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## **MTO 14.2 Examples: Adams, Aspects of the Music/Text Relationship in Rap**

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

<http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.08.14.2/mto.08.14.2.adams.php>

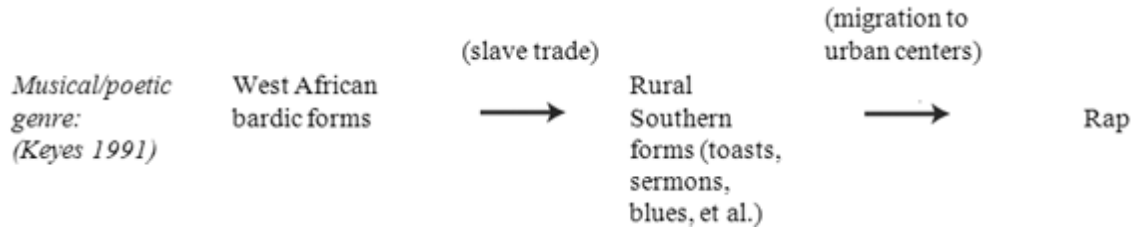
**Example 1.** A Tribe Called Quest with Leaders of the New School, “Scenario” (1991), last verse (Rapper: Busta Rhymes)

Watch! As I combine all the juice from the mind  
Heel up, wheel up, bring it back, come, rewind Powerful impact- BOOM! from the cannon  
Not braggin’, try to read my mind, just imagine  
Vocabulary’s necessary  
When diggin’ in to my library  
Oh my gosh! Oh my gosh!  
Eating Ital stew like the one Peter Tosh-a\*  
Uh! Uh! Uh! All over the track, man  
Uh! Pardon me, UH! As I come back,  
As I did before I heard you beg your pardon  
When I travel to the sun I roll with the squadron  
RAWR! RAWR! Like the dungeon dragon  
Change your little drawers ’cause your pants are saggin’  
Try to step to this I will fit you in a turban  
And have you smellin’ ripe like some old stale urine  
Chocolatey chock-o, the chocolate chicken  
The rear cock diesel, butt cheeks they were kickin’  
Yo! Bustin’ out before the Busta bustin’ out the rhyme the  
Rhythm is in sync (HUH!) the rhymes are on time (TIME!)  
Rippin’ up the sound just like a ratio  
Observe the vibe but check out the Scenario

\* Peter Tosh was an early reggae musician known for his commitment to the legalization of drugs.

“Ital” refers to a type of cooking favored by Rastafarians; the word is derived from “vital.”

## Example 2. Graphic Depiction of the Development of Rap



## Example 3. A Tribe Called Quest, “Push It Along” (1990), 0:47–1:37 (Rapper: Q-Tip)

Clicks

Drum Set

Electric Guitar

Synth 1

Synth 2

Bass Guitar

| 1     | x    | y    | z    | 2     | x   | y      | z      | 3     | x     | y    | z     | 4    | x    | y | z   |
|-------|------|------|------|-------|-----|--------|--------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|------|---|-----|
| Q-    | Tip  | is   | my   | tit-  | le  |        | I      | don't | think | that | it's  | vi-  | tal  |   | for |
| me    | to   | be   | your | i-    | dol |        | but    | dig   |       | this | re-   | ci-  | tal  |   |     |
| If    | you  | can  | en-  | vis-  | ion |        | a      | bro-  | ther  | who  | ain't | dis- | sin' |   |     |
| Say-  | in'  | this | and  | that  |     |        | 'cause | this  | and   | that | was   | mis- | sin' |   | In- |
| stead | it's | been | in-  | jec-  | ted |        | the    | Tribe | has   | been | per-  | fec- | ted  |   | Oh  |
| yes   | it's | been | se-  | lec-  | ted |        | the    | art   | makes | it   | pro-  | tec- | ted  |   |     |
| Af-   | ro-  | cen- | tric | liv-  | in' |        |        | Af-   | ri-   | cans | be    | giv- | in'  |   | a   |
| lot   |      | to   | the  | cause |     | 'cause | the    | cause |       | has  | been  | ris- | en   |   |     |



Example 6. Purple Ribbon All-Stars, “Kryptonite” (2005), 1:31–1:51 (Rapper: C-Bone)\*

Drum Set: Hi-hat 2nd & 3rd time

Synthesizer: 2nd & 3rd time

Piano: 1. 2. 3. 8va 9va

Bass Guitar: 1. 2. 3.

