

23 SEASON
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EDUCATOR GUIDE

BOOK BY **DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU**

MUSIC SUPERVISION, ORCHESTRATIONS, & ARRANGEMENTS

BY **KENNY SEYMOUR**

CHOREOGRAPHED BY **CAMILLE A. BROWN**

DIRECTED BY **KAMILAH FORBES**



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*HIPPEST TRIP:
THE SOUL TRAIN
MUSICAL*

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HIPPEST TRIP

THE SOUL TRAIN MUSICAL

Book by **Dominique Morisseau**

Music Supervision, Orchestrations, & Arrangements by **Kenny Seymour**

Choreographed by **Camille A. Brown**

Directed by **Kamilah Forbes**

CAST

TERENCE ARCHIE* ENSEMBLE	ANGELA BIRCHETT DELORES CORNELIUS	QUENTIN EARL DARRINGTON DON CORNELIUS
KAYLA DAVIN JODY WATLEY	SIDNEY DUPONT TONY CORNELIUS	JENNIFER MARIE FRAZIER ENSEMBLE
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MIKI MICHELLE* ENSEMBLE	MAYTE NATALIO ROSIE PEREZ, ENSEMBLE	ACHÉ RICHARDSON ENSEMBLE
ROUKIJAH "NUTELLAK" ROOKS ENSEMBLE	SEQUOIIA ENSEMBLE	CHARLENE "CHI-CHI" SMITH DAMITA JO, ENSEMBLE
	MALEEK WASHINGTON ENSEMBLE	

UNDERSTUDIES/SWINGS

TERENCE ARCHIE* DON CORNELIUS	ANGELA BIRCHETT PAM BROWN	UNISSA CRUSE SWING
JENNIFER MARIE FRAZIER DELORES CORNELIUS	MCKENZIE FRYE JODY WATLEY	JUSTIN JORRELL TONY CORNELIUS
MIKI MICHELLE* DAMITA JO	AMANDA LE NGUYEN SWING, CHERYL SONG	ALORA TONIELLE MARTINEZ ROSIE PEREZ
ACHÉ RICHARDSON TYRONE PROCTOR	SEQUOIIA JEFFREY DANIEL	AYA TRAVICK-BEST SWING
		MALEEK WASHINGTON DON CAMPBELLOCK

STAGE MANAGEMENT

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*Dance Captain +Fight Captain

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
Recording notice: The videotaping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings of this production, or distributing recordings on any medium, including the internet, is strictly prohibited.

WELCOME!

A.C.T.
EDUCATION &
COMMUNITY
PROGRAMS

American Conservatory Theater's Education & Community Programs Department is delighted to welcome you and your students into the **LOVE, PEACE and SOUL** of *Hippest Trip – the Soul Train Musical*.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Prepare your students for the *Hippest Trip* using these materials to learn about **Love of Culture**, **Peace in Artmaking**, and **Soul of Visioning**. Consider your curriculum, your own perspective, and how your students might engage with this information. Mix & match, adapting the content for your students' grade level, capacity, talents and interests. Do your students need a little more Love? more Peace? or more Soul? Consider using parts of this guide that will suit and support your students' social-emotional needs.

All hyperlinked materials and websites are click-able in the PDF version of the guide, available at act-sf.org/soultrain

Please reach out to education@act-sf.org if you have any questions or support needs. We hope you enjoy the show!

This guide was made in August 2023, designed by Laura Clatterbuck and created by:



laura elaine ellis is enjoying her 30th year as a dance and theater educator. laura performs and tours with two award-winning Bay Area companies, Dimensions Dance Theater and Flyaway Productions and

has danced in works for choreographers Emily Keeler, Donald McKayle, Garth Fagan, Deborah Vaughan, Joan Lazarus, Anne Bluethenthal, Kim Epifano, and Robert Moses. She is co-founder of the award-winning Black Choreographers Festival: Here & Now and has choreographed for Bay Area theater projects produced by Theatre Rhinoceros, Douglas Morrison Theatre, Shotgun Players, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, SFBATCO, and SFArtsEd.



Natalie Greene is celebrating 20 years working as an artist and educator in San Francisco. A former professional modern dancer, Natalie directed the intergenerational performance company Dance

Generators and served as Artistic Director of the award-winning devised theater ensemble Mugwumpin. As a choreographer and intimacy director, Natalie has worked with 42nd St. Moon, A.C.T., Aurora Theater, Cal Shakes, Center Rep, Custom Made, Cutting Ball, Portland Center Stage, Shotgun Players and more. She is currently the Interim Director of Education & Community Programs at American Conservatory Theater.

Soul Train creator, producer and host Don Cornelius signed off every show with his catchphrase, wishing everyone “[Love, Peace and Soul](#).” Before you come to see *Hippest Trip – the Soul Train Musical*, this guide invites you to review the history, ideas, images, vibes and power of *Soul Train* through these 3 themes:

LOVE OF CULTURE

Love of Culture as expressed through the Black is Beautiful movement of the 60s & 70s. The phrase “**Black is Beautiful**” referred to a broad embrace of Black culture and identity. It called for an appreciation of the African-American past as a worthy legacy, and it inspired cultural pride in contemporary African-American achievements. The Black is Beautiful movement aligned with the Black Power Movement, together creating the **Black (em)Power(ment)** Movement.

PEACE IN ARTMAKING

Peace in Artmaking as embraced by the **Black Arts Movement** which focused on music, literature, drama, dance, and visual arts. Made up of Black artists and intellectuals that shared the Black Power Movement ideologies of self-determination, political beliefs, and African American culture. Art-making that creates a peaceful yet provocative way to catalyze change and express resistance to injustice.

SOUL OF VISIONING

Soul of Visioning as evidenced by **African American entrepreneurs and visionaries** that play a profound role in shaping the U.S. business landscape. From Reconstruction to the 21st Century, African American citizens’ long history of entrepreneurship is marked by ebbs and flows. In recent years, the number of Black-owned businesses has risen dramatically. If history is any indication, Black entrepreneurship will continue to grow and thrive in the coming years.

CONSIDER FOR STUDENTS:

Which themes are familiar to you?

What assumptions come to mind when you think about these themes?

What do these themes inspire or help you to imagine?

CONSIDER FOR EDUCATORS:

How might these themes connect to existing curriculum or classwork?

How might these themes support your social-emotional learning goals?

SOURCES: [The National Museum of African American History & Culture](#), [Forbes.com](#), and [Poets.org](#)
See the resources section of this guide for more information.

HOW TO ACTIVATE THIS GUIDE

We encourage students to start by reading **LOVE, PEACE and SOUL** (above) and **The Show - What It Is!** (2 pages below), and watching this [short preview](#) (1 min. 17 sec.). We hope you find many ways to use our [Cultural Groove PLAYLIST](#), and encourage students to pursue the resources and activities that are most interesting to them.

Many of the materials in this guide have elements of Love, Peace AND Soul. However, you might consider grouping the activities and readings as follows:

★ Lesson plan for **Love of Culture**:

- [Cultural Groove Timeline & Playlist, including some of the ideas for activating them](#)
- [Find The Groove activity, including the Make That Move add on](#)
- [Scramble Board activity](#)

★ Lesson plan for **Peace in Artmaking**:

- [Read “Phenomenal”](#)
- [Find The Groove activity](#)
- [The Do’s and Don’ts of the Soul Train Line, then dance it](#)
- [Haiku activity and/or Vision Collage activity](#)

★ Lesson plan for **Soul of Visioning**:

- [Cultural Groove Timeline & Playlist, including some of the ideas for activating them](#)
- [Sankofa activity, including reading Dominique Morisseau interviewing Tony Cornelius](#)
- [Vision Collage activity and/or Haiku activity](#)



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NATIONAL ARTS STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS GUIDE

Creating: Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - CR1
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - CR2
- Refine and complete artistic work - CR3.

