

## Unit 2 - Rhyme Rehab

### 2A Introduction

Are there things in life you think you can't do without, other than food, water, and a place to sleep? People can get attached to all kinds of things: video games, designer jeans, drugs, books by a certain author, TV shows. In this case, two emcees describe their addiction to rhymes.

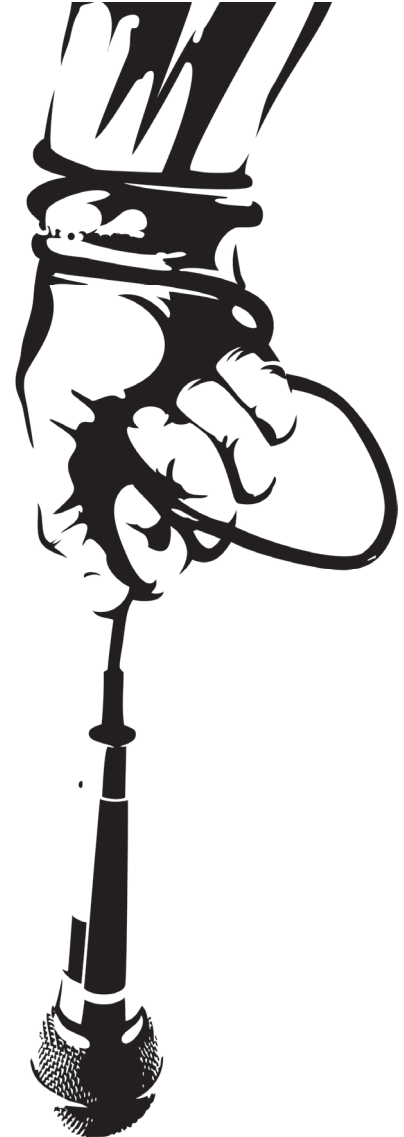
### 2B Song Lyrics

They tried to make me go to rehab, and I said:  
 "Great! Let's go! You came just in time!"  
 I've got a twisted mind, and my bad habit is rhymes!  
 I'm an **addict**, which means I have to have it.  
 If I can't, I get **sullen**, quiet, and mad,  
 I can't stop; I'm a word nerd like Tupac.  
 My pen and my pad's like my shield and my sword,  
 And I'm ready to conquer any enemy with my metaphors.  
 Rhymes satisfy and **quench** my thirst,  
 If nothing rhymed with "thirst" that would be the worst.  
 I'd climb into a hearse made from a Ford Taurus,  
 I like when people gather to sing in a chorus.  
 I feel **mirth** and joy,  
 And happiness, you know, when I **acquire**,  
 When I somehow get the rhymes I desire.  
 But I'm burning! I feel like my skin is on fire!  
 Call a fireman! Better yet, call a **firebrand**!  
 Someone who's going to cause trouble like I am!  
 I'm like a sailor on dry land until I get my hands  
 On lyrics that sound like they line-dance.  
 I feel a **magnetic** attraction to verses,  
 I steal rhymes from Biggie, but I'd never snatch purses.  
 When I try to go cold turkey, it only worsens,  
 So immediate action is needed, it's **urgent**!

*I think we lost him doctor. Wait, wait! He's coming back...*

*Oh! Oh! Yeah I'm an addict for rhymes,  
 It's automatic when I'm writing up the nicest of lines.  
 Oh! Oh! Give me a pen and a pad,  
 I'm ready to rap and write, so get ready for that.  
 (x2)*

I know a few rhyme addicts, but I think none are bad as me,  
 The need to rhyme pulls me in like **gravity**.  
 It seems to be a natural force, of course,  
 But I can't quite put my finger on the source.  
 It's something **subtle**, it's difficult to analyze,  
 Like the right amount of salt to put on your French fries.  
 See, too much of a good thing can be **toxic**,  
 I once ate a whole jar of mustard and got sick.



