your step. Also, don't forget your character – exaggerate everything!

### **Popping/Boogaloo:**

*In the mid 70's, after the popularity of locking began to simmer out, many were turning to the growing disco scene. But a young man named "Boogaloo Sam" Soloman in Fresno, California was developing a new dance style. It consisted of flexing your muscles continuously to a beat to create a jerky, snapping effect. Him and his group, "The Electric Boogaloes," were influenced by "The Lockers" and their funky style, but created their own kind of movements by watching disabled people, cartoons, slinkys, and mime shows. There are many styles of popping, including their signature Boogaloo style that mixes popping with fluid movements.*

1. Basic warm-up (arms and legs) – *To pop the arms, you must flex and unflex your tricep muscles continuously to the beat. You can also use your elbows and wrists. It takes practice to build the muscles up so that you have a visible "pop." To pop the legs, you simply start with them slightly bent and snap them back to the beat. Wearing baggy pants gives the illusion of popping because you never see the legs bend. To advance, try popping your chest and your neck.*

2. Fresno – *most popular and basic popping move*

1. Begin with feet in 2<sup>nd</sup> parallel, pointing diagonally to the left.
2. Pop your right arm out straight in front of you and your left arm at your side twice while you pop your legs twice at the same time.
3. Switch to the other side by turning on your toes until you're facing the right diagonal.
4. Repeat with your left arm up.

\*Note: To progress, pop your chest and your head at the same time.

3. Boogaloo move – *demonstrates the Boogaloo popping method of isolating the upper and lower halves of the body using rolls of the hips and walk outs.*

1. Start standing with your feet apart.
2. Lean to your right dropping your chest and bending your right knee in, letting your arms hang loosely.
3. Replace your right foot with your left foot as you ball change. Now your left knee is bent in and your right leg is straight. Your upper body does not move, therefore, now it appears that you are leaning to your left.
4. Shift your upper body to the right side, straightening your left leg and bending your right so that your back where you were in step 2. Repeat. The step moves to the right.

\*Note: This step can be done in either direction. To progress, pop your arms, chest and head while executing.

4. Waving – *a liquid type of popping. Your body looks like a wave of water is running through it. We will learn the basic wave of the arms.*

1. Stand with your arms extended out to your sides, slightly bent with your fingers pointing up.
2. Start on your left hand by bending the fingers in at the second knuckles.
3. Bend at the wrist so now the fingers are straight and pointing down.
4. Bend the elbow up towards the ceiling, now flexing the wrist.
5. Push your shoulder up to your ear, while straightening the elbow.
6. Drop that shoulder while bringing your right shoulder to your ear.
7. Drop the right shoulder as you raise your right elbow towards the ceiling (right forearm is dangling).
8. Raise right wrist so that now the elbow is pointing down and so are the right fingers.
9. Straighten your wrist and slowly unroll your fingers.

\*Note: This can go both directions and throughout your body. Practice one part at a time first. Then try to make it one fluid motion.

*This is what I say to myself as I practice: Fingers, elbow, wrist, shoulder, shoulder, elbow, wrist, fingers.*

### **Current Trends in Hip Hop:**

*All right, so who remembers the “Running Man” and the “Roger Rabbit?” How about the “Cabbage Patch?” I know it seems like a long time ago, but these were all popular dance moves that the kids of the late 80’s and early 90’s were doing in dance class and through the hallways at school. Now, how many of you have heard of the “Chicken-head” or the “C-walk?” Maybe not so many of you. These are the dances that kids nowadays are dying to learn. Visit [dance.net](http://dance.net), and go to the hip hop section. The message boards are flooded with kids asking other kids how to do these dances. They post sites that explain them; they tell each other what music videos to watch; they even help each other out by trying to explain it in words. These moves originated in clubs, and have been popularized through the power of music videos. MTV, BET, and other channels bring these videos, complete with the “new” dance moves to thousands of living rooms across the nation. Now, there are kids of all races, ages, and dance backgrounds*



*trying to emulate what they see on TV. It is comparable to the impact Michael Jackson had on the youth of America with his video "Thriller". Even Wade Robson said he learned to dance by watching the "Thriller" music video until he mastered the steps, including the "moonwalk," one of Jackson's signature moves.*

*With popping and locking coming from the west, and breaking coming from the east, finally there are some signature moves arriving from the south.*

1. *Chickenhead - a club dance that originated in the clubs of St. Louis, Missouri. Artists like Nelly and Chingy popularized it in their music videos. The term "chickenhead" is sometimes used as derogatory term used to describe women who enjoy engaging in sexual activity. Today, it often is used to describe women who are primarily dependent on men, and most commonly used as slang for the word "groupie". The "chickenhead dance" should not be associated with this definition.*

1. Start with a step to the left and a tap inward and slightly forward with the ball of your right foot.
2. Keep repeating, switching sides, with a bounce in your step.
3. Increasingly turn the "tapping foot" inward.
4. With fists by your hips, elbows out, flap arms forward with the tap, and back with the step.
5. Start contracting and arching body with the rhythm of the step. Contract on the tap, arch on the step.
6. Using the neck, move the head forward and back.

