



# REBEL

with a rhyme

study guide with

*Britta B.*  
YEH U KNOW ME!



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# Learning Goals

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You will understand what makes a poem dynamic and meaningful, distinguish how Spoken Word sets itself apart from Page Poetry, identify other forms of Spoken Word like Slam and Dub Poetry, as well as **compose and perform** your own original poetry.



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## about the show

Through a mix of poetry performance and conversation, Britta B illustrates how she first came to **recognize her voice through spoken word poetry** and how it turned into her career. Her talk explores themes of identity, diversity, women's empowerment and resiliency as a platform for creative and thriving communities.



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# About Britta

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Britta Badour, better known as Britta B., is a Kingston-born, Toronto based spoken word poet, emcee, public speaker and artist educator. Over the last decade, Britta has competed in international poetry slams and has performed in notable spheres such as The Walrus Talks, several TEDx Talks and countless poetry scenes across North America including the world-famous Nuyorican Poets Cafe in New York City. Currently, Britta is working on her debut book of poetry and is a **Creative Writing MFA candidate at University of Guelph.**





# during the show

Showing up to a spoken word poetry event is an interactive experience. You're encouraged to **snap your fingers, rub your palms together and "woo!"** throughout the poetry performances. This declares an appreciation, respect and personal connection to the what's being said and what is felt in the moment.

Take note of any words, images or ideas that **stand out** in the performance. These are perfect moments to finger-snap or pose a question about its meaning at the end of the show.



# REBEL

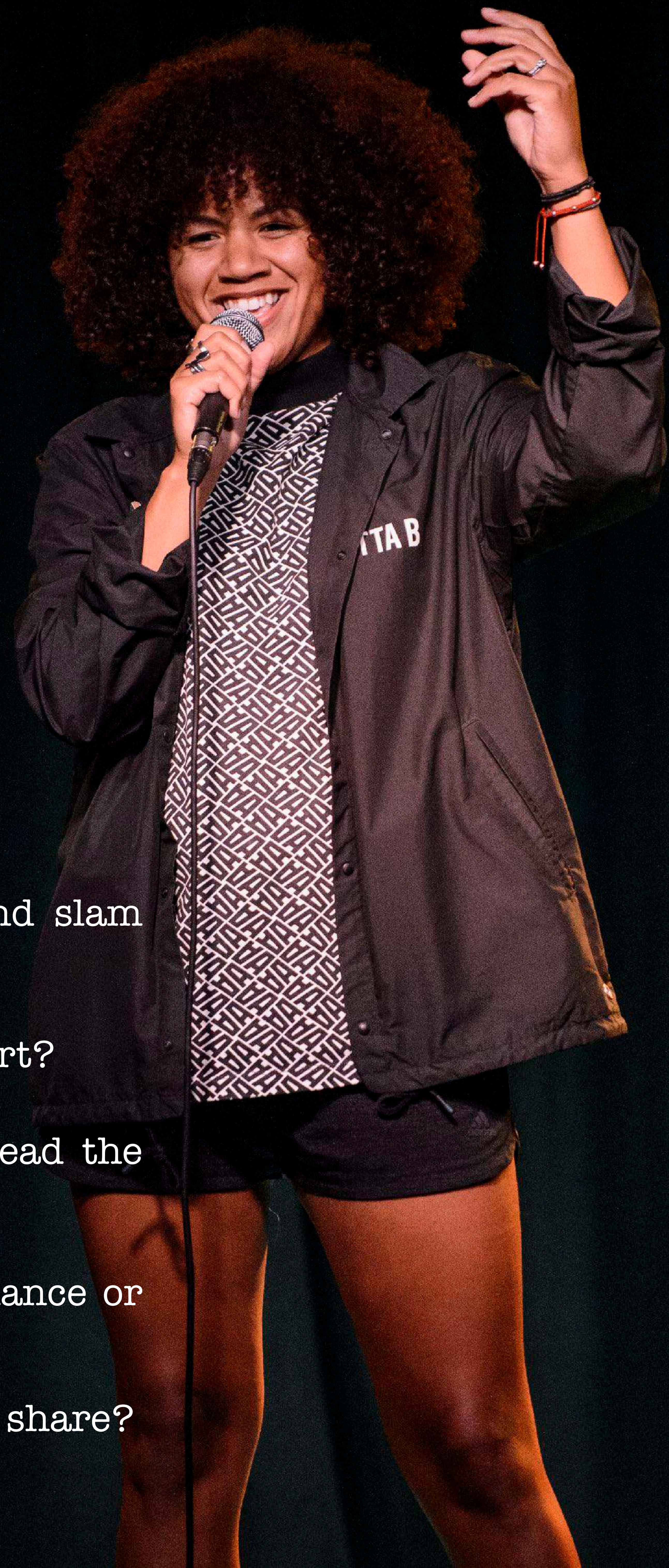
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## discussions