Sounds: 1st time only (Breath)s: Hu Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha

| 1   | x | y     | z   | 2     | x    | y    | z   | 3       | x | y      | z   | 4     | x | y      | z |
|-----|---|-------|-----|-------|------|------|-----|---------|---|--------|-----|-------|---|--------|---|
|     |   | get   |     | dope  |      | on   | a   | dai-    |   | ly     |     | bas-  |   | is     |   |
|     |   | get   |     | high  |      | make | dem | ug-     |   | ly     |     | fac-  |   | es     |   |
|     |   | smoke | a   | dro   | (1)  | an'  | I'm | on      |   | pro-   |     | ba-   |   | tion   |   |
|     |   | my    |     | blunt |      | I    |     | don't   |   | be     |     | lac-  |   | in'    |   |
|     |   | I'm   |     | on    |      | dat  |     | kryp-   |   | to-    |     | nite  |   |        |   |
|     |   | come  |     | to    |      | my   |     | crib    |   | to-    |     | night |   |        |   |
|     |   | let   | me  | beat  |      | that |     | puss    |   | all    |     | night |   |        |   |
| run |   | tell  | ya  | bud-  | dies | I    |     | fucked  |   | you    |     | right |   |        |   |
|     |   | tell  | 'em | 'bout |      | all  | the | plaques |   | on     | the | walls |   |        |   |
|     |   | tell  | 'em | how   |      | you  |     | licked  |   | my     |     | balls |   |        |   |
|     |   | tell  | 'em | how   |      | Kon- |     | crete   |   | run[s] |     | the   |   | street |   |
|     |   | Big   |     | Boi   |      | he   |     | put     |   | us     |     | on    |   |        |   |

Example 7. OutKast, "The Rooster" (2003), 0:00–0:20

Motive A



Motive B



The musical score for "The Rooster" by OutKast is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff is for Brass, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a *f* dynamic marking and a *(loco)* instruction. Below it is the Seratches staff, which includes a *pp* dynamic marking. The Synth 1 staff provides a bass line with a steady eighth-note rhythm. The E.Gtr. and E.B. staves show guitar and bass parts, with the E.B. staff having a *f* dynamic marking. The Sounds staff at the bottom includes the lyrics "cock - a-doo - dle doo!". The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 4, 7, and 10 indicated at the beginning of their respective staves.

Example 8. OutKast, “The Rooster” (2003), 0:46–1:15 (Rapper: Big Boi)

|    | 1      |       |      | 2     |                     |        | 3       |      |       | 4       |         |           |        |       |      |     |
|----|--------|-------|------|-------|---------------------|--------|---------|------|-------|---------|---------|-----------|--------|-------|------|-----|
|    | x      | y     | z    | x     | y                   | z      | x       | y    | z     | x       | y       | z         |        |       |      |     |
| 1  |        | O-    |      | K     |                     | I      | star-   | ted  | out   | a-      | lone    | 'cause my |        |       |      |     |
| 2  | ba-    | b y   | ma-  | left  | me                  | now    | there's | no-  | bod-  | y       | at      | home      |        |       |      |     |
| 3  | be-    | gin-  | nin' | to    | feel                | like   | Mis-    | ses  | Jack- | son     | done    | got       | cloned |       |      |     |
| 4  | but    | it's  | some | real  | shit                | and    | I'm     | liv- | in'   | it      | through | this      | song   |       |      |     |
| 5  | A      | mo-   | vin' | ve-   | hic-                | le     | took    | my   | fam-  | ily     | as      | I         | slept  | out   | on   | the |
| 6  | so-    | fa    | in   | the   | boom                | boom   | room    | I    | woke  | up      | ve-     | ry        | up-    | set   |      |     |
| 7  | I      | throw | the  | co-   | vers                | back   | and     | peep | out   | through | the     | dra-      | pe-    | ries  | my   |     |
| 8  | daugh- | ter,  | my   | ba-   | by,                 | my     | ba-     | by   | ma-   | ma      | all     | es-       | ca-    | -     | pin' | me  |
| 9  |        | like  | a    | (can- | dle) <sup>(1)</sup> | in     | the     | wind | she   | was     | my      | friend    | like   | Prin- | cess |     |
| 10 | Di     | be-   | fore | she   | died                | there- | fore    | we   | tried | and     | tried   | a-        | gain   |       |      |     |
| 11 |        | but   | in   | the   | end                 | you    | pay     | at-  | ten-  | tion    | to      | the       | plus-  | es    | but  | the |
| 12 | mi-    | nus-  | es   | be-   | hind                | it     | make    | it   | seem  | like    | you     | can't     |        | win   |      |     |



**Example 10.** A Tribe Called Quest with Leaders of the New School, “Scenario” (1991), 2:56–3:50 (Rapper: Busta Rhymes)

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Drum Set, Organ, and Electric Bass. The Drum Set part is in common time (C) and features a complex, syncopated rhythm with many 'x' marks above the staff indicating hits. The Organ part is in 4/4 time and features a melodic line with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The Electric Bass part is in common time (C) and features a simple, steady bass line.

