

WHAT IS SAMPLING?

soundbreaking
Stories from the Cutting Edge of Recorded Music

E-mu Systems SP 1200

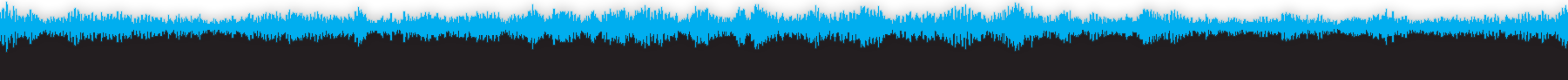
Est. Time: 45-60 minutes
Subjects: Art, General Music
Age Range: Middle & High School
See the full lesson [here!](#)

★ *TEACHROCK* ★



What is sampling, and what does it offer musicians and producers?

In this lesson you will:

- Explore what “sampling” is as both a musical and technological practice
 - Consider what sampling offers musicians and producers as a creative technique
 - Experiment with sampling music
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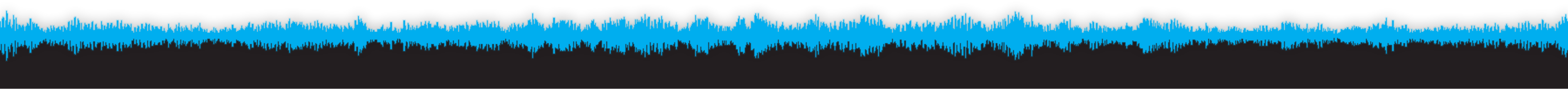


SAMPLING AS A NATURAL HUMAN PRACTICE

Watch the [above video](#) on the history of sampling.



Think about or discuss with a friend:

- In what ways was the idea of a “sample” explained in this clip?
 - Esperanza Spalding suggests that musicians assimilate information and then *disseminate* it again, but it comes out as “their bag.” What do you think Spalding means by this?
 - Do you “assimilate information or inspiration” in your life? How?
 - In what ways might you then “disseminate” that information or inspiration again?
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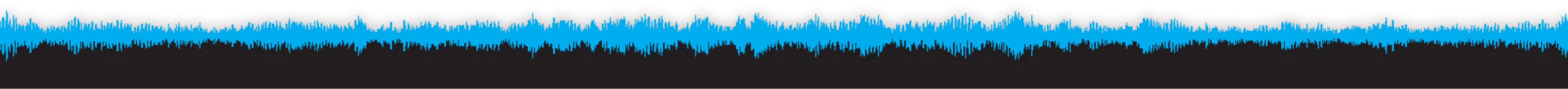


THE WU-TANG CLAN, “CAN IT BE ALL SO SIMPLE”

Watch the [above video](#) on the Wu Tang Clan song “Can it All Be So Simple.”




Think about or discuss with a friend:

- In the clip, RZA says that sampling allowed his music to be more “cinematic.” What might he mean by this?
 - The clip mentions that by sampling “Can It All Be So Simple,” RZA made the original more “dark.” How might have he been able to create a different mood for the song?
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Draw a vertical line across a piece of paper, separating it into two columns. Label one column “Gladys Knight and the Pips - The Way We Were/Try to Remember.” Label the other column “Wu Tang Clan - Can It All Be So Simple.”





Listen to the original Gladys Knight song [here](#). Make a note on the mood you think the song evokes. What is it about the song that makes you feel this mood? Consider both the way the song sounds and the lyrics.

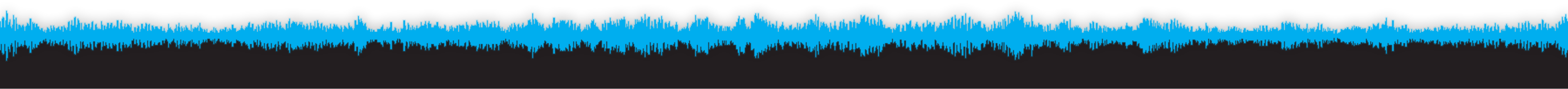
Now listen to Wu Tang's "Can It All Be So Simple" [here](#). Note the mood of this song in the second column, and again consider how the sound of the song and the lyrics help create this mood.





Listen to Wu Tang's "Can It All Be So Simple" once again, this time listening for other samples. Make a list of other samples you hear in the song.

Consider:

- How do these samples contribute to the mood of the song?
 - What is the effect when these other samples are mixed with the Gladys Knight sample? What about when these samples are mixed with the lyrics?
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SUMMARY

- Sampling is essentially the practice of “borrowing” musical ideas and transforming them into something new. Musicians have always borrowed and rearranged musical phrases, but with the advent of recording technology, artists can now directly copy older recordings and place them into newer works.
- Sampling is another tool in the artist’s toolbox, allowing them to musically express a mood or thought.



BE CREATIVE

Musical Sampling Activity:

- Using the **TeachRock Sampling TechTool**, experiment with “sampling” a section of music! Use **these instructions** to get started.
- Take Sampling a step further! Using Garageband, Audacity, or other digital audio software, sample a portion of a song, place it into a new context in order to change the mood of the song. Feel free to also sample sound effects or dialogue.



BE CREATIVE

Visual Sampling Activity:

- Using photo editing software, or by simply cutting and glueing, create a collage by inserting visual elements into a pre-existing picture to change the mood. Look at the work of artists [featured here](#) as inspiration.



CAREER CONNECTIONS

Interested in the music producing? You might be interested in pursuing careers in:

- Design, visual, and media arts

Interested in creating new musical instruments? You might be interested in pursuing careers in:

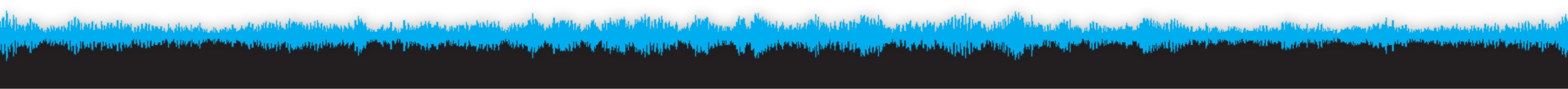
- Product Innovation and Design
- Engineering Design
- Mechanical Systems Installation and Repair
- Engineering Technology



CONNECT

Take your sound samples and/or collage and:

- Share it with your classmates
- Share it with us! Either you or an adult in your life can share your work with TeachRock on **Instagram** or **Facebook**, email to **info@teachrock.org**, or Tweet it to **@TeachRock**





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Visit us at teachrock.org for hundreds of other free arts-rich resources for every age range and classroom.

Please check back to teachrock.org/distancelearning frequently as we will update the material daily!