2. *The Wobble - As the song says "Lemme see ya shake, bounce, twerk, rattle and roll, I call it the wobble now get yourself on the floor!" The 504 Boyz from the New No Limit Record Label demonstrate this move in their music video for the appropriately named song, "Wobble Wobble." The artists, from New Orleans, Louisiana, are under the direction of famous hip hop producer, Master P.*

1. Simply speaking, it is just a second position, with a little sway.
2. Staring in second, bend the knees. Lift the right leg slightly, then place it back on the ground, feeling the rhythm. (and one, and two)
3. Keeping the rhythm going start allowing the left knee to turn inward, rotating from the left hip.
4. Bend arms at elbows, with fists in front of body. When right leg is on ground, fists go right, when right leg is slightly lifted, fists go left.
5. With the emphasis outward, right hip, head and fists all sway to the right.
6. Can be performed with different arms (behind body, one arm out,), and can also be performed on the left side, or in a circle.

3. *Heel Toe - Derivative of the "C-walk". It's kind of funny when a 10 year-old little girl in suburban America begs you to teach her the C-walk. The reason is because this dance step is surrounded by much controversy. Commonly used by the street gang known as the Crips, the C-walk is now popping up in clubs and schools around the country. It is said that the Crips used to do this step after shooting or killing a rival gang member. On the one end of the debate are those who feel that C-walking should be banned from schools*

and clubs due to the gang ties it has. On the other hand, there are those who feel that the Crip-walk dance is simply a passing fad. The first time Crip-walking appeared in a music video was in a song done by WC several years ago. Since then Snoop Doggy Dogg, a former Crip himself, Xzibit, and even Lil' Bow Wow and B2K, have performed the C-walk or variations of the dance at their concerts. By performing the dance, the aforementioned performers have not only made C-walking more mainstream, they have increased the number of non-gang members doing the step. The C-Walk's jittery stutter-step combination of foot pivots and shuffles were on display at gang celebrations more than 20 years ago. The question today, however, is whether or not the dance has crossed over to mainstream society and lost its violent gang association. Only a true Crip could teach you the real C-walk, and since that probably won't be happening any time soon, students will have to settle for variations on the step, such as the heel-toe.

1. Place the left foot right next to the right heel (like a parallel 5<sup>th</sup> position).
2. Keep the left foot straight, and turn the right toe inward. Bend knees.
3. Start by lifting the right toe, turn it outward (to the right) on the heel with a straight leg, then place it back to its starting position on the ground (turned in and knees bent). Do this a couple of times before you engage the left foot.
4. Left foot—heel goes outward (to the left) on the ball of the foot, knee stays bent.
5. Both feet should be working simultaneously. Pivoting the front foot on the heel, and the back foot on the ball.
6. After one pivot with the right foot in front, ball change quickly and set up your feet on the other side, with the left foot turned in, and the right toe at the base of the left heel.
7. Do one pivot on this side, and ball change to the original side. Keep repeating.

### **Putting it all together**

*Now, put all the steps together in a combination!*

1 8 count of each:

Basic Top Rock  
Indian Step  
Sa-Sa  
Skate  
Helicopter  
CC  
Locks  
Rolls/Uncle Sam points  
Campbell Walk  
Locker Handshake (2 8's)  
Fresno  
Boogaloo move  
Waving  
Chickenhead  
Wobble  
Toe Heel  
End it with a Freeze!

### **Conclusion:**

*There are definite positives to teaching hip hop with this method. Hip hop has a tremendous impact on adolescents' lives because of its popularity in mainstream society, but you can change **how** it impacts your students. Kids need to know that there is more to hip hop than what they hear on the radio and what they see on MTV. By teaching with this method, you can change their perception. You can teach them to have a discerning eye and ear so that they will recognize sexism, materialism, and commercialism, and see it as superficial. Examine the messages in the lyrics. Promote discussion about these issues. Talk about social inequality and oppression. Hip hop came from the intense aspiration that comes from having little. It's about speaking the truth and not being quiet in the face of injustice. It's a mode of expression emphasizing the importance of community. It teaches kids to be themselves and that they can accomplish their goals, no matter what the hardships. When I implemented my 10 week curriculum on a group of adolescents ages 12-18, the results were far more amazing than what I expected. I'd like to share some quotes from the teens that they wrote at the end of the session.*