I need to be more **wary** and more cautious,  
About what I eat so I don't get nauseous.  
I need to **conjure** up a cure for rhyme sickness,  
I must create a remedy with magical quickness.  
I **aspire** to quit, I really hope I can stop,  
But no matter what I try, another rhyme just pops  
Into my head and then falls out of my voice,  
I really am a rhyme addict and it's not by choice.

Hook

## 2C Words Defined

*Below you'll find each vocabulary word that was used in the song. Each word is followed by the part of speech, a simple definition and a meaningful sentence. Some words will also have synonyms, antonyms and other forms of the word listed.*

**1. acquire** (verb) to gain ownership of something; to obtain by one's own actions

Only once he became the spokesperson for a brand of cereal could the rapper finally *acquire* the yellow sports car he always wanted.

Synonyms: obtain

Antonyms: lose, forfeit

**2. addict** (noun) a person who becomes dependent on something that is habit-forming, like a drug or an activity

Kyle was a shoe *addict*: He owned more than 20 pairs!

Synonyms: fanatic, fiend

Other forms: Many types of drugs can be addictive (adj); you can even get addicted (verb) to the caffeine in coffee. Addictions (noun) can be very serious and sometimes extremely harmful.

**3. aspire** (verb) to desire something eagerly, especially something important or in the future

Beyoncé always *aspired* to be a singer, but she never knew she'd become an actress as well.

Synonyms: yearn, long for

Other forms: Even though Jojoba was young, he had lots of big *aspirations* (noun).

**4. chorus** (noun) 1. a group of people trained to sing together 2. the part of a song that's repeated after each verse

1. The *chorus* was invited to sing at the White House. 2. The *chorus* to that song is so catchy!

Synonyms: 1. choir 2. hook

Other forms: Some *choral* (adj) concerts are pretty amazing.

**5. conjure** (verb) to make something happen or come into being as though by magic

The basketball captain announced that the team would have to *conjure* up \$200 this year to pay for uniforms.

Synonyms: summon

Other forms: A *conjuror* (noun) is a magician who makes things appear.

**6. firebrand** (noun) a troublemaker; someone who encourages others to rebel

Tony tried to get Lisa kicked off the school paper staff because he thought she was a *firebrand*.

Synonyms: rebel, agitator

**7. gravity** (noun) 1. the force that makes objects fall toward the center of the Earth (or any other large mass) 2. seriousness

1. There is less *gravity* on the moon, so astronauts have been able to hop along the surface like kangaroos. 2. Chloe didn't realize the *gravity* of her dad's illness until he was rushed to the hospital.

Synonyms: 2. importance, severity

Antonyms: 2. unimportance, silliness

Other forms: With so much *gravitation* (noun), Jupiter sucked the space ship into its *gravitational* (adj) field. As a verb, *gravitate* can mean "to be naturally drawn toward/attracted to": I don't tend to *gravitate* (verb) toward science, though; I prefer history.

**8. magnetic** (adj) 1. having the power to attract 2. being able to attract iron

1. Ronda has a *magnetic* personality, which is probably why she's so popular. 2. Some metals are more *magnetic* than others.

Synonyms: alluring

Antonyms: uninteresting, repellent

Other forms: My fridge is covered in *magnets* (noun).

**9. mirth** (noun) joy, fun, and laughter

There was so much *mirth* around the Thanksgiving table; everyone seemed to be smiling and enjoying themselves.

Synonyms: glee, hilarity

Antonyms: sadness, distress

**10. quench** (verb) to put out, extinguish; to satisfy

If I've been at cheerleading practice and I'm thirsty, for some reason milk just doesn't *quench* my thirst.

Synonyms: put down, relieve

Antonyms: start

**11. subtle** (adj) difficult to perceive, barely observable; delicate

The chicken had a very *subtle* apple flavor to it.

Synonyms: faint

Antonyms: obvious, blatant

Other forms: To tell someone they made a big mistake without hurting their feelings requires some *subtlety* (noun).

**12. sullen** (adj) silent or gloomy because of anger or resentment

After finding out that they weren't going to stop and get ice cream, the toddler became *sullen* and frowned quietly.

