**The Historical Roots of Hip Hop:**

**Student Discussion/Reflective Questions**

**ABC VIDEO CLIP: SOUTH BRONX, NEW YORK CITY – 1970s**

* What do you notice about this neighborhood? What do you think has taken place there?
* What means do you think people living in this environment would have to express themselves artistically?
* This video clip was left without any sound.  If you were to compose music to accompany this footage, what would that music sound like? What feelings or emotions might you try to convey through your music?

**MAP OF NEW YORK CITY**

* What famous landmarks do you notice on this map? In which borough are most of these landmarks located?
* Where is the Bronx in relation to Manhattan, where many of the famous landmarks are found?
* Are there any roads or highways demarcated on the map?
* What is the proximity between 1520 Sedgwick Avenue and the Cross Bronx Expressway, and how might that affect life at that address?

**BRONX DEMOGRAPHICS CHARTS**

* The population of which racial/ethnic group increased the most in the Bronx between 1960 and 2000? Which population decreased the most?
* What happened to the poverty rate of the total population of the Bronx between 1970 and 2000? What percentage of the total population was in poverty in 1980?
* What overall conclusions can you draw from these charts about the socioeconomic conditions in the Bronx while Hip Hop was developing there in the 1970s?

**VIDEO: GRANDMASTER FLASH – INVENTING THE HIP HOP SOUND**

* Where was early Hip Hop performed? Who was in the audience?
* What equipment did Grandmaster Flash use to build a new musical sound? How did he utilize this equipment in an innovative way?
* What are “the breaks” to which Grandmaster Flash is referring? What is “scratching”? What about the way Hip Hop DJs played this music made it original?
* How does Grandmaster Flash describe the role of the Master of Ceremonies, or MC at a Hip Hop performance?

**“THE MESSAGE”: GRANDMASTER FLASH AND THE FURIOUS FIVE (1982)**

* Why do you think this song was titled “The Message”? What is its message?
* What are the images in the song that reflect life in the city in the 1970s?
* Why do you think Hip Hop became so popular with the people in urban communities such as the Bronx?
* How did “The Message” reflect the social and economic conditions of the Bronx in the 1970s? Think about both the equipment that was needed to produce it and the themes reflected in its lyrics.

**SUMMARY ACTIVTY**

Considering what you have just learned about the history of Hip Hop music, compose your own verse or two to Grandmaster Flash’s “The Message” that is reflective of the rising social and economic tensions that exist today.