### **Quotes from Saza's students**

*"Some of the hip hop on MTV, media today talks a lot about negative stuff, it kinda did that before. But the culture taught me that people in poverty that had everything taken away were angry and let out their emotions. Today hip hop music talks about sex, money and other stuff and it's not as strong as it was before. At first, hip hop was positive and if you know the foundation you can still see it positively, but public and society seems to see hip hop as provocative and negative. I think some hip hop artists talk about weird issues and lyrics that sell to the public, not to promote the culture."*

*"Hip hop is shown in the media as a style of music centered on violence and materialism. The three elements other than rap are ignored and the messages of the music have changed. I wish other people could take classes like this so they could see what hip hop culture is about, 'cause I can't seem to explain it to them. I think the only way hip hop will survive how it's supposed to be is to separate itself from mainstream rap."*

*"[This class] makes me see the stuff that's 'in' as artificial and non-entertaining and I don't like it all that much any more..."*

*"At first I didn't really know much about hip hop. All I really knew was an eight-count and how to follow my teacher's lead. I really didn't know much about the actual culture or background. I now know a lot more about the history of hip hop, and have more respect for it."*

*"When I see hip hop dance, I thought of Britney Spears, Justin T., and Janet. I forgot about the old school breaking, popping, and locking – foundation. So this class definitely changed my attitudes. I learned that hip hop has a positive goal even though it seems negative."*

## A Quote from Tony Tee

“Out there in our world, Modern-day Entertainment Dance, called "HIP HOP" or "STREET" is used in innumerable videos and TV programs. However, I don't believe our society properly respects the wonderful qualities of it. They think of it as just a fad, an African-American culture, and a youth culture. They think of hip hop as a dance style that can be easily learned by anyone. They think of it as just a recreation. It is all right if this dance is merely a part of the culture. But I want to elevate this dance to an art form. And I am certain that "STREET/HIP HOP DANCE" deserves to reach that level. I want to tell everyone how perfect "STREET/HIP HOP DANCE" is in expressing "the beauty of groove." I want to explain what it is to relentlessly pursue the art of following the beat in the music and the difficulty in doing so. Through my instruction and performances I want to make this dance bloom and become a new art form. I believe that is the only way that Don's modern-day entertainment dance as entertainment will be not only something for the African-Americans or the younger generation but a dance form that is loved by everyone in the world, regardless of age, gender, religion, race or nationality. I want to make this happen. I believe that will be my contribution to the African-Americans who introduced me to dance.”

“It will be my show of respect to the person who known as  
THE FATHER OF LOCKING,  
Don Campbell.”

[www.tonytee.com](http://www.tonytee.com)

With a professional of dance career spanning 25 years, Tony Tee has analyzed dance form four different standpoints: Ethnology, Kinesiology, and Music and Dance theory. As a result, he has discovered the “basic techniques for dancing on the beat.” which he has organized into a system of general rhythm theory. Tony Tee teaches Pulse Rhythm Theory. The Benefits of Interlock Training at his LA studio.

## The History of Hip Hop Dance: A More Detailed Look

Collected and written by Sarah "Saza" Dimmick

### **DEFINITION:**

Hip hop is not just a form of dance; it is a culture - a way of life. Hip hop consists of four main elements: b-boying (breaking), dj-ing, graffiti art, and mc-ing (rapping). Hip hop dance as we know it today evolved from three underground dance styles: *b-boying*, *locking*, and *popping*. It then fused with the ideas and choreographic elements of jazz dance to create a hybrid dance form.

### **BRIEF HISTORY:**

To understand hip hop dance, you must investigate the history of the three dance styles from which it evolved.

Locking was the first professional street dance. Creator, Don "Campbellock" Campbell, stumbled upon this new dance in the late 60's in Southern California while trying to do the funky chicken. He was clumsy; he would fall, slide, and point, but people loved it. He soon formed his own performing group called the *Campbellock Dancers*, a name that would soon be changed to *The Lockers*. They were invited to perform on all of the popular talk shows of the time, including the *Dick Van Dyke Show*, the *Tonight Show*, and the *Carol Burnett Show*. They were also regulars on *Soul Train*. Soon everyone was doing this dance. *The Lockers'* most famous members were Tony Basil (who recorded the hit, "Hey Mickey") and Rerun (from the show, *What's Happening*). Locker attire includes knickers, suspenders, marshmallow shoes with matching striped socks, and appleboy caps.