Synonyms: glum, frowning

Antonyms: cheerful

13. **toxic** (adj) poisonous; causing harm

Don't drink laundry detergent: It's *toxic*!

Antonyms: harmless

Other forms: *Toxic* is sometimes used as a noun: Many cleaning supplies, like laundry detergent, are *toxics* .

14. **urgent** (adj) needing fast action or attention

Rory ran out of homeroom with an *urgent* note for his friend Camille.

Synonyms: critical, pressing

Other forms: An intense person, Kiki brought an *urgency* (noun) to everything she did.

15. **wary** (adj) cautious and watchful; careful of danger

In certain cities, you need to be *wary* of thieves who might try to pick your pocket.

Synonyms: alert, suspicious

Antonyms: careless

## 2D Fix the Mistake

*Each of the sentences below has a mistake. The wrong vocabulary words have been used, so the sentences don't make sense. Rewrite each sentence using the correct vocabulary word from this unit.*

1. Your cousin is always **magnetic**; it seems like he never smiles at all.

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2. This ice cream is just what I need to **conjure** my desire for something sweet!

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3. I put a **toxic** strip on the back of my picture so my grandma can easily put it up on her refrigerator.

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4. Trent **quenches** to be the best singer in the school; unfortunately, no matter how many lessons he takes, he still sounds like a croaking frog when he sings.

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5. Mary couldn't come tonight because she had **wary** business to attend to; her mother suddenly fell sick and had to be rushed to the hospital.

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6. The rabbit became **subtle** and alert when it heard the baying of distant dogs.
- \_\_\_\_\_
7. Luis is a video game **firebrand**; Mrs. Chen had to take away his phone because he couldn't stop playing Tetris during class.
- \_\_\_\_\_
8. The lyrics to this song are awful, but the **gravity** gets stuck in my head.
- \_\_\_\_\_
9. When the robot army was finally defeated, the villagers had a feast that was filled with songs, jokes, and a feeling of great **addiction**.
- \_\_\_\_\_
10. Hannah tried to be **urgent** so Kyle wouldn't be embarrassed; he didn't get the hint, though, so finally she blurted out, "Dude, you've got dragon breath!"
- \_\_\_\_\_
11. If the workers aren't careful around the **sullen** waste from the nuclear power plant, it could make them extremely sick.
- \_\_\_\_\_
12. I'm not sure that you understand the **mirth** of the situation: If James doesn't get to school right now, he's going to fail English.
- \_\_\_\_\_
13. Dionne is so good at card tricks; she can **acquire** a pack of cards out of thin air.
- \_\_\_\_\_
14. Andres is such a **chorus**; in math class today he had everyone hooting like owls every time Mr. Stimpers used the word "angle."
- \_\_\_\_\_
15. The thief planned to rob the bank, but first he needed to **aspire** a getaway car.
- \_\_\_\_\_

**2E Pick the Winner**

Circle the word that best fits into the sentence. Then write a sentence below that uses the word you didn't pick in a meaningful way.

- 1. I returned your call quickly because my mother told me it was **(urgent OR subtle)**.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. The runner **(quenched OR conjured)** his thirst with a giant glass of water.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Michelle is sometimes labeled a(n) **(firebrand OR addict)** because of her wicked sense of humor, but in reality, she's very well-behaved.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. I wouldn't eat that leftover Chinese food if I were you; it's been sitting in the refrigerator so long it's probably become **(magnetic OR toxic)**.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Young children should learn to be **(wary OR sullen)** of strangers.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_

**2F Draw the Relationships**

In each grouping of eight words below, draw straight lines between the synonyms (words that mean similar things), and draw wiggly lines between any antonyms (words that mean nearly opposite things). Every word should have at least one line connected to it. Some may have more.

**1**

desire	obvious	summon	urgent
critical	conjure	aspire	subtle

.....

**2**

wary	satisfy	quench	acquire
gravity	lose	trusting	importance

.....

