PART 3

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

"I, too, am America."

—Langston Hughes, "I, Too"
Neither as an artist and an activist, James Weldon Johnson spent his life introducing the United States to the creative voice of African Americans while fighting the racism and the social injustices he believed hindered their progress. For Johnson, writing poetry and fighting for equality served the same goal: winning a respected place in society for African Americans.

Born in Jacksonville, Florida, Johnson grew up in a stable middle-class home and was raised to have an appreciation of the arts and a love of learning. Later, as a student at Atlanta University, he embraced the school’s philosophy that educated African Americans should devote their lives to public service—and he did just that.

“I believe that the richest contributions the Negro poet can make to the American literature of the future will be the fusion into it of his own individual artistic gifts.”

—James Weldon Johnson
“Preface,” The Book of American Negro Poetry

Born to be a New Yorker  In 1900, he and his brother Rosamond composed the spiritual-influenced song “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” which would later be referred to as “the Negro National Anthem.” Shortly after that, the brothers began writing hit songs for Broadway musicals and the stage. They quickly realized that living in Florida was a disadvantage for that profession, and by 1902 Johnson resigned his post as principal of Stanton School and the brothers relocated to New York City. For Johnson, New York City proved “an alluring world, a tempting world, a world of greatly lessened restraints . . . but, above all, a world of tremendous artistic potentialities.”

During the 1920s, Harlem became “the recognized Negro capital,” and the passionate innovations in African American music, art, and literature that developed there became known as the Harlem Renaissance. Johnson was involved in the movement not only as an author but also as a mentor of young writers, such as Claude McKay and Langston Hughes. He urged artists to find their inspiration in real-life African American communities. In these artists he saw “a group whose ideals are becoming increasingly more vital than those of the traditionally artistic group, even if its members are less picturesque.” In 1922, Johnson published his widely acclaimed anthology, The Book of American Negro Poetry.

Devoted to Public Service  Though most famous for his literary contributions, Johnson’s work outside the creative sphere was equally impressive and, in some ways, groundbreaking. Johnson was the first African American lawyer to be admitted to the bar in Florida, and as a leader in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), he was instrumental in helping the organization become a national force capable of lobbying in Washington. He played an integral role in bringing attention to the issues of social desegregation and the abolishment of discrimination in housing, education, employment, and voting. Johnson’s contributions as a Civil Rights activist, poet, and novelist continue to impact modern society.

James Weldon Johnson was born in 1871 and died in 1938.

Author Search  For more about James Weldon Johnson, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem
Do you love the city or town you live in? What would you miss most if you had to leave? In Johnson’s poem, he celebrates New York City and what the city means to him. Think about the following questions:

• What is your favorite place? Why?
• How would you feel if you could never visit it again?

Building Background
At the beginning of his literary career, Johnson often modeled his writing after classic poets of the English language—writing in a formal style and using rhymed verse in traditional forms such as the sonnet. “My City” is an example of a Petrarchan sonnet, named for Francesco Petrarca (or Francis Petrarch), the Italian poet who developed the form in the 1300s. During the Harlem Renaissance, Johnson began experimenting with free verse. Inspired by the powerful rhythms of African American preachers, he wrote a collection of poems styled after folk sermons, called God’s Trombones.

Setting Purposes for Reading
Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance
In “My City,” Johnson celebrates Manhattan, the most well-known borough (or administrative unit) of New York City. Harlem is a neighborhood in Manhattan. As you read, note what Johnson’s poem suggests about the vitality of the city during the Harlem Renaissance.

Literary Element Sonnet
A sonnet is a lyric poem of fourteen lines, typically written in iambic pentameter and usually following strict patterns of stanza division and rhyme. “My City” is a Petrarchan (or Italian) sonnet, which has fourteen lines divided into two stanzas, an eight-line octave and a six-line sestet. The octave typically sets up a situation or poses a question that is developed or responded to in the sestet. Notice this structure as you read.

• See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R17.

Vocabulary
subtle (səˈtəl) adj. faint; barely noticeable; not obvious; p. 788 Although her smirk was subtle, I saw it.
stark (stārk) adj. absolute; complete; p. 788 Pablo’s opinion was in stark contrast to mine.
unutterable (ənˈə-tər-bal) adj. too deep or great to be put into words; p. 788 The apprehended thief experienced unutterable regret.