In Fresno, California, 1975, a young man named "Boogaloo Sam," Soloman was inspired by *The Lockers* and started to put together movements that would become the *boogaloo* popping style. Popping consists of snapping the legs back and flexing muscles continuously to a beat to give a jerky, snapping effect. The *boogaloo* style combines the elements of popping with a smooth style that utilizes angles, and incorporates fluid movements to make everything flow together, often using rolls of the hips, knees, and head. Boogaloo Sam started the famous dance group, the *Electric Boogaloos*, who still perform and teach to this day. Other styles of popping include waving, robot, ticking, strobing, hitting, and puppet style.

Locking and popping are called the "funk styles." They are both danced to funk music and were developed during the West Coast Funk Era. These dance forms were adopted into hip hop, but have purely funk roots.

B-boying (better known as breakdancing, a term given by the media) began evolving in the late 60's/early 70's in South Bronx, New York (the birthplace of hip hop). At one of

his famous block parties, DJ Kool Herc noticed that some of the partiers would wait until the break of the record (the part with no lyrics, just funky beats) to jump on the dance floor. He revolutionized dj-ing by finding a way to prolong the break by using two of the same record and switching them back and forth. He named these dancers, *b-boys* and *b-girls*, which stands for break boy and break girl. In the beginning, breaking only consisted of dancing "on top," which is called the *top-rock*. This toprocking was very spontaneous, incorporating postures, poses, and challenges. It wasn't until around 1974-75 that the b-boys took it down to the floor. The first *floorwork* was very sporadic and jerky with moves like the *Russian*, *swipes*, *CC's*, and *freezes*. Before long, b-boying was brought to the streets. It started as an African American artform, but soon other nationalities became involved. Puerto Ricans, especially, took to the dance. Soon, more acrobatic moves were added. B-boy *crews* began to form. They would *battle* each other for turf, fame, and bragging rights. Whoever had the illest moves and the most creative style would win.

By 1976-77, Disco was killing the b-boy scene. So in 1977, Rock Steady Crew was formed to keep the "rockin' steady." In the 80's, there was a media explosion. B-boying was everywhere. Movies like *Style Wars*, *Beat Street*, *Breakin' 1* and *2*, and *Flashdance* were exposing the entire world to the dance. That was when the term, "breakdance," was coined by the media. It was a way for the general public to relate to b-boying. But then the media decided that "breakdancing" was over – just a passing fad. Little did they know, the underground scene was still booming, and it has even made a comeback in the media in the last ten years by way of television commercials, movies, and music videos.

Breaking brought new ideas to the world of social dance: full-body contact with the ground was okay; spinning and other moves were possible through the careful manipulation of the body; fighting moves could be a part of dancing. Dancing is now freer, more pumped up, and less controlled because of this.

Before long, these three dance styles, locking, popping, and breaking, began to merge with the organized elements of jazz choreography. Music videos, especially, began to show choreography that had a hip hop flare. Hip hop dance has taken on a life of its own and now thrives independently from the strict vocabulary of jazz, locking, popping, and b-boying. Hip hop dance varies in style depending on your location, ranging from a more pop music/jazzy style to a rougher or booty-shakin' style.

Although hip hop dance has evolved into a style of its own, the three underground dance forms of locking, popping, and b-boying are still alive and kicking today. There are b-boy, locking, and popping crews all over the globe. Rock Steady Crew is still going strong after more than 25 years. It is one of the most respected b-boy crews in the world. There are organized "jams" and battles that occur weekly, monthly, and yearly in the U.S. (not to mention, the world), including a thriving scene here in Arizona. These dance forms have even entered the realm of concert dance with companies like *Rennie Harris Puremovement*, *Montazh*, *The Groovalos*, and *Nebellen*.

## The Issue of Music:

In this small-world-after-all age of Internet downloading and non-stop cable TV programming, hip hop can reach fans anywhere. And it does. Nearly 30 years after its birth in South Bronx, NY, and 25 years after it jumped into the mainstream with the release of the Sugar Hill Gang's single "Rapper's Delight," hip hop is in its prime - an industry that generates \$10 billion annually.

In 2003, nearly one out of every four CDs sold in the United States was a hip hop or R&B CD, totaling \$2.8 billion, according to the Recording Industry Association of America. The most popular CD of the year was 50 Cent's "Get Rich or Die Tryin'," helping hip hop become the second-biggest genre in music, behind rock. In October of 2003, the top 10 songs of the Billboard 100 were all hip hop songs, the first time ever.

Hip hop is a music. It is a culture. It is a marketing platform. It has slipped into nearly every aspect of U.S. culture - from movies and TV to fashion to the way people speak. Hip hop's control over popular culture grows even as supporters acknowledge that much of the music remains obsessed with violence (both real and imaginary), with demeaning portrayals of women and with consumerism (bling-bling) of the highest order.