3

choir

gravity

chorus

silliness

addict

toxic

fanatic

harmless

4

repellent

mirth

happiness

magnetic

firebrand

sullen

troublemaker

cheerful

**2G Understanding What You Read**

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

**The Hip-Hop Houdini**

When David Blaine was growing up in the 1970s, not a lot of kids aspired to become magicians. From the moment he acquired his first magic trick, however, Blaine knew that he wanted to amaze people for a living. As a child, he became a magic addict, devoting all his spare time to learning and practicing tricks.

Shortly after high school, Blaine moved to New York City. He worked as a waiter during the day, and at night, he performed magic at private parties. Blaine's specialty was close-up magic. He would use simple props like playing cards and cigarettes to astound party guests.

From the beginning, Blaine's style was different from many conjurers. Most magicians at the time had a mirthful approach to their craft. They told goofy jokes and aimed their shows at families. Blaine was a firebrand who wanted to bring a sense of danger back to magic; he filled his tricks with a sense of gravity. He took his tricks seriously, and had a magnetic personality that made people like him. Because of his youth and fashionable appearance, he became known as "the hip-hop Houdini."

His unique style soon caught the eye of Hollywood. In 1997, ABC aired a TV special called *David Blaine: Street Magic*, which showed Blaine performing tricks for people on the street. The special was a huge success, and made Blaine a household name.

Since then, Blaine has become probably the world's most talented magician. In 1999, he lived in a tiny glass coffin for seven days. A few years later, he lived inside a box over the river Thames in London for 44 days. In 2008 he broke a world record by holding his breath for 17 minutes and 4.4 seconds. As incredible as it may seem, none of these feats were tricks. They were real stunts that Blaine performed to test the limits of the human body.

Not everyone loves David Blaine. Some people are wary of his stunts, thinking he just wants attention. No matter what you might think about Blaine's stunts, however, there's no doubt he's made a tremendous impact on the world of magic.

**1. Based on information in the passage, you can tell that Blaine**

- (A) Does not do magic anymore
- (B) Works hard at his craft
- (C) Was born in Manhattan
- (D) Has only had one TV special

**2. Read this sentence from the passage:**

“His unique style soon caught the eye of Hollywood.”

The author means that Blaine

- (A) Moved to Hollywood
- (B) Made people in Hollywood angry
- (C) Drew the attention of people in Hollywood
- (D) Influenced fashion in Hollywood

**3. Which of these sentences from the passage is an opinion?**

- (A) Shortly after high school, Blaine moved to New York City.
- (B) In 1997, ABC aired a TV special called David Blaine: Street Magic.
- (C) Since then, Blaine has become probably the world’s most talented magician.
- (D) In 2008 he broke a world record by holding his breath for 17 minutes and 4.4 seconds.

**4. What is one thing that makes Blaine different from many other magicians?**

- (A) He does not tell silly jokes.
- (B) He became interested in magic as a child.
- (C) He performs close-up magic tricks.
- (D) He has performed at private parties.

**5. According to the passage, when did Blaine become famous?**

- (A) In the 1970s
- (B) 1997
- (C) 1999
- (D) 2008

**2H Thinking Creatively**

Answer each question below. Don't be afraid to think creatively.

1. If you could **acquire** a new talent, what would it be?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. When might it be good to be a **firebrand**?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What gives you **mirth**?

\_\_\_\_\_



4. What would you put in a soup called “The **Toxic** Stew”?

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5. What famous person do you **aspire** to be like?

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### **Word Breakdown**

It might be easy to assume that the second meaning of *gravity*, (“heaviness or seriousness”) comes from the scientific meaning (“the force that makes objects fall toward the Earth”). In reality, the Latin word *gravitatem*, meaning “weight,” led to the scientific usage. Weight (*gravitatem*) existed before we knew what gravity was. Isaac Newton, the man who discovered how gravity works, wrote, “It is now established that this force is gravity, and therefore we shall call it gravity from now on.”

The word *subtle* has an unusual trait: The “b” is silent. There are many words that end in “mb” in which the “b” is silent, such as *climb*, *limb*, *dumb*, and *tomb*. However, only two other words have a silent “b” that does not follow an “m”—*debt* and *doubt*.