Vocabulary Tip: Antonyms Antonyms are words that have opposite or nearly opposite meanings. Note that antonyms are always the same part of speech.
When I come down to sleep death’s endless night,
The threshold of the unknown dark to cross,
What to me then will be the keenest loss,
When this bright world blurs on my fading sight?

5 Will it be that no more I shall see the trees
Or smell the flowers or hear the singing birds
Or watch the flashing streams or patient herds?
No. I am sure it will be none of these.

But, ah! Manhattan’s sights and sounds, her smells,
10 Her crowds, her throbbing force, the thrill that comes
From being of her a part, her subtle spells,
Her shining towers, her avenues, her slums—
O God! the stark, unutterable pity,
To be dead, and never again behold my city.

**Big Idea**  The Harlem Renaissance  *How do you think the speaker feels toward Manhattan’s “shining towers” and “slums”?

**Vocabulary**

- *subtle* (sa’təl) adj. faint; barely noticeable; not obvious
- *stark* (stârk) adj. absolute; complete
- *unutterable* (un’a’tə rá bal) adj. too deep or great to be put into words
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. How did “My City” make you feel about New York City as it was during the Harlem Renaissance?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What question does the speaker pose for himself at the beginning of the poem? (b) Is the speaker’s age implied in this question? If so, how?
3. (a) What possible answers to his question does the speaker first explore? (b) Why might he propose these answers?
4. (a) What answer does the speaker finally provide? (b) What reasons does he give? (c) What does this answer tell you about the speaker’s personality?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What, according to the speaker, is “the stark, unutterable pity” (line 13)? (b) Why might the speaker feel this way about the city?
6. (a) How does the rhyme scheme connect to what the poem says? (b) Would the poem have the same effect if it didn’t have a rhyme scheme? Explain.
7. (a) A caesura is a pronounced pause in the middle of a line of poetry that is often indicated by punctuation. Where does Johnson use caesuras in the poem? (b) What is the effect of these pauses?

Connect
8. Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance (a) How does Johnson’s poem reflect the general mood of the Harlem Renaissance? (b) Why do you think he titled the poem “My City”?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Sonnet
Petrarchan sonnets always have two stanzas: an octave and a sestet. The relationship between these two stanzas can vary, however. After the octave establishes the main idea of the poem, the sestet can either further develop that idea or offer a new, even contradictory idea.

1. What relationship do the octave and sestet have in “My City”? Explain.
2. How does the division of this poem into an octave and a sestet contribute to its effectiveness?

Reading Strategy Interpreting Imagery
Johnson uses imagery in “My City” not only to evoke the reader’s emotions, but also to help the reader understand what the speaker is seeing and feeling. Look at the chart you made as you read.

1. How does the imagery change from the octave to the sestet?
2. How does this change reinforce the meaning of the poem?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Antonyms Find the antonym for each vocabulary word from “My City” listed in the first column. Use a dictionary or a thesaurus if you need help.

1. subtle a. obvious b. detailed
2. stark a. incomplete b. plain
3. unutterable a. massive b. explainable

Learning for Life
A Brochure of Poetic Places Using a map and tourist information about Manhattan, locate places that match Johnson’s descriptions. Then create an illustrated tourism guide for “My City.” Before you turn in your guide, share it with another student and ask for feedback on how well it expresses Johnson’s love of Manhattan.

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
MEET ZORA NEALE HURSTON

In 1973, writer Alice Walker traveled to Fort Pierce, Florida, to visit Zora Neale Hurston’s grave. According to Walker, what she found looked “more like an abandoned field” than a cemetery. Walker ordered a headstone to mark Hurston’s grave. “I wanted to mark Zora’s grave so that one day all our daughters and sons would be able to locate the remains of a human mountain in Florida’s and America’s so frequently flat terrain,” Walker explains.