|    | 1             | x     | y             | z            | 2              | x     | y      | z     | 3             | x    | y            | z     | 4             | x       | y     | z   |     |
|----|---------------|-------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------|--------|-------|---------------|------|--------------|-------|---------------|---------|-------|-----|-----|
| 1  | (here's       |       | Bus-          | ta           | Rhymes         |       | with   | the   |               | sce- | na-          | ri-   | o)            | Watch!  |       |     |     |
| 2  | As            | I     |               | com-         | bine           | all   |        | the   | dew           | from |              | the   | mind          |         |       |     |     |
| 3  | heel          | up    |               | wheel        | up             |       | bring  | it    | back          | come |              | re-   | wind          |         |       |     |     |
| 4  | Pow-          | er-   | ful           | im-          |                | pact  |        |       | <b>BOOM</b>   |      | from         | the   | <b>can-</b>   | non     |       |     | not |
| 5  | brag-         | gin'  |               |              | try            | to    | read   | my    | <b>mind</b>   |      | <b>just</b>  | im-   | <b>a-</b>     | gine    |       |     |     |
| 6  | Vo-           |       |               | ca-          |                | bu-   |        |       | <b>lar-</b>   | y's  | <b>nec-</b>  | ess-  | <b>a-</b>     | ry      |       |     |     |
| 7  | <b>When</b>   |       | <b>dig-</b>   | <b>gin'</b>  | <b>in-</b>     |       | to     |       | <b>my</b>     |      | <b>li-</b>   |       | <b>bra-</b>   | ry      |       |     |     |
| 8  | Oh            |       |               | my           |                | gosh! |        |       | <b>Oh</b>     |      | <b>my</b>    |       | <b>gosh!</b>  |         |       |     |     |
| 9  | Eat-          | ing   | I-            | tal          |                | stew  | like   | the   | one           | Pet- |              | er    | Tosh          |         |       | (a) |     |
| 10 | UH!           |       |               | uh           |                | UH!   |        | all   | <b>O-</b>     |      | <b>ver</b>   | the   | <b>track</b>  |         |       | man |     |
| 11 | Uh!           |       | par-          | don          | me             | UH!   |        |       | <b>As</b>     | I    | <b>come</b>  |       | <b>back</b>   |         |       |     |     |
| 12 | <b>As</b>     | I     | <b>did</b>    | be-          | <b>fore</b>    | I     | heard  | you   | beg           |      | your         | par-  |               | don     |       |     |     |
| 13 | When          | I     | trav-         | el           | to             | the   | Sun    | I     | <b>roll</b>   |      | <b>with</b>  | the   | <b>squad-</b> | ron     |       |     |     |
| 14 | <b>RAWR!</b>  |       |               | <b>RAWR!</b> |                |       | like   | the   | dun-          |      | geon         | drag- |               | on      |       |     |     |
| 15 | <b>Change</b> | your  | lit-          | tle          | <b>drawers</b> |       | 'cause | your  | pants         |      | are          | sag-  |               | gin'    |       |     |     |
| 16 | <b>Try</b>    | to    | <b>step</b>   | to           | <b>this</b>    | I     | will   |       | <b>Fit</b>    | you  | in           | a     | <b>tur-</b>   | ban     |       |     | and |
| 17 | <b>have</b>   | you   | <b>smell-</b> | in'          | <b>ripe</b>    |       | like   | some  | <b>old</b>    |      | <b>stale</b> |       | <b>ur-</b>    | ine     |       |     |     |
| 18 | Choc-         | la-   | tey           | chock-       |                | o     |        | the   | <b>choc-</b>  |      | <b>late</b>  |       | <b>chick-</b> | en      |       |     | the |
| 19 | <b>rear</b>   |       | <b>cock</b>   |              | <b>die-</b>    | sel   |        | butt  | <b>cheeks</b> |      | <b>they</b>  | were  | <b>kick-</b>  | in'     |       |     |     |
| 20 | Yo!           |       | bust-         | in'          | out            | be-   | fore   | the   | <b>Bust-</b>  | a    | <b>bust-</b> | in'   | <b>out</b>    | the     | rhyme | the |     |
| 21 | <b>rhy-</b>   | thm   | is            | <b>in</b>    | <b>sync</b>    |       | (UH!)  | the   | <b>rhymes</b> | are  | <b>on</b>    |       | <b>time</b>   | (TIME!) |       |     |     |
| 22 | <b>Rip-</b>   | pin'  | <b>up</b>     | the          | <b>sound</b>   |       | just   | like  |               | a    | ra-          | ti-   | o             |         |       |     |     |
| 23 | Ob-           | serve |               | the          | vibe           |       | but    | check | out           |      | the          | scen- | a-            | ri-     | o     |     |     |