



## Creating a Personal Logo

### OVERVIEW

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can a logo help communicate a person or group's unique personality?

#### OVERVIEW

*In this lesson, students discuss how the logos of the Hip Hop groups Run-DMC, Salt-N-Pepa, Wu-Tang Clan, and A Tribe Called Quest reflect their musical identity. From what they learn about these groups, students then develop their own personal logo that expresses their own unique individuality.*



Hip Hop is a culture that celebrates individuality. Break dancers break free of spatial norms to assert their presence. Graffiti artists are admired and recognized for their customized signatures, characters, and styles. DJs and producers dive deep into forgotten records to create a unique sonic signature. And rappers freely express themselves in creative cadence and verse.

The most legendary Hip Hop groups have managed to combine many or all of these forms of expression into a singular image or statement. Coming out of Hollis, Queens, New York City in the 1980s, Run-DMC created a style based on minimalism, performing over skeletal beats and eschewing bombastic outfits for street clothes like tennis shoes, jeans, and tracksuits. Also from Queens, Salt-N-Pepa, a trio of women recording artists, helped elevate Hip Hop into the sphere of popular music, releasing a series of hits that offered a woman's perspective on relationships. In the 1990s, the Wu-Tang Clan emerged from the borough of Staten Island in New York City. The group, which would become a long-lived Hip Hop institution, is known for a unique worldview inspired and defined by encyclopedic knowledge of Kung-Fu films and Asian philosophy. Finally, from St. Albans, Queens, emerged A Tribe Called Quest, a group at the center of the Native Tongues collective which also included De La Soul. Known for eclectic sounds, ideas, and visuals, the quartet's debut album featured samples of Cannonball Adderley (a collaborator of Miles Davis), the Beatles, and Stevie Wonder.

Remarkably, each of these groups were able to distill their complex artistic personas into a single group logo, each of which has become iconic not just in Hip Hop, but across global culture.

Using these groups as an inspiration, students will reflect on their own unique personality, and consider how using colors, shapes, and letters in a logo might express parts of their personality. After creating a personal logo, students will then share their work with others, and collectively organize all the personal logos into groups based on criteria developed in the class.

## OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will:

### 1. KNOW (KNOWLEDGE):

- That a student's identity is worth promoting and celebrating
- The definition of a logo
- The definition of an adjective, and its use
- How color, shape, and letters can be used in a logo to describe a personality trait
- The music groups Run-DMC, Salt-N-Pepa, Wu-Tang Clan, and A Tribe Called Quest, and their associated logos
- Strategies to organize works of art in groups based on particular criteria

### 2. MASTERY OBJECTIVE:

- Students will be able to visually express their individuality and sense of self by examining the logos of four well-known Hip Hop groups.

## ACTIVITIES

### MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITY

1. Ask students:

- What is a “selfie”?
- Have you ever taken a selfie? If so, when was the last time, and why?
- Why do you think people might enjoy taking selfies?
- What is an artistic way you can express yourself and your personality that is similar to a selfie?
- What might be some other ways you can express yourself and your personality outside of a selfie or self-portrait?

### PROCEDURE:

1. Show **Image 1, Batman Logo**. Ask students:

- Do you recognize this symbol? Who does it represent?
- What do you know about Batman? Do you think this is a good symbol for

Batman? Why or why not?

- This symbol can be called a “logo,” which is a type of image that represents a brand or character. Can you think of any other logos?

2. Inform students that they will be expressing their personalities through a personal logo, but first they will be looking at some Hip Hop logos for inspiration.
3. Distribute **Handout - Hip Hop Logo Gallery Walk Worksheet** to each student. Explain to students that they will be using the handout to help them examine some famous logos used by Hip Hop groups. Ask students:
  - The word “adjective” is used in the handout. Have you heard this word? What does it mean?
  - What are some adjectives we can use to describe a logo?
  - What are some adjectives we can use to describe someone’s personality?
4. Display the images from **Gallery Walk: Hip Hop Logos** as stations around the room. Ask students to look at the images and fill in the corresponding section of the handout (pending class time, you could assign certain students to visit certain stations to ensure that all of the Hip Hop groups are represented in the activity).
5. Once students complete the handout, ask them to return to their seats to discuss their responses as a class. Ask students:
  - What similarities did you see between the logo and the photograph of each group? Do you think each group’s logo and fashion are similar or different? Why?
6. Create a chart on the board with the following headings: Run-DMC, Salt-N-Pepa, Wu-Tang Clan, A Tribe Called Quest. Have each student report the adjective they gave in response to question #8 in the handout. Write student responses in the appropriate area of the chart. Then, ask students:
  - Are the responses you see on the chart similar or different for each group? Why might this be the case?
  - Based on the chart, could you summarize what kind of personality each group is displaying through their logo and photograph?
7. Inform students that they will now be creating a personal logo. Instruct students to take a few minutes to create a Personal Logo list of five personality traits they are proud of. Suggest that they also include some of their interests, physical traits, skills, and activities that they enjoy on their list.
8. Once students have completed their list, have them partner up. Instruct each student to ask their partner to share three adjectives that their partner feels best describes them. Students will add the three adjectives their partner shared to their Personal Logo list.
9. Ask each student to pick three words from their Personal Logo list that they feel best represents them. Then, instruct students to use those three words to create a graphic image consisting of not too much detail and with simple lines and shapes.

## SUMMARY ACTIVITY

1. Ask each student to share their personal logo with the class, and explain what the logo represents about them. Then ask students:
  - Why did you choose the colors you chose?
  - Why did you choose the shapes and lines you chose?
  - How do the colors, shapes, and lines represent the parts of your personality you wanted to express?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. As a class, discuss a way you could group all the personal logos into categories (for instance, by color(s) used, curved or straight lines, or the general emotion evoked by the logos). Once organized (and pending time), brainstorm other ways you might group together the personal logos.
2. Share student personal logos with [info@teachrock.org](mailto:info@teachrock.org)

## STANDARDS

### NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

#### *Responding*

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

#### *Performing/Presenting/Producing*

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

## RESOURCES

### HANDOUTS

- Handout - Hip Hop Logo Gallery Walk Worksheet
- Gallery Walk: Hip Hop Logos

*Lesson created in collaboration with André LeRoy Davis.*