**This presents hip hop dance teachers with a difficult dilemma. How do we choose appropriately suitable songs in order to protect the innocence of today's youth? We have a responsibility to address these issues with our students, and to help them understand the motivation and history behind hip hop music. How has hip hop music reached its current state and why does it hold so much negativity?**

On Nov. 12, 1974, Kool DJ Herc was playing records at a house party in the Bronx, but the crowd wasn't responding the way he wanted. To keep them moving, he played the instrumental pieces of the song they liked, "the break," over and over again. When the bit ended, he picked up the needle and put it back at the beginning of the piece. The crowd went wild. In addition to DJ's, many MC's rhymed over the 'breakbeats', the part of a song where the music was stripped and the beat more emphasized. The term MC originally meant Master of Ceremonies, and often early MC's were just that. They developed a flair for saying anything while on the microphone that could get a crowd at a dance hyped up... as a result many early MC's were also DJ's. Gradually this evolved, borrowing precedent from artists who recorded spoken-word poetry to a beat, from the beatniks on up to Umar-Bin Hasaan and the Last Poets. MCing came to mean a person who rhymed or spoke poetry on a microphone, and as this activity became popular crews of MC's formed groups and challenged each other to battle -- who could write the best rhyme, or diss the other guy better. Another influential DJ, Grandmaster Flash, recognized the need for a system in which a DJ could have one breakbeat ready to go on a turntable as the previous one faded, sometimes the same beat or tempo. As he developed the systems that made this possible he also developed the scratching technique, of moving a record in forward and reverse under the needle in time with the beat. This raw sound so suited hip hop it was quickly adopted and spread like wildfire... soon MC's were bragging not just about themselves, but who had the better DJ or whose DJ could do better tricks 'on the mix'.

As MC's began to record raps over the breakbeats, increasing in their rawness and message, "rap music" was born. Hip hop had spread from its birthplace in New York to other inner-cities elsewhere in the country, and began to develop more topic-specific forms of expression. Now hip hop began to develop more topic-specific forms of expression. While Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five had the first successful political record in "The Message", the form did not explode until after the appearance of Public Enemy and Boogie Down Productions in 1986. Their early success lead to even more afrocentric records, the two seminal recordings being BDP's "By All Means Necessary" in 1987 and PE's "It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back" in 1988. This spawned a whole movement of political records and higher consciousness, other MC's such as Rakim and Big Daddy Kane mixed elements of political style into their new, more poetic styles of MCing, in which metaphors and similes became precedent and battling was

elevated to a high plateau. Their success spawned an era that, in combination with the popularity of afrocentric rhyming, has been hailed as the 'golden age' of hip hop. At the same time their success reached new highs, some MC's also experimented with what is now known as 'gangsta rap'.

This new era of hip hop spawned from the west coast, and to a good extent includes the southern United States. This era of hip hop music is known as "gangsta" or "reality" rap. The first group to break large in this area was N.W.A. They achieved notoriety due to a Federal Bureau of Investigations warning that their song "F--- the Police" would be held accountable for retaliation against civil authorities. This only heightened public awareness and caused more people to buy their "Straight Outta Compton" album. The critics said it was offensive solely for the purpose of being shocking to sell records, when it actually breaks down the problem of the inner-city in harsh fashion. Their success caused a transformation throughout hip hop. Groups like the Geto Boys whose sales were once limited suddenly skyrocketed to gold and platinum. These successes spawned imitators, and the whole thing spread like wildfire. The media accusations actually backfired, for instead of causing the condemnation of the music they actually made it more popular. Even those not interested in the message of the music would get down because it had a funky beat, or because it was rebellious and 'cool'. Despite several attempts by highly visible public figures (from George Bush to the Reverend Calvin Butts) to curtail this industry, it still survives and continues to evolve to this day.

Today, it's all about the Benjamins. The word bling-bling has already been added to the Oxford English dictionary. The term, which is used to describe diamonds, jewelry and all forms of showy style, was coined by New Orleans rap family Cash Money Millionaires back in the late '90s and started gaining national awareness with a song titled "Bling Bling" by Cash Money artist BG.