Performing/Presenting/Producing: Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation. Note that this guide is focused primarily on process rather than performance or presentation, but many of the creative exercises can be further refined to address these standards, including Find the Groove/Make that Move.

Responding: Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning

- Perceive and analyze artistic work - RE7
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work - RE8
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work - RE9

Connecting: Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art - CN10
- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding - CN11

CALIFORNIA SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (CASEL) COMPETENCIES

California Transformative SEL Competencies - Social and Emotional Learning (CA Dept of Education)

Several of the exercises in this guide cover these CASEL competencies:

- [Self-awareness](#) - understanding personal and social identities, having a growth mindset, developing a sense of purpose
- [Social awareness](#) - identifying diverse social norms, understanding biased and racist systems

Look for the footnotes:

CR1, CR2, CR3, RE7, RE8, RE9, CN10, CN11

THE SHOW - WHAT IT IS!

Get ready for “the hippest trip in America” with the world premiere of ***Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical***, the Broadway-bound musical based on the iconic TV show that brought Black music, dance, and style into every living room in America. Journey back to 1971’s Chicago, when Black entrepreneur and radio DJ Don Cornelius transformed the pop culture landscape by recognizing the lack of Black musical artists on television. Within a year, his local dance show went national and became one of the longest-running shows in television history. Elegant, determined, and complicated, Cornelius set trends for nearly 40 years by giving a stage—and a camera—to the artists who created the soundtrack of multiple generations, and to the dancers, including Rosie Perez and Jody Watley, who became superstars.

The acclaimed creative team of African American women leading ***Hippest Trip*** includes Tony Award–nominated playwright and MacArthur Genius **Dominique Morisseau** (Broadway’s *Ain’t Too Proud; The Detroit Project*), Tony Award–nominated choreographer **Camille A. Brown** (A.C.T.’s *Toni Stone* and Broadway’s *for colored girls*), and the Apollo Theater’s acclaimed executive director **Kamilah Forbes**. Don’t miss this world-premiere musical event that will have you dancing in the aisles and leave you with “love, peace, and soul” in your heart.

[Check out this short preview: Are you ready for the Soul Train experience? \(1 min. 17 sec.\)](#)

[Check out the first time the actors met the band: Our Sitzprobe!! \(1 min. 15 sec.\)](#)

“I am so excited to help bring the narrative of one of our culture’s most influential and legend-making endeavors to the stage. Having grown up on this series and being immersed in the culture around it, I never knew what it took to make it the iconic staple that it is. Through the socio-political challenges both internally and externally, Don Cornelius’s uncompromised vision, and the revolutionary dance culture that the show made visible to the mainstream, there are a million handprints on what we know as Soul Train. I cannot wait to partner with this legendary creative team of incredible women to celebrate the history and the unsung heroes of our nation’s longest running televised music and dance series.”

—Playwright Dominique Morisseau

CONTENT WARNING:

This production includes occasional profanity, and references to suicide and physical abuse. This production also explores themes of labor exploitation and racism in the American entertainment industry.

CONSIDER for EDUCATORS:

Do some of your students have personal experiences with one or more of these issues? What types of preparation or follow up would best support those students?

For example, does a student need to sit on the aisle so they can leave the theater if needed? Would they benefit from a personal follow up, to see how they’re doing after the show?

CULTURAL GROOVE TIMELINE

Soul Train has a fond and impactful place in American TV History. In tribute, here is a timeline, framed by *Soul Train* history, that outlines some notable moments and people in American history that have influenced our society and speak to our love, peace and soul.

1960

SNCC: Young activists and organizers with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC (pronounced “SNICK”), represented a radical, new unanticipated force whose work continues to have great relevance today.

[More on SNCC](#)

1965

Black Arts Movement: Began when poet Amiri Baraka [LeRoi Jones] established the Black Arts Repertory Theater in Harlem, New York, as a place for artistic expression. African American artists that embodied the Black Arts Movement and social activism through their art include: Audre Lorde, Ntozake Shange, James Baldwin, Katherine Dunham, Gil Scott-Heron, Talley Beatty, Pearl Primus, Maya Angelou, Alvin Ailey, Thelonious Monk and Nikki Giovanni.

[More on the Black Arts Movement](#)

1968

Black Studies (1968): The first university Black Studies department in the United States was created at San Francisco State University.

[More on Africana Studies at SFSU](#)

1963

March on Washington: The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, also known as simply the March on Washington, was held in Washington D.C., on August 28, 1963*. The purpose of the march was to advocate for the civil and economic rights of African American people.

[More on March on Washington](#)

*August 28, 2023: the 60-year Anniversary of this historic event.

1965

Selma to Montgomery March: The historic march, and Martin Luther King Jr.’s participation in it, raised awareness of the difficulties faced by Black voters, and the need for a national Voting Rights Act.

[More on Selma March](#)

1966

Black Power Movement: Credited with first articulating “Black Power” in 1966, SNCC leader Stokely Carmichael represented a generation of Black activists who participated in both Civil Rights and the Black Power movements. The Black Power Movement of the 1960s and 1970s was a political and social movement whose advocates believed in racial pride, self-sufficiency, and equality for all people of Black and African descent.

[More on Black Power Movement History](#)

Black Panther Party: Founded in Oakland, California, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense was the most influential politically active Black power organization of the era. Its members confronted politicians, challenged the police, and protected Black citizens from brutality. The Party’s community service programs provided food, clothing, and transportation. For them, Black power was a global revolution.

[More on the Black Panther Party](#)

National Organization for Women: NOW tried to write a Bill of Rights for Women, it found consensus on six measures essential to ensuring women’s equality: enforcement of laws banning employment discrimination; maternity leave rights; child-care centers that could enable mothers to work; tax deductions for child-care expenses; equal and unsegregated education; and equal job-training opportunities for poor women. [More on NOW](#)

1969

Stonewall Uprising: The Stonewall Riots, also called the Stonewall Uprising, began in the early hours of June 28, 1969 when New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club located in Greenwich Village in New York City. The raid led to six days of protests and violent clashes with law enforcement outside the bar on Christopher Street, in neighboring streets and in nearby Christopher Park. The Stonewall uprising, led by Black & Brown LGBTQ+ people, served as a catalyst for the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world.

[More on Stonewall](#)

[More on “The Black & Brown Activists Who Started Pride”](#)

CULTURAL GROOVE TIMELINE

1970 & 1971

Soul Train Premieres: *Soul Train*, one of the longest-running syndicated shows in television history, began in 1970 on the Chicago television station WCIU-TV when there were few outlets for popular Black culture throughout the United States. During the second season, 1971, *Soul Train* moved to Los Angeles, where it was broadcast nationally for the first time.

[More on Soul Train](#)

“Two Excerpts from the documentary “*Soul Train The Hippest Trip In America*”

First, [why was it needed?](#) (6min. 41 sec.)

Second, [the dancers!](#) (6min. 59sec.)