Introduction to Folklore Zora Neale Hurston grew up in Eatonville, Florida, one of the first incorporated black towns in the United States, where her father was the mayor. Only thirteen years old when her mother died, Hurston spent the next two decades working as a waitress, a manicurist, and a maid, while trying to complete a high school education. Finally she enrolled in Howard University, and later Barnard College. There, she came to the attention of celebrated anthropologist Franz Boas, who invited Hurston to become formally trained as an anthropologist and a folklorist. After completing her studies, Hurston used her training to collect the folklore of Eatonville and other southern African American communities. She later used this material as a source for much of the fiction writing she pursued when not documenting folklore.

“There is no agony like bearing an untold story inside you.”

—Zora Neale Hurston

Literary Success and Obscurity Although considered an important figure in the Harlem Renaissance, Hurston was a fierce individualist who resisted membership in any one school of thought. She once remarked, “I am so put together that I do not have much of a herd instinct. Or if I must be connected with the flock, let me be the shepherd my ownself. That is just the way I am made.” Her ideas sometimes got her into trouble with her fellow writers, some of whom felt that documenting the speech and folkways of small-town African Americans could expose the community to ridicule. Over the years Hurston’s popularity declined. By the time of her death in a Florida retirement home, she was penniless.

Today, thanks to Walker and other admirers, Hurston’s books are widely read. She is remembered for her ability to capture the rich traditions and poetic speech of southern African American culture. Her book Mules and Men is recognized as the first history of African American folklore written by an African American, and her most admired novel, Their Eyes Were Watching God, has sold more than a million copies since its republication in 1969. Hurston’s work is rich in human insights about both community and the individual, and frequently portrays characters with complex longings for a free and wide-ranging way of life. In her autobiography, Hurston recalled, “I used to climb to the top of one of the huge chinaberry trees which guarded our front gate and look out over the world. The most interesting thing I saw was the horizon. . . . It grew upon me that I ought to walk out to the horizon and see what the end of the world was like.”

Zora Neale Hurston was born in 1891 and died in 1960.
Connecting to the Story

Have you ever received a gift that changed your perceptions of another person? As you read this excerpt, think about the following questions:

- What gifts tend to be the most meaningful?
- What can you learn about someone from his or her reactions to a gift?

Building Background

This excerpt takes place about 1900 in Eatonville, Florida. Zora Neale Hurston frequently celebrated Southern life that Hurston considered worthy of recording and celebrating.

Although the autobiography Dust Tracks on a Road is fascinating for what it reveals about Hurston and her background, it conceals much about her life at the same time. Hurston never tells when she was born, never mentions her second marriage, and contradicts details about her life that she wrote about in private letters to friends.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea** The Harlem Renaissance

Although Hurston resisted being defined by any particular literary movement, she participated in New York musical and literary scenes and, with other Harlem intellectuals, helped to create a vibrant culture. Her works were among the first to celebrate Southern African American life. As you read, notice details of Southern life that Hurston considered worthy of recording and celebrating.

**Literary Element** Voice

The voice of a literary work is the distinctive use of language that conveys the author’s or narrator’s personality to the reader. Voice is determined by elements of style such as word choice and tone. As you read, pay attention to what the narrator’s voice reveals about her personality and background.


Reading Strategy Analyzing Language

When you analyze a selection, you look at separate parts to see how they work together to produce an underlying meaning. As you read, examine the ways Hurston uses precise, vivid words, dialect (local speech patterns), and regional expressions to create a rich portrait of childhood in Eatonville.

Reading Tip: Reading Slowly When you read material that contains unfamiliar words, phrases, or concepts, slow down your reading rate to aid comprehension.

Vocabulary

*brazzeness* (brā’zen nəs) n. defiant behavior; boldness; p. 792 *We laughed at the comic’s brazzeness when he ridiculed the mayor.*

*exalt* (ig zôlt’) v. to lift up; to put in high spirits; p. 793 *I always exalt the influence of my mother.*

*snicker* (snï’kar) n. a snide, partly suppressed laugh, often expressing disrespect; p. 794 *When the actor forgot his lines, a man in the audience let out a snicker.*

*indifferent* (in dï̬’ər ant) adj. lacking feeling or concern; p. 796 *Jim played for the joy of it; he was completely indifferent to whether he won or lost.*

Vocabulary Tip: Analogies Analogies are comparisons that show similarities between two things that are otherwise dissimilar. An analogy can help explain something unfamiliar by comparing it to something familiar