The explosive commercial success of what became known as gangsta rap brought to the forefront a nihilistic theme in hip hop (the belief that all established authority is corrupt and must be destroyed in order to rebuild a just society). While the growth in nihilism among black youth paralleled that of white youth, its roots were distinctively of the African-American experience. This African-American youth nihilism stemmed from the rise in police brutality, the crack cocaine epidemic, and its prison industrial complex counterpart. Without a stable conscious foundation, however, they grew discouraged with their inability to constructively address these racially targeted ills. Hip hop's growing commercial appeal provided a dangerous outlet for the generation's frustration, and gangsta rap morphed into "bling-bling-ism" - the supercilious rampage of material worship and indulgence. So this is where we are today, a hip hop generation with an obsession with money, fascination with crime, and selfish indulgence. The ruthless pursuit of individual wealth is the American dream, and for the hip hop generation, athletes and entertainers are the pioneers in a world where "sex sells", and money=power. **This is not meant to infer that ALL hip hop music promotes a negative message. In the following Music Resource Guide, we will list options for finding appropriate music.**

In the early days of hip hop, its various disciplines, not unlike jazz almost a century earlier, centered on a single idea for people who felt marginalized by mainstream society: "Look at me. I am important." In the late '70s, that was a powerful declaration - especially in the Bronx, where the cuts of cash-strapped New York City government hit hard. Hip hop's ability to give a voice to the struggling remains an essential part of its appeal today. As hip hop hits its 30th birthday, music experts say it will continue to dominate popular culture.

Information Compiled by Kelly Martell Scovel from:

- Christopher Tyson: Urban Think Tank, Inc. "Exploring the Generation Gap".  
<http://www.urbanthinktank.org/generationgap.cfm>
- Glenn Gamboa: Newsday. "30 Years of Hip Hop".  
[http://www.nynewsday.com/news/local/brooklyn/nyc-etglob104000083oct10\\_0\\_4565732.story?coll=nyc-topheadlines-brooklyn](http://www.nynewsday.com/news/local/brooklyn/nyc-etglob104000083oct10_0_4565732.story?coll=nyc-topheadlines-brooklyn)
- Jamal Kirk, Aka Rave "History of Hip Hop Music and Culture".  
<http://www.nograffiti.com/files/Files2/hiphop>



## Hip hop Music Resource Guide

**1. iTunes Music Store:** For use with computers with a CD burner. Open 24/7 on Macs and Windows PCs, the iTunes Music Store has become a smash hit with music fans, professional musicians and the entire music industry. Featuring hundreds of thousands of songs from major music companies, the iTunes Music Store offers more than 100,000 new tracks from independent artists and record labels. The iTunes Music Store lets you quickly find, purchase and download the music you want for just 99¢ per song. You can search by entering the name of an artist or composer, or the title of a song — or even part of the title — and clicking the Search button. When you find something you like, listen to a 30 preview, and buy it instantly or save the store preview in a play list on your Mac or PC.

The best thing about this resource is that iTunes offers many songs in their **clean** version. This means it is in edited format (no vulgar language). It would be wise to preview the songs, even in their edited format, because often there are still references to sex or drugs.

**2. Christian Artists (Holy Hip hop):** Holy hip hop, or what some call Christian hip hop, first appeared in the late '80s and early '90s. Groups like SFC, Dynamic Twins and Stephen Wiley created hip hop music with the message of the gospel. The scene began to take off in the mid- to late '90s with groups such as Cross Movement, Grits and Gospel Gangstaz bringing more credibility and a better quality of music to the forefront. Now dozens of individual artists, groups and record labels rap about Jesus - and some are on the verge of breaking through to the mainstream. Multi-platinum rapper Kanye West released the inspirational hit record "Jesus Walks," rapper-turned-pastor Mase returned to the hip hop industry, and embattled singer R. Kelly churned out a lauded gospel album. These songs are especially appropriate for hip hop dance instruction in Catholic or Christian school environments. Artists like Will Smith promote positive messages as well, but with out the references to religion.

**Here's a quick survey of Christian hip hop. These albums are available at Amazon.com**

- Gospel Gangstaz, "Exodus": A pioneering West Coast hip hop trio.
- Grits, "Dichotomy A": A duo on the verge of breaking through to the mainstream.
- Corey Red & Precise, "Resistance Iz Futile": An ultra-aggressive East Coast-style group.
- Cross Movement, "Holy Culture": Often described as a Christian Wu-Tang Clan.
- ProcuSSIONs, "As Iron Sharpens Iron": Denver's own celebrates hip hop and the Spirit.
- KJ-52, "It's Pronounced Five-Two":
- New Breed, "Nine": A brother- and-sister group pushing the boundaries of thematic hip hop.
- Papa San, "God & I": Dancehall/ reggae music with a Christian theme.
- The Tunnel Rats, "The Tunnel Rats": A collective of artists coming together to create an album.
- DJ Maj, "DJ Maj Presents: The Ring Leader: Mixtape Vol. 3": A mix of various Christian hip hop and R&B artists mixed by DJ Maj.