1971

1972

Shirley Chisholm for President (1972): Shirley Chisholm became the first African American person to run for a major party's nomination for President of the United States, making her also the first woman ever to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination.

[More on Chisholm](#)

Rainbow/PUSH & Rev. Jesse Jackson: Rainbow/PUSH is a Chicago-based nonprofit organization formed as a merger of two nonprofit organizations founded by Rev. Jesse Jackson; Operation PUSH and the National Rainbow Coalition. The organizations pursue social justice, civil rights, and political activism.

[More on Rainbow/PUSH](#)

1973

1973

LA Mayor Thomas Bradley (1973):

Thomas Bradley was an American politician and police officer who served as the 38th Mayor of Los Angeles from 1973 to 1993. He was the first Black mayor of Los Angeles, and his 20 years in office mark the longest tenure by any mayor in the city's history.

[More on Bradley](#)

Birth of Hip Hop: Legend goes that on August 11, 1973, DJ Kool Herc was entertaining at his sister's back-to-school party and tried something new on the turntable: he extended an instrumental beat (breaking or scratching) to let people dance longer (break dancing) and began MC'ing (rapping) during the extended break. Humble beginnings led to an entire cultural movement that's altered global generational thinking – from politics and business to arts and language.

[More on the History of Hip Hop](#)
[A Timeline of Bay Area Hip Hop History](#)

Listen to how [“The Bay Area Was Hip-Hop Before There Was Hip Hop”](#) (25 min. 29 sec.)

*August 11, 2023: the 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop

1985

We Are the World released, Lionel Richie and Michael Jackson wrote this song to raise money for African famine relief; they gathered famous vocal artists from multiple genres to perform this song that generated some \$50 million in donations and received a Grammy for song of the year.

[Watch We Are the World](#) (7 min. 11 sec.)

[More on 1985](#)

1993

Last year that Don Cornelius hosts *Soul Train*; Bill Clinton President; Microsoft Windows NT 3.1 released; Toni Morrison wins Nobel Peace Prize for Literature.

[More on 1993](#)

2006

Last year *Soul Train* airs on TV; Twitter has public launch; *The Audacity of Hope* by Barack Obama becomes best-selling literature (before he was elected the first Black President of the United States in 2008).

[More of 2006](#)

CULTURAL GROOVE TIMELINE QUESTIONS

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY SCAVENGER HUNT:

After reviewing the timeline, students choose one or more links to explore for a set amount of time. After the exploration, students share with a small group and/or with the class: a notable figure, an invention, an event, and/or a fascinating fact that resonated with them.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

What year were you born and what were the fascinating facts and events happening?

What would be included in your personal or family timeline?

What would be included in your own cultural-historical timeline?



CULTURAL GROOVE PLAYLIST

[CLICK HERE](#) or search on Spotify for

“Hippest Trip: CULTURAL GROOVE PLAYLIST”

This curated playlist is a compilation of music artists that performed on *Soul Train* or had their songs featured on *Soul Train*. For many people that watched *Soul Train*, these songs make up the soundtracks of their lives, memories, and cultural experiences.

SONG	ARTIST	YEAR	ALBUM
Friendship Train	Gladys Knight & The Pips	1969	Nitty Gritty
Stand!	Sly & The Family Stone	1969	Stand
I Want You Back	The Jackson 5	1969	Diana Ross Presents The Jackson 5
Express Yourself	Charles Wright & The Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band	1970	Express Yourself
Super Bad	James Brown	1971	Super Bad
The Revolution Will Not Be Televised	Gil Scott-Heron	1971	Pieces of a Man
We the People	The Soul Searchers	1972	We the People
Fool's Paradise	The Sylvers	1972	The Sylvers
Love Train	The O'Jays	1972	Back Stabbers
Yes We Can Can	The Pointer Sisters	1973	The Pointer Sisters
Living For The City - Edit	Stevie Wonder	1973	R & B Soul
Funky Stuff	Kool & The Gang	1973	Wild And Peaceful
Wake Up Everybody (feat. Teddy Pendergrass)	Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes	1975	Wake Up Everybody (feat. Teddy Pendergrass)
Happy Music	The Blackbyrds	1975	City Life
On Your Face	Earth, Wind, & Fire	1976	Spirit
Too Hot Ta Trot	Commodores	1977	Live!
Everybody Dance	CHIC	1977	Chic
The Groove Line	Heatwave	1978	Central Heating
One Nation Under a Groove	Funkadelic	1978	One Nation Under a Groove
Easier to Love	Sister Sledge	1979	We Are Family
Angel of the Night	Angela Bofill	1979	Angel of The Night
Make That Move	Shalamar	1980	Three for Love
The Breaks	Kurtis Blow	1980	Kurtis Blow
8th Wonder	The Sugarhill Gang	1981	8th Wonder
Stay With Me	DeBarge	1983	In A Special Way
I Go To Work	Kool Moe Dee	1989	Knowledge Is King
Keep On Movin'	Soul II Soul, Caron Wheeler	1989	Keep On Movin'
Fight The Power	Public Enemy	1990	Fear Of A Black Planet
Feels Good	Tony! Toni! Toné!	1990	The Revival
T.S.O.P. (The Sound of Philadelphia), aka the Theme for <i>Soul Train</i>	MFSB, The Three Degrees	1973	Love Is The Message

Ideas for activating the playlist:

Invite students to pick a song to listen to, study the lyrics, and discuss:

- How it might relate to the Cultural Groove Timeline
- What ideas or lyrics stand out in relation to Love, Peace and/or Soul

Listen to the playlist:

- In class while reading parts of this guide, or while doing some of the activities
- On the way to or from the theater
- ANY TIME YOU WANT A DANCE BREAK!

FIND THE GROOVE ACTIVITY

The music, dance and style featured on *Soul Train* provided a foundation for many cultures and subcultures that we know and love today. This activity is designed for students to embody past and present cultural influences.

STEP 1: [Watch choreographer Camille A. Brown’s Visual History of African-American social dances](#) (4 min. 27 sec.).

STEP 2: Students read the following quotes about dance independently, and **pick one to discuss** with their partner or small group:

<p>You dance because you have to. Dance is an essential part of life that has always been with me.</p> <p>-Katherine Dunham</p>	<p>The freedom to move in space, to demand of my own sweet perfection that could continually be approached, though never known, was poem to me, my body and mind ellipsing, probably for the first time in my life.</p> <p>Ntozake Shange</p>
<p>Everything in the universe has a rhythm, everything dances.</p> <p>Maya Angelou</p>	<p>Dance is bigger than the physical body. Think bigger than that. When you extend your arm, it doesn’t stop at the end of your fingers, because you’re dancing bigger than that – you’re dancing spirit.</p> <p>Judith Jamison</p>
<p>There’s an experience in the dance where all the dancers become one with the work, and so do all of the spectators, and it transforms the inner being.</p> <p>Dianne McIntyre</p>	<p>I dance not to entertain but to help people better understand each other. Because through dance I have experienced the wordless joy of freedom, I seek it more fully now for my people and for all people everywhere.</p> <p>-Pearl Primus</p>

STEP 3, DISCUSS: What quote did you choose and why? What do you think it means? What examples can you think of? How has this come up in your life?

Optional deep dives:

- Google search who said your quote. Share fun facts about that person. Share physical shapes you can recreate from looking at their pictures or their dancing. Share what about that person suggests that they believed what they said.
- Check out “MAKE THAT MOVE,” a suggested movement add-on, below.