1. What is poetry? Why do people write poems?
2. What's the difference between spoken word poetry and slam poetry?
3. How is RAP similar to spoken word? What sets them apart?
4. Would the poetry be different if you were to simply read the poem versus experience it as part of a live audience?
5. How do physical expressions and vocal techniques enhance or distract a poem's overall tone or message?
6. **If you had 5 minutes on a microphone,** what would you share?





# pre show activity #1

**LINE BREAKS:** What's the role of a line break? How does it impact the rhythm and tension of a poem?

Encourage your students to test out their skills as a group or in pairs by preselecting a poem of choice using the **Poem Roulette** ([poetryinvoice.com/roulette/](https://poetryinvoice.com/roulette/)). Sort the poem beforehand so that there are no line breaks and the poem is instead in paragraph form. Have students select meaningful moments, words and ideas to end the line. Allow 10-15 minutes for students to reorganize the poem then have them present their ideas. Share the original poem at the end to compare and discuss artistic choices!

# pre show activity #2

**HYPE UP:** What are some ways to decrease stage freight and showtime nerves?

Discuss what happens physically and emotionally when one gets NERVOUS. Do your palms sweat? Does your heart beat rapidly? What's the difference between feeling really excited and really scared? Our thoughts! **Develop a “pre-show ritual”** that includes at least one activity in the following fields: Your Mind, Your Body, Your Voice.

Examples: meditation, prayer, affirmations, stretching, push-ups, flex & release muscle groups, sing or rap a verse of your favourite song, listen to the same track on repeat for 15mins, repeat your poem backwards 5 times fast, breathing exercises, lip rolls, spending time with a loved one or sacred item, etc.



# post show activity #3

**CLICHES @ BAY!** What are themes and words that come up over and over in creative works like poetry?

Make a major class list of **30-50 words that are overused** in conversations and in poetry. Examples: “like” “honestly” “wish” “broken” “drowning” “sky” “caged” “locked” etc.

Allow 5-10mins for students to indecently write a free-verse, free form poem or RAP or rant without using any of the words on the list. 😊



# post show activity #4

**PANTOUM POEM:** A pantoum poem is a Malaysian form of song that is also used to create beautiful poetry.

This can be composed in small groups or individually. Have students write 4 lines of poetry. Each stanza that will be created in this poem will be a quatrain, so ensure that students only prepare 4 lines (not 3 or 5 lines). These lines can be prompted by a previous in-class discussion to suit a particular theme (ie. social justice, identity, well-being, etc.) or it can be up to the students to decide what they'd like to write about.

Encourage your students to write at least 6-8 stanzas. Rule: Each succeeding stanza takes the 2nd and 4th line from the proceeding stanza and inserts them verbatim as the 1st and 3rd lines of the stanza being worked on. Meaning, half the work is always done! The 2nd and 4th lines of the new stanza are free-written and used for the next stanza. For the very last stanza, repeat the rule, however, this time you will also be taking the 1st and 3rd lines from the very first stanza and inserting them as the 2nd and 4th lines of the final stanza — **Tada! Every line is recycled!**



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## next steps

1. **Attend a community open mic** or poetry slam
2. Watch more spoken word on YouTube via Button Poetry and Louder Than A Bomb
3. Work on delivery & rehearse your poems aloud in small groups
4. Organize an open mic! You're encouraged to test out your performance skills with polished or unpolished poems in front of a larger audience
5. If you enjoy friendly competition, **run a school-wide poetry slam!** Make sure to have at least 5 judges and 2-3 rounds (meaning, 2 or more polished poems as well). Decide on rules like time limit, no costumes or musical instruments. Top poets advance to the next round. Winning poet gets a cool prize (New journal? Trophy? Pizza Pizza gift card??)





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