**3. Funk Music/Breakbeats:** Remember, early hip hop dance styles (breaking, popping, and locking) were performed to breakbeats and funk music. No need to worry about words, because these songs are often instrumental, with a great beat, and fun to dance to. There are a couple resources for these types of songs:

- [www.dancemaster.com](http://www.dancemaster.com) - click on the CD link. There is a collection of OG (original) Funk music available for purchase.
- [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) -follow the music link. Enter "Street Jams" into the search box. 18 awesome CD's full of old school music; *Street Jams: Electric Funk*, Volumes 1-4, *Hip hop from the Top 1-4*, and *Back to the Old Skool 1-4* are available for purchase, and can even be previewed before purchase. These are probably available at record stores as well.

**4. Wal-Mart and Wal-mart.com:** Only sells clean music. Once again, "clean" doesn't always mean appropriate.

## GLOSSARY

- Battle:** A challenge between an individual or group of b-boys.
- B-boy/B-girl:** Break boy/girl, boogie boy/girl, as in one who breaks.
- Bite (to bite):** To copy someone's style and moves. Very disrespectful!
- Capoeira:** A Brazilian martial art form that has greatly influenced breaking, especially power moves.
- Chicken-head:** A club dance that originated in the clubs of St. Louis Missouri. Imitates a chicken flapping its wings and moving its neck.
- Crew:** Group of b-boys and/or b-girls who practice and compete together.
- C-walk:** The Crip-walk. It is said that the Crips used to do this step after shooting or killing a rival gang member. It is a jittery stutter-step combination of foot pivots and shuffles.
- Down Rock/  
Floor rock/  
Footwork:** The rhythmic weaving of legs and feet - usually in a circular motion. Performed with body close to the floor.
- Drop:** The transition between upright or standing moves and moves done on the ground.
- Freeze (stall):** Climatic point in a dance routine or sequence where the b-boy unexpectedly freezes into an awkward or difficult position for a few seconds.
- Baby Freeze:** The most basic of freezes. A balance on the hands, usually with one leg on the knee.
- Freestyle:** Improvisational form of hip hop dancing. Dancers make up moves or combinations on the spot. Done often in B-boy circles.
- Funk Music:** A genre of music with African-American origins. Accenting the one-three beat. Locking and Popping are danced to funk music.
- Hip Hop:** A culture defined as a movement which is expressed through various artistic mediums, or elements, known as MC'ing, DJ'ing, Graffiti Art, and Breaking.
- House Dancing:** Dancing done to house music (disco music blended with drum beats), originating in dance clubs in Chicago and NYC in the early eighties.

Lock:	The main move of locking. A locking of the joints of the arms and body.
Routines:	Connected and/or executed movements done by several dancers together.
Top Rock/ Shuffle:	The dance; the basic upright footwork. It can be based on many different influences and is different in each individual.
Uncle Sam Point:	A point with either one finger or two. Originated from the Uncle Sam recruitment posters.
Pop:	To flex your muscles continuously to a beat to create a jerky, snapping effect.
Power Moves:	Moves incorporated into breaking that require great physical strength or gymnastics skill.
Sa-Sa:	A top rock with a salsa or Latin style.
Skate:	A top-rock sometimes used by b-boys to push people out of the way to get in the circle in a club.
Six Step:	Backbone of floorwork. Looks as if b-boy is walking around on ground in a circle. Takes 6 steps to complete pattern.
Tutting:	A form of popping, inspired by the Egyptian hieroglyphics – uses angular patterns.
Up Rock/ Brooklyn Rock:	Uprocking is a dancing fight in which the dancers are close but do not touch! Usually used against someone you battle. Holding the rhythm and acting to and with the music is the most important thing. Nowadays this dance style is often mixed within the top-rock of b-boys.
Waving :	A liquid type of popping.
The Wobble:	The 504 Boyz from the New No Limit Record Label demonstrate this move in their music video for the appropriately named song, "Wobble Wobble."

# Resources

## Documentaries

- "The Freshest Kids: A history of the B-Boy" (DVD)
- "Underground Dance Masters: History of a Forgotten Era" (VHS)  
—History of Locking and Popping
- "Style Wars" PBS Special on Graffiti, b-boys, MC's and DJ's

## Movies

- "Wild Style"
- "Beat Street"
- "Breakin' 1" and "Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo"
- "Flashdance"

## Books


- The Vibe History of Hip Hop edited by Alan Light
- Rap and Hip Hop: The Voice of a Generation by Sherry Ayazi-Hashjin
- Yes Yes Y'all by Jim Fricke

## Websites

- ElectricBoogaloos.com
- MrWiggles.com
- Tonytee.com/campbellock
- Rocksteadycrew.com
- Bboy.com
- Daveyd.com
- UrbanThinkTank.com