STEP 4: Prepare students to **watch a video of the *Soul Train* dancers**. Remind them this was the 1970’s: they’ll see some moves that may seem old-fashioned, but these same moves are the foundation of many dances that people still perform (and innovate) today! Invite students to consider the role of *Soul Train* in dance history, and remind them that dance history is an amazing way to learn about culture, society and much, much more.

[Soul Train Dancers & The Origins Of The Soul Train Line](#)

STEP 5: Consider the music, fashion, movement, and people. With a partner or small group, discuss:

- What did you see? What stood out to you, and why?
- What did you not see? Why do you think that is? (consider gender, race, and more)
- Try one of the movements in your own body, then create your own version of it (see more below)
- Do you see any movements/dances that are familiar?
Anything similar to a dance you do today?

Options for STEP 6: Dance Party! Put on a *Soul Train* video and dance along! Can you imitate any of the movements? Can you create your own version?

FIND THE GROOVE ACTIVITY:

SUGGESTED MOVEMENT ADD-ONS

QUICK MOVEMENT WARM UP (standing near desks or in an open space):

After Step 2, before Step 3 (above): Turn on any song from our [Cultural Groove PLAYLIST](#) then have students stand up and shake out their bodies. Shake out different body parts (e.g. “shake one arm” then other arm & each leg), then do a few simple stretches (your favorites and/or the students’ suggestions), some freestyle dancing or follow the leader, switching it up as needed.

GO SHOPPING FOR DANCE MOVES!

Expansion of Step 3: Explain students will watch a video and “go shopping” for some dance moves. They should remain standing throughout the video viewing, and watch the whole video like they’re walking through a big store. Just like trying on clothes in a dressing room, students can try on dance moves as the video is playing. If they like one, they can try it on for longer. If they know right away that it’s not for them, they can move on quickly. Encourage students to keep trying things until they have a few they like and want to take along with them.

[A montage of popular Soul Train Dancers and Dance moments:](#)

[Soul Train Dancers Adolfo Shabba-Doo Quinoñes, Pat Davis & More, In Marco De Santiago’s Top Moments!](#)

While watching one of the videos above: Have students standing with space around them and encourage them to move. One of the best ways to do that is by modeling the activity yourself. Stand up, move & groove, and celebrate those who are going for it!

SHARE AFTER THE VIDEO:

During Step 4: Facilitate a movement show & tell using your favorite songs from our [Cultural Groove PLAYLIST](#). Students share their favorite move(s) with a small group, or with the whole class. When a student demonstrates a move, encourage everyone else to try it. Ideally, this comes in the form of a **Soul Train line!** Make two parallel lines facing each other, with enough space for 1 or 2 dancers to dance down the line. Keep it moving and take turns like a conveyor belt.

Optional deep dive: Small groups sequence their movements together for a short choreographed dance. *OR* Discuss and dance how some of the “old-fashioned” movements evolved into dances we do today.

PRO TIP

Look for the students who are comfortable with movement, the natural groovers, and lift up their contributions! They can be group leaders, perform great examples for the class, and even choreograph something for their classmates. The young folks led Soul Train... who are the fantastic young movers in the room?

TALKING MOVEMENT

WITH CHOREOGRAPHER CAMILLE A. BROWN

Natalie Greene sat down with Choreographer **Camille A. Brown** to learn more about the show's dances and the process of creating them. Here's what Camille had to say:

I've always loved social dance.

People show up with their bodies and in their bodies, and witness each other's bodies. That is community building. What makes it a social dance is that I can come as myself, and moving together as we dance, we're bringing where we're from and we're bringing our upbringing. It's all these creative identities coming to the community bringing who they are.

Through the dances in this show you see a passage of time. Social dances like the Camel Walk, the Jerk, the Wing, the Bart Simpson, and the Running Man. They're all from different eras, telling different parts of the story. The Wing, especially, is rooted in African dances, and I just love it. I put it in so many things that I do.

It's also my creative play with those social dances. Someone asked [about a specific moment in the show], "How would you describe that movement?" and I said, "I would describe it as Camille!" There are dances rooted in the African Diaspora, there's hip hip, and there's also a movement language that's contemporary. Even though you see the social dances that everybody knows in the show, you also see my take on it.

Dance should tell part of the story. An example is when Don Cornelius is making his calls, he's [making deals and] trying to get the show on its feet. When Director Kamilah [Forbes] was talking about what she wanted, she was doing hand gestures, and what she was doing is called the Dap, and it's a symbol of Black Power. [gesture of two fists bumping, variations on handshake & slap] - Black soldiers used it a lot during the Vietnam War to show community, seeing each other. The Dap is also reflected in the Fresh Prince of Bel Air.

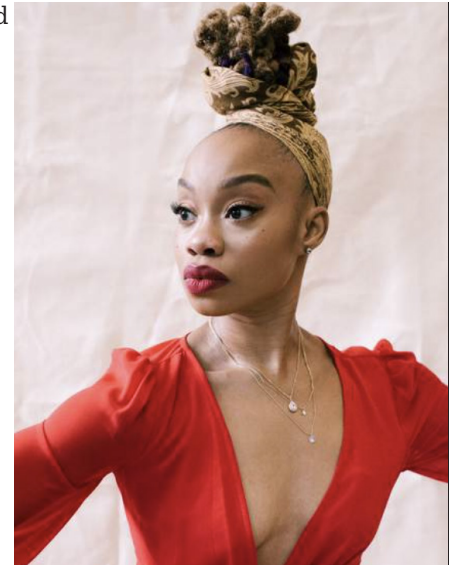
[The Relevant and Important Backstory of 'The Dap'](#)
(2 min. 13 sec.)

So I took that and said, okay... how can we use this gesture of the Dap to reflect the deals that Don is making? And then, when it comes to social dance, I immediately thought of the Locker's handshake, that part where they're facing each other. It aligns with the idea of making deals, because to me the Locker's handshake is a conversation. So how can that represent the various conversations needed to make [Soul Train] happen? In the choreography you see people do the Dap, and then they come together and do the Locker's handshake, and then they all stand facing downstage, and they all do a kind of march. I wanted it to be like this Black Power army that was marching towards the making of the show.

It's not too often that you see 3 Black women leading a musical. I hope that Black girls in particular can see the show and go, "oh wow! I can do that." It's important we see a reflection of ourselves, but also seeing that things are passed down and things evolve.

Before there was a TikTok there was a Soul Train. How we exchange dances happened one way before, and now we exchange dances through social media. Their generation is creating and moving dances their own way, but they come from somewhere, you know. Everything comes from something, and there's always a progression.

Community starts in the rehearsal space. So when you bring [the show] to the theater and bring in that next theatrical element, the root is still authentic. They were a community before they got this onto the stage. The community aspect of what happens in that room is where we get the love, the peace and the soul of this show.



CAMILLE A. BROWN

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF THE SOUL TRAIN LINE

By Aries Jordan



This excerpt from an [article](#) that appeared in the Spring 2023 issue of [IN DANCE](#) is shared with permission from [Dancers' Group](#) and the author.

GET IN FORMATION AND STAY IN IT: Parallel lines are essential to a successful Soul Train Line! There should be enough space where someone is able to bust a move without busting someone in the head. This is not the Conga Line, wait until the person has reached the end of the line before you start. Unlike circle dances where someone is in the middle and onlookers and dancers alike fight to get to the center. The parallel lines allow everyone to see and be seen.

