



Coffy Town Radio Theater
COFFY POP ART HIPINC.ORG

SOUND AS IDENTITY

Sound as Identity: 2-Day Course Hand-Out

Course Overview

This 2-day module explores how sound and frequency shape identity, emotion, and culture. Students will learn the historical roots of rhythm in the African diaspora, examine how institutions use sound and color to influence perception, and reclaim identity through creative literacy.

Day 1: Rhythm, Frequency, and Identity

Session 1 — Sound as Identity: We Are Rhythm People

Content:

Across the African diaspora, rhythm has carried messages, warnings, celebrations, spiritual communication, and community identity.

Low frequencies (bass, drums, stomps) ground us and connect us to the earth and each other.

- Music is not entertainment — it is identity.
- Activity:
 - Listen to traditional drum patterns and modern bass-driven tracks.
 - Students journal: *What rhythms feel like “home” to me?*

Discussion:

- How does rhythm function as language? How does it shape identity?

Session 2 — The Frequency of Fear

Content:

Institutions use high-frequency sounds (sirens, alarms) to trigger fear responses. These mimic cries, screams, and distress signals.

- Students learn how sound can calm, excite, warn, intimidate, control, and unify.
- Activity:
 - Play recordings of sirens, alarms, and soothing low-frequency sounds.
 - Students map their physical reactions (heart rate, breath, tension).

Discussion:

- How do institutions use sound to manipulate emotion? How can we reclaim our responses?

Session 3 — Color Has Frequency Too

Content:

Color is vibrational: red = lowest visible frequency, violet = highest.

Sound also has frequency: bass = low, screech = high.

- Institutions combine red/blue lights with high-pitched sirens to create full-spectrum sensory command.
- Activity:
 - Students compare color swatches with sound samples.
 - Create a “frequency chart” linking color and sound.

Discussion:

- How do color and sound together shape perception?

Day 2: Culture, History, and Reclamation

Session 4 — Identity, Color, and Culture

Content:

Identity is shaped by what we see, hear, and feel.

- Students explore how music, fashion, language, rhythm, and color symbolism influence cultural identity.
- Activity:
 - Students bring examples of music, clothing, or art that express identity.
 - Group discussion: *How do these elements define us? How can they be redefined?*

Session 5 — The Evolution of “Black” as Identity

Content:

Identity terms shift over time. “Black” was once considered an insult, transformed through music, art, and activism.

- Example: James Brown’s *Say It Loud — I’m Black and I’m Proud* reprogrammed cultural identity.
- Activity:
 - Listen to excerpts of identity-shaping songs.
 - Students write reflections: *How does music change how we see ourselves?*

Discussion:

- How do cultural movements reclaim identity through sound?

Session 6 — Historical Context: Color in Indigenous America

Content:

Giovanni da Verrazzano’s 1524 letter describes Indigenous people valuing copper, red, and blue as identity symbols.

- Color symbolism existed long before modern institutions.
- Activity:
 - Students analyze excerpts from the letter.
 - Compare Indigenous color symbolism with African diaspora rhythm traditions.

Discussion:

- What does this tell us about the universality of sound and color in identity?

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain how sound influences emotion.
- Identify how color affects perception.
- Understand the cultural roots of rhythm and identity.
- Analyze how institutions use color and sound.
- Recognize emotional manipulation in media.
- Appreciate the historical significance of red, blue, and copper.
- Discuss the evolution of “Black” as a cultural identity.

Why This Belongs in HIP Soul Fest

HIP Soul Fest is not just performance — it is awareness, empowerment, and creative literacy.

This module teaches young people how to:

- Understand the world.
- Understand themselves.
- Decode signals around them.
- Reclaim identity through art, rhythm, and knowledge.

It aligns with the curriculum’s mission: To uplift, educate, and empower through creativity.