## Instructional Videos

- "Mr. Freeze-Straight Up Foundation"  
--Available at [www.concretemasters.net](http://www.concretemasters.net)
- "Breakdance Step by Step" DVD  
--Available at [www.bboy.org](http://www.bboy.org)
- "Boogaloo Sam: Poppin' and Boogaloo Bolume 1"
- "Popin' Pete: Poppin' and Boogaloo Basics 1 and 2"
- "Popin' Pete: Pop What you Got"
- "Mr. Wiggles Sessions #1,2, and 3"
- "Skeeter Rabbit Poppin' Video #3: The Cure"  
--All available at [www.electricboogaloos.com](http://www.electricboogaloos.com)
- "Seven Levels of Locking" and "Seven Levels of Popping"  
--*Chain Reaction System* available at [www.dancemaster.com](http://www.dancemaster.com)




**Street Moves**  
*Top-Rock, Up Rock, Freezes and Airposes for the Dance Teacher*


Mila Pamish - Arizona State University  
 Sarah Dimmick - Arizona State University  
 Kelly Martell - Xavier High School

**STREET MOVES**

*Hip Hop Influence in Today's Music Videos*




**Britney Spears**




**N'Sync**

**STREET MOVES**

*Today's Hip Hop Choreographers*



**Wade Robson**




**Shane Sparks**

**STREET MOVES**

4 Elements  
Hip Hop

*Visual Expression-Graffiti*



**STREET MOVES**

4 Elements  
Hip Hop


*Verbal Manifestation-Rapping*



**STREET MOVES**


4 Elements  
Hip Hop

*Musical Backbone-DJing*




**STREET MOVES** 4 Elements  
Hip Hop

*DJs and MCs*



**STREET MOVES** 4 Elements  
Hip Hop

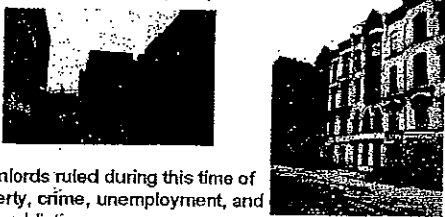
*Physical Expression B-Boying*



B-boy & B-girls - A way for the young to express themselves

**STREET MOVES**


*Bronx, NY  
Birthplace of Hip Hop*



Stumfords ruled during this time of poverty, crime, unemployment, and drug addiction.

**STREET MOVES**

*Top Rock*



- "The Dance"
- The basic upright footwork
- Postures
- Poses
- Challenges

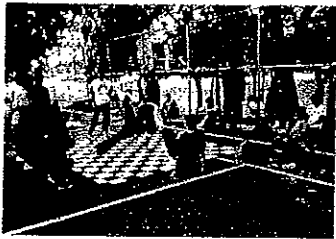
B-boy Allen Ness  
Rock Steady Crew, NY

**STREET MOVES**

*Floor Work*

The rhythmic weaving of legs & feet - usually in a circular motion.


Performed with body close to the floor.



**STREET MOVES**

*Freezes*

Climatic point in a dance routine or sequence where the b-boy unexpectedly freezes into an awkward or difficult position for a few seconds.



**STREET MOVES**

**Locking**

*"The true beauty of the dance lies in pure improvisation, not a series of pre-planned, sequenced dance moves."*



Creator: Don "Campbellock" Campbell

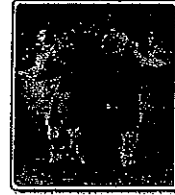
**STREET MOVES**

**Popping**

Flex your muscles continuously to the beat to create a jerky, snapping effect

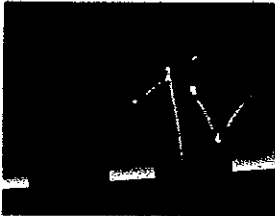


Creator: "Boogaloo Sam" Solomon



**STREET MOVES**

**Power of Music Videos/Internet**



**STREET MOVES**

**Signature Dance Moves From the South**



504 Boyz popularized "The Wobble"



Chingy popularized "The Chickenhead"

**STREET MOVES**

**The Crip-walk**



A jittery stutter-step combination of foot pivots & shuffles used in gang celebrations.

**STREET MOVES**

**Hip Hop Stereotypes**



- Foul language
- Degrades women
- Glorifies drugs, sex, and violence
- Importance placed on money & material possessions

## STREET MOVES

### *Hip Hop Community*



## STREET MOVES

### *Student Reflection*

"Hip Hop is shown in the media as a style of music centered on violence and materialism. The three elements other than rap are ignored and the messages of the music have changed. I wish other people could take classes like this so they could see what hip hop culture is about, 'cause I can't seem to explain it to them. I think the only way hip hop will survive how it's supposed to be is to separate itself from mainstream rap."

Renata Greico 17