MOVE AUTHENTICALLY: The Soul Train Line is your moment to shine; Do the dance you finally mastered in private. Feel the beat and work with what you got. I will never forget an event where a woman dropped it low and swung her cane in the air #toptier. Know thyself and determine your comfort level from the sidelines. If the idea of everyone looking at you while you're dancing causes instant panic, it's best to stay at the end of the line and high five people.

DO THE MOST, IT IS EXPECTED: It is mandatory that you show out with old school moves and dances associated with the song playing. Then there are partner dances like "The Bump" or "Kid and Play." These dances can be tricky and require coordination and finesse. If done correctly you and your dancing partner will definitely wow the crowd.

DON'T SKIP THE LINE: Now this is very important depending on how turned up the group is, this might save your life. Whatever you do, don't skip the line. Your turn will come, I promise. The only exception to this rule is if someone isn't ready to go down the line and tells you to go in front of them.

DO NOT REPEAT DANCE MOVES: Unless you're going to up the ante, don't repeat moves someone else has done. The Soul Train Line is all about creativity, nostalgia, and originality. No one wants to see the same moves over and over. If you must repeat a move, put some stank on it, add razzle dazzle or something extra.

KEEP IT MOVING, LITERALLY: The Soul Train Line is a conveyor belt of movement and good times. Don't stay in the same spot. The goal is to get everyone to the front and down the line. I have seen the epic fail of the Soul Train Line simply because people stopped moving. If you're scared or changed your mind it's okay to just step out of the line to keep the train moving.

If you find yourself in this, now rare, group dance, no excuses you know what to do!

Aries Jordan is an educator, writer, and Chief Circle Keeper of the Just Write Experience, dedicated to meeting writers where they are at and providing a supportive space to simply just write. Her writing weaves prose, proverbs, and explores cultural narratives of the African Diaspora to provoke thought and inner reflection.

PHENOMENAL: THE VALIDATION OF SOUL TRAIN

BY NATALIE GREENE
WITH DANNY DUNCAN AND
LAURA ELAINE ELLIS

Soul Train aired for the first time in 1970, and after that, the world was never the same. Families around the nation, young and old, looked forward to watching Soul Train every week. A.C.T.'s Associate Director of Education Natalie Greene sat down with two generations of San Francisco choreographers to hear about what Soul Train meant to them.

I'm a baby boomer, so in the 60s, I was a teenager. Dance shows were a CRAZE. In the early 60s everyone watched *American Bandstand*—and it was all white kids, dancing to the latest grooves on the R&B charts. White teenagers dancing to Black artists like the Supremes, Chubby Checker, Gladys Knight & the Pips. The progression came because of the civil rights movement and integration. I remember when they first had Black kids on the show, just two couples at first, and we were shocked! Because for years it was only white kids, it was news! It was a big, big deal that *American Bandstand* allowed Black teenagers to come and join the party. It was phenomenal.

I remember the excitement of television. Black people were really not on television in the 1950s, can you imagine? If a Black person appeared on the Ed Sullivan show, or if you saw a commercial with a Black person on it, everyone would gather around. Someone in the house would scream, "Lena Horne is on television!" and everyone in the family would run to the TV. It was phenomenal. Until integration came, that's the way it was. You didn't see Black people on television, unless they were servants—no one carrying a briefcase or in a position of power.

In many cities, the local TV had a show called *Dance Party*, a riff on *American Bandstand*. I went to Benjamin Franklin Junior High School in San Francisco, and they called for us to be on *Dance Party*. And we were Black kids! We went downtown and we were on TV dancing to the Supremes, The Four Tops, The Temptations...dancing with the white kids, integrated finally!

When the 70s came about, the popularity of *Dance Party* had waned. Then Don Cornelius had the brilliant idea of doing something like *American Bandstand* for Black children. But he elevated it in the sense that the R&B stars were his guests, and the dancers became known by name just like we'd all known Peggy from *American Bandstand*. The great dancers in that program became our household names, it caught on! It became a big, big thing. *Soul Train* offered me soul dancing, social dancing, and integrating social dancing caught on for the masses. It's amazing that the *Soul Train* line is something people still dance today.

Danny Duncan

Choreographer, Director, Dramaturg
Beloved Educator, San Francisco born and raised
Director of the SFArtsED Players

It was incredible to see people who looked like me on TV every Saturday afternoon. I was a dancer growing up, danced and trained from the age of six, but we all grooved. We all did the latest dances. It was incredible to do these dances and see these people who looked like us, and that we could depend on seeing that every single Saturday.

The commercials were Black-focused. Don Cornelius even had Black-owned hair care products in the commercial breaks. The games were Black-focused, I remember this thing called the Scramble Board. They took the names of Black politicians, artists, athletes—it was historical names, current names, notable names in the Black community that contributed to America. They jumbled up the letters and dancers undid the jumble. What came forward on the Scramble Board and in the interviews with the artists, was that you got to hear people who looked like you talking about their careers, who they are and how they got where they are.

For children like me growing up in the 70s, during the Black Power movement, we knew quite a bit about people contributing to make America what it was. My story for example, I'm 6th generation American, my son is 7th generation American. We know there's not really anything in this country that our people didn't have our hands on. We know the White House was built by African American hands. Monticello. The signal light. The filament. We knew these things, we knew this about our history. There's no traffic light without Black folks, no computer motherboard or video games. So seeing *Soul Train* on television was a validation of what we already knew. It validated our pride. This is what we mean by Ungawa, Black Power.

Seeing young people on the show that looked like me, being represented, seeing that so boldly, so funkified, it was an amazing thing. It was funk, it was soul, it was style, it was classy. It wasn't like, "Oh, I wish I could be that." It was like, "We are that. That's me." It validated what we already knew.

Laura Elaine Ellis

Dancer, Choreographer, Educator
Executive Director of the African and
African American Arts Coalition
Producer of the Black Choreographers Festival

SCRAMBLE BOARD ACTIVITY

The **Soul Train SCRAMBLE BOARD** started with the names of Black politicians, artists, activists and athletes – historical names, current names, notable names in the Black community, people who contributed or were contributing to America. They jumbled up the letters of the names and the dancers undid the jumble.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

video projection, writing utensils, post-its or paper, scissors & tape

Before the activity below, **watch one of these videos with the class**. During the activity, consider playing more of the videos. Notice how there was music playing and dancers dancing while people were unscrambling the letters? Consider recreating this with your class!

Soul Train 76' - Cheryl Song's ST Scramble Board Debut!!1976 (1 min. 6 sec.)	Soul Train Scramble Board [Caretha & Derrick] Donna Summer - I'm A Wanderer (1980) 1980 (2 min. 13 sec.)	Soul Train Scramble Board [Leslie & Chris] Cameo - Word Up (Soul Train 1986) 1986 (2 min. 24 sec.)
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START WITH MAKING LISTS

- Ask students to individually make a list of notable Black figures, past & present. Remind students they can be any famous Black person that they think has made a significant contribution.
- Engage with the Cultural Groove Timeline to find names.
- Consider using a timer... e.g. how many people can you list in 1 minute?

DECIDE ON NAMES TO SCRAMBLE

- With partners or small groups, review the lists of names and determine names to create Scrambles with. If a name comes up on more than one person's list, that's someone to feature for sure! If a name comes up that someone in the group doesn't recognize, students should discuss who that person is. Students work together to select names to scramble.
- Consider attention span and teamwork capacity... should each group select just one name for another group to un-scramble? 3 per group? 1 per person?

MAKE PHYSICAL SCRAMBLES

- Using post-its: Write out the name(s) with one letter per post-it, then rearrange the order of the letters until the name is unrecognizable.
- Using paper & scissors: Write out the name(s) in big capital letters (all the same size), leaving space between each letter. Then, cut out each individual letter and rearrange the order of the letters until the name is unrecognizable.
- *PRO TIPS: Determine in advance how the groups will exchange Scrambles. Will they be on one big piece of paper to pass to another group? Or will they leave Scrambles on their table/desk and physically move to another group's area? Make sure the letters are attached in a way that's easy to move around and physically un-scramble.*

DECIPHER THE SCRAMBLED NAMES

- Partners or groups exchange Scrambles. Once the names are un-scrambled, encourage conversation and learning! (e.g. discuss why this person is significant, what do you know about them and what do you want to learn, google them to find photos and fascinating facts)
- If your students would benefit from a competitive element, the group who unscrambles the name the fastest "wins," and consider awarding 2nd & 3rd place. An incentive for the winner(s) could be getting to choose a song to listen & dance to from the [Cultural Groove PLAYLIST](#).

VISION COLLAGE ACTIVITY

Design and craft a Vision Collage to express your personal journey with words and images: consider what makes up your PAST, what is part of your PRESENT, and what inspires you to look to your FUTURE.

Creating a Vision collage can be fun and easy. You don't need to overthink the process. Your Vision Collage is for you, so there's no one you need to impress with it.

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: GATHER YOUR MATERIALS

It is fine to make do with what you have on hand, and some materials are more important than others.

- For the base: large and strong sheet of construction paper, posterboard, or cardboard, cut from a used box
- For images: old magazines and catalogs, printed versions of online images, old photos, and/or postcards
- For securing items to the base: glue or glue stick, tape, or pins
- Other useful/needed tools: scissors, pens, markers, paint, and/or stickers... and any other materials you have on hand to embellish the Vision Collage!

STEP 1: CLARIFY YOUR VISION

Creating a Vision Collage requires you to reflect on your desires and aspirations. Before you start crafting, take a few moments to clarify your vision. Consider (through reflection or writing): What elements of your past are important to your present and future? What elements of your present are you proud of? What do you hope to change or evolve? What do you envision and desire in your future? What do you want to manifest with your Vision Collage?

STEP 2: FIND IMAGES AND OBJECTS THAT REPRESENT YOUR VISION

Select pictures, images, and objects that connect to the reflection or writing you did in Step 1. If there's an important image, color or texture that's missing, consider drawing it or finding it online and printing it out. Be creative, be thoughtful, and have fun with your image & object selection!

STEP 3: ARRANGE YOUR MATERIALS AND REFLECT ON YOUR COLLAGE

Feel free to play around with different layout options until it feels just right for you. This process is part of developing a clearer, more detailed vision for the future. When done, secure everything in place with your binding material of choice. Then, take in the new image(s) you've created by assembling this collage. How does it feel? Where might you display your collage, to see for inspiration?



SANKOFA - LOOKING BACK TO GO FORWARD

A Twi word from the Akan Tribe of Ghana, **Sankofa** loosely translates to, “go back and get it.” Its literal translation comes from the Akan proverb, “Se wo were fi na wosan kofa a yenkyiri,” meaning, “**It is not taboo to go back for what you forgot (or left behind).**”

Sankofa is about connecting what is now to what was in the past.

ACTIVATE YOUR SANKOFA, LOOK BACK TO MOVE FORWARD:

1. What does Sankofa make you think about in terms of your own cultural heritage?
2. What from the past do you feel is still present and part of our society today?
3. What from the past do you feel we should take forward into the future for our society, and what do you feel would be best to leave behind?

Consider using the questions above as part of a writing assignment, or as discussion prompts for partners or small groups. Consider pairing this activity with the song [Wake Up Everybody](#) from our [Cultural Grooves Playlist](#). For example:

- Project these questions or write them on a whiteboard
- Play (part of) the (7 1/2 minute) song and have students reflect on the questions while they listen
- Then, ask students to discuss their responses with a partner or small group

OPTIONAL ADD ONS:

Read below: Hippest Trip Playwright Dominique Morisseau interviews Tony Cornelius, Executive Producer of Soul Train and the son of its creator, Don Cornelius. Discuss the Sankofa present in their conversation about legacy, trusting artists, Black excellence, and extraordinary producing.

Dance your Sankofa: Create a gesture that depicts the essence of your response to each of the questions above. Without talking, share your 3 gestures with a partner. The partner reflects on what they saw, thought, felt and wondered while watching the gestures. Switch person sharing. Afterwards, discuss the Sankofa reflected in your gestures.

Watch a video and think about it: While creating the musical *Hippest Trip*, some of the show’s performers got to connect with the real-life dancers they are playing in the show. The *Soul Train* performers shared perspectives, memories, advice, moves and grooves, and likewise got to reflect on their own memories, impact and legacy. Watch one of many videos from our Resource List (below), and invite students to consider the Sankofa that must have been present when the real-life *Soul Train* dancers met the actors playing them in this show.

IN CONVERSATION:

DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU AND TONY CORNELIUS

EDITED BY KATIE CRADDOCK

AS **HIPPEST TRIP** REHEARSALS LIT UP A.C.T.'S STUDIOS IN DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO, BOOK WRITER DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU ZOOMED WITH TONY CORNELIUS, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER AND THE SON OF *SOUL TRAIN*'S CREATOR, DON CORNELIUS. DOMINIQUE AND TONY FIRST FOUND THEMSELVES IN DEEP CONVERSATION YEARS AGO AS SHE BEGAN CRAFTING THE EARLIEST DRAFTS OF **HIPPEST TRIP**. HERE, THEY CONNECTED OVER QUESTIONS OF LEGACY, TRUSTING ARTISTS, BLACK EXCELLENCE, AND EXTRAORDINARY PRODUCING.

DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU: Tony, you're Don Cornelius's son, but you have your own journey with *Soul Train*. Can you talk about your journey with the show?

TONY CORNELIUS: I can start from the beginning where I never wanted to be involved if it had anything to do with *Soul Train*, because in the neighborhood, that's all I heard: "Oh, that's Don's son, 'Soul Train.'" I was in grammar school, and they lined us up and called "Joe" and "Mike" and "Kathy" and whoever. And then when he got to me, "Soul Train." He wouldn't call my name. That started in third grade. It drove us crazy that people were talking about it all the time. But as we grew up, my brother and I, we started to put our arms around it. I started accepting the joy that people felt when they danced on the show at Channel 26 or when they talked about a Black man on TV, Black commercials about Black people in Afros.

Then I went to film school and got involved in the company. I learned from the bottom up: I was a runner, then a coordinator, then a production manager, and then an executive in charge of production. Then I started my own thing and learned so much from [my father]. It was a real education and he really put his arm around me. I mean, sometimes he didn't put his arm around me. He wanted to keep us away from it because this is a tough business. And

they really wanted to stop him from doing this. He was competing against the likes of Dick Clark. But he just wanted to do what he did best.



DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU

DM: What is that? How would he define the thing he did best?

TC: He knew how to dance. He had good ears. He knew there was nothing else like it. He knew he wanted to promote Black excellence. I think those are the things that drove him. And he hung around people like Jesse Jackson and Martin Luther King, who were promoting Black positivity. I have a picture of him when he started as a radio guy and a newsman, running Martin Luther King down with a microphone.

DM: That's what he was made of, and a lot of that is in you. What's your role with *Soul Train* now? How have you carried it forward?

TC: I've carried it forward by being open to people who want to help carry the legacy, whether it be working with BET on *American Soul* or working with you on *Hippest Trip*. I've been doing the *Soul Train* cruise for about 11 years now. People really enjoy it and come back every year.

And when my father left this Earth, I started the Don Cornelius Foundation. It's dedicated to those who are struggling with suicide and mental health.



TONY CORNELIUS

I'm always trying to figure out how to keep our Blackness going – to put programs together that help us along the way.

DM: What do you think it was that made the show last so long? What's the secret to that sauce?

TC: In the cities that were involved, there was a Black population tuning in every Saturday. As bad as they probably wanted to put hockey on instead, it was making money. A lot of people don't realize that it was a fight every day against executives who said, maybe we shouldn't do this show anymore. My father had to convince them to keep it on the air. He was always trying to make it better.

He did things for free. When the show first went on the air, he didn't make a dime. It was hard work and he lost a lot of sleep. Our family had to take a backseat. When you're working that hard, you spend a lot of time away and it gets challenging.

DM: You and I talked a lot in 2020, because what else was there to do? I would stay on the phone for long hours during the pandemic and talk.

I had just lost my father. It's funny how they stay with you, or come back to you. The other day, I was talking about my dad a lot. I have another play going up next year, and it's one he inspired; I dedicated it to him. I talk about my father a lot working on *Hippest Trip*, too. I talked about him on three different calls that day.

Later, I went to pick up my son. When I turned on my car, my father's voice was coming through the speakers. I was like, "What is happening? Why am I hearing my dad's voice?" It sounded like a recording. I couldn't see any evidence of it on my phone when I was listening to it. I realized, "Oh, this is a voicemail he left me." But why was it playing? It wasn't no app open. It was just a weird thing that got triggered. I thought, "This man's trying to talk to me right now." I felt like I had invoked him.

I look at stories as a place to make people immortal, to bring them back and to give them new life and maybe even a new perspective. As you work on projects about *Soul Train*, do you feel connected to your father in a different way? Does working on things about him give you a different perspective?

TC: It does. And I think about what he would think. He's all on the side of my ribcage. Things that he talked about, isms that he talked about. I remember working on the *Soul Train Awards* and Puffy was rehearsing all night long, and the budget was going through the roof. The electricians, the stage—it was two o'clock in the morning. Now my father's at home asleep and I'm in charge. We got into a little face-to-face because I said, "Hey man, you got to move this along." They finally finished, and I guess a rumor spread that me and him had got into this thing.

The next day my father pulled me aside and said, "Hey son, let me explain something to you. Without them, there's no us. If you're going to be in this business, you have to let artists do what they do. And if they do what they do, guess what happens? You get all the credit for it."

DM: That's a hell of a lesson, and that's a particularly potent statement at this time when artists [the Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild] are striking. They feel undervalued and underappreciated, and then over-policed and over-handcuffed with no dividends to show for it. To hear that an executive had that point of view—it's a little revolutionary. Are there other qualities that made him an extraordinary producer?

TC: He was also extremely persuasive. When I saw him in action at an event, or trying to book an act, he was charming as hell.

We were trying to book Whitney Houston one time. He had called her management twice, and they didn't call him back. I went in his office and said, "Dad, why don't you try one more time?"

He said, "You know what, Tony? I'm not going to do that." I said, "Well, why?" He said, "They're calling somebody back. They're just not calling me back."

I would blame the manager, but he slowed me down there. He said, "Tony, sometimes you have to understand it's not the manager and it's not the agent, it is the talent." Sometimes the talent doesn't want to do it.

DM: I'm taking a lesson right now—to know your worth, and to not keep chasing someone. If it's not an even exchange, keep it moving. That's powerful.

With *Soul Train*, some of those artists or TV execs might be uncomfortable to go back and admit, "Maybe I wasn't the one that saw the vision right away." But not everybody has long vision. Sometimes we have foresight, and sometimes we have hindsight.

““ IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE IN THIS BUSINESS, YOU HAVE TO LET ARTISTS DO WHAT THEY DO. ””

TC: [My father] made a couple mistakes himself. He said one of his biggest mistakes was not letting Madonna do the show. They introduced him to Madonna. He was like, “Oh God, this woman can’t sing.” She just had this aura. It’s something. And when she became a big star, he was like, “Oh man, I should’ve booked her.”

DM: You’ve done a TV show about *Soul Train*, and now we’re making a musical about it. Don Cornelius is such a storied character in history. What do you think people would be surprised to learn about your father?

TC: He wrote every show. From the beginning to the end, he wrote every show.

People are surprised that he owned it from soup to nuts. James Brown asked him years ago, “Well, who you with?” And he said, “It is just me.” “Well, who you really with?” “It’s just me.” “Don, who you really with?” “Well, it’s just me.” I feel insulted when people wonder whether it was his, because as Black folk, they’ve done a lot of things that stopped us from having our own, and this was his. It was his baby.

DM: What most excites you about having a *Soul Train* musical now?

TC: What excites me most is that we get to see Black excellence. I love that we’re able to showcase the abilities of talented people. We get to extend this world that [my father] created. In some states, they’re trying to erase our history. When you get down to the real nucleus of why we’re doing things, that’s what I appreciate most. Not everything [my father] worked on materialized, but it never stopped him. I use that energy for myself and I’m passing it on to you, and you can pass it on to somebody else. We just have to keep going.

DM: That’s very inspirational. You know, a lot of people around here in the Bay have been saying they’re excited about the show and they say, “The Bay really needs this.” That’s the thing we keep hearing from local folks. I thought, “I feel like I need it.” We going to give the Bay something the Bay needs, something we need, and that’s truly exciting. Every conversation I have with you, I’m always more enriched than the last one. It has definitely helped me give this book real gravitas and heart and soul. Thank you for being willing to talk, for being a partner, for being willing to share in this journey with us. And I mean, I just cannot wait for the Bay to see this show.

TC: I’m going to say what a very close friend of mine said to me when my father died. He said, “Tony, whatever decision you make is the right decision.” And I’m saying that to you: whatever decision you make, Dominique, is the right

decision, okay? I’m handing it off because as I said earlier, when you let artists do what they do, guess who gets the credit for it?

DM: That’s a gift, man. That’s a gift to all of us.



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION ONLINE!

We want to see your *Soul Train* line videos, photos of you at the theater, and hear what you have to say! Tag us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Threads using **@ACTSanFrancisco** and **#ACTSoul**

HIPPEST HAIKU ACTIVITY

Consider one of the three topics, reflect and write a Haiku poem to creatively express your thoughts.

WRITE A HAIKU POEM HONORING AN ANCESTOR OR YOUR ANCESTRY.

OR

WRITE A HAIKU POEM ABOUT HEALING OR WHAT BRINGS YOU JOY.

OR

WRITE A HAIKU POEM DESCRIBING WHAT YOU EXPERIENCED VIEWING ONE OF THE SOUL TRAIN VIDEOS.

(or, after the show, write one describing what you experienced seeing *Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical*)

Choose one of the three topics, [learn more about Haiku from this website](#) and review these guidelines for writing a Haiku poem:

Haiku is composed of 3 lines only : the first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables, and the third has 5 syllables (17 syllables total).	Haiku is written in the present tense, in ordinary language , and works particularly well when two different images spark off of each other.	It's good to include one or more of the senses such as sound, smell, taste or touch, and not just what we can see.
Haiku is ideal for observations as a kind of short-hand for remembering events or incidents.	Haiku doesn't tell or merely describe, it allows the reader to enter the poem in their own way .	This poetry structure can be therapeutic , exercising both the right and the left sides of the brain.

3 EXAMPLES of HAIKUS by African American author and poet Richard Wright:

1.
A spring sky so clear
That you feel you are seeing
Into tomorrow.
2.
Burning out its time,
And timing its own burning,
One lonely candle.
3.
In the setting sun,
Each tree bud is clinging fast
To drying raindrops.

These are just examples. Be creative and craft your own original Haiku.

SOURCES & RESOURCES

PDF with clickable links available at act-sf.org/soultrain

Throughout this guide there are links to videos, webpages and other resources. We encourage you to click around! And if you'd like to know more....

BLACK HISTORY AND BLACK EXCELLENCE:

[Black is Beautiful: The Emergence of Black Culture and Identity in the 60s and 70s](#)

[Black History: Timeline of the Post-Civil Rights Era](#)

[Black In Business: Celebrating The Legacy Of Black Entrepreneurship](#)

[Black Power Movement](#)

[Black Arts Movement](#)

[Black Panther Party for Self Defense](#)

[Explore Black Panther Party history in Oakland today](#)

MORE on SOUL TRAIN and DON CORNELIUS:

[“Love, Peace, and Soul” a tribute to Don Cornelius](#)

[Wikipedia’s list of performers who appeared on Soul Train](#)

[Excerpt from the documentary “Soul Train The Hippest Trip In America”](#) (6 min. 59 sec.)

[Don Cornelius Documentary](#) (40 min. 19 sec. – Content Warning: selfharm/suicide)

POPULAR DANCERS of SOUL TRAIN - The Influencers of Soul Train -

Including Pat Davis, Damita Jo Freeman, Don Campbell, Jody Whatley, Jeffrey Daniels & Cheryl Song

[Pat Davis & Gary Keys](#) (1 min. 42 sec.)

[Brief bio of Pat Davis](#) (10 min. 14 sec.)

[Damita Jo Freeman with James Brown – Super Bad](#) (2 min. 49 sec.)

[Damita Jo Freeman and Don Campbell, interviewed by Don Cornelius](#) (1 min. 1 sec.)

[Soul Train Line w/ Cheryl Song, Jody Whatley and Jeffery Daniels](#) (2 min. 43 sec.)

[A montage of popular Soul Train dancers and dance moments](#) (5 min. 14 sec.)

ADDITIONAL VIDEOS YOU MIGHT ENJOY

[TED Talks by choreographer Camille A. Brown](#)

[Sponsor of Soul Train: George Johnson – brief bio](#) (3 min. 40 sec.)

[Commercial featuring Afro Sheen \(a Black hair care product\) with a Black is Beautiful theme](#) (1 min. 2 sec.)

[Preview for documentary: “Summer of Soul \(...or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised\)”](#) (2 min.)

[7 dances to try out down a ‘Soul Train’ line, from the SF Chronicle](#)

HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR EXPERIENCE

PRIOR TO YOUR VISIT

- [Double check A.C.T.'s COVID-19 updates](#).
- If you are feeling unwell, please stay home. If you or a member of your party is experiencing symptoms similar to those of COVID-19 or have had known exposure to someone with COVID-19, please stay home.
- [More information about ACCESSIBILITY at A.C.T.](#)
- Read the [A.C.T. "Rules of Play"](#) to learn more about how we hope you arrive, engage and enjoy the show!
- If your students would benefit from [additional information about theater etiquette](#), consider discussing some of these points made by Blake Theater.
- Consider listening to our [Cultural Groove PLAYLIST](#) on the way to A.C.T.!

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE THEATER

- Front of House Staff including security personnel, ushers, and house managers are trained to assist guests and ensure that safety measures are followed. If you feel uncomfortable or perceive a risk at any time, please speak with one of these team members.
- Hand sanitizer stations are available throughout the theater.
- During the show, please stay in your seat unless using the restroom.

STUDENT MATINEE PERFORMANCE

If you are seeing *Hippest Trip - A Soul Train Musical* during our Student Matinee performance:

- Masks are recommended for all students, staff, and guests, and masks are available upon request. Masks should fit well, meaning they cover your nose and mouth comfortably without need of frequent adjustment.
- No food and beverages will be served or allowed in the theater.
- No cell phone use during the performance. No photo, no video.
- To ensure a positive experience for all in the audience, we kindly request chaperones monitor eating and phone use when your group is in the theater.
- There will be a talkback after the show. Your students will have the opportunity to ask the performers questions! Please consider staying in the theater for the additional ~20-minute engagement opportunity. Invite your students to consider their curiosities in advance, and encourage them to participate in the Q&A.

AFTER THE SHOW

★ Revisit parts of this guide that you didn't use before, including readings, videos & links, as well as activities and discussion prompts.

★ Consider and discuss the moments, music, movement, characters, images and other examples of:

- **Love** of Culture
- **Peace** in Artmaking
- **Soul** of Visioning

★ Additional questions to consider:

- How and why was MUSIC an important part of this story?
 - How did music help tell the story? Would the show have been the same without it? Why or why not?
 - What do you think was involved for the artists who selected, created and performed the music in this show? Would you want one of their jobs? Why or why not?
- How and why was DANCE an important part of this story?
 - How did dancing help tell the story? Would the show have been the same without it? Why or why not?
 - What do you think was involved for the artists who envisioned, created and performed the dances in this show? Would you want one of their jobs? Why or why not?
- If you could go back in time and have any role on the Soul Train TV show, who would you be and why?
 - Remember Don Cornelius and the dancers in the show were just some of the people involved in creating it, there were many people behind the scenes; people creating, producing and supporting the TV show, and sending love, peace and soul all around.
- What might it have been like for the various artists who created Soul Train (the TV show) who saw *Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical*? What might it have been like for the artists who created *Hippest Trip*?

★ Use a “SEE - THINK - WONDER “ discussion model:

- What did you **see** in the show? What are some memorable images or moments, and why? How did the Visual imagery in the video projections and scenic design help tell the story? What was the impact?
- What did you **think** during the show? What were your favorite moments, and why? If you could see or write another play about any of the moments or characters in the show, what would you choose and why?
- What do you **wonder** about the show? What are you still curious about? If you could learn more about any of the characters, relationships or events, what would you want to know?

★ This is the PREMIERE (or the very first performance ever) of *Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical*, and later this play will open on Broadway.

- If you had any suggestions, recommendations, hopes or wishes for the artists who made the show, what would they be?
- Would you like to express Love, Peace or Soul to the show's creators? You can write a letter or a poem, compose and sing a song, choreograph and perform a dance, send a sketch, a painting or a drawing, or any combination of these things.
- *Feel free to send these, and any other responses or reflections, to education@act-sf.org. We'll pass them along to the creative team!*

THANK YOU FOR COMING TO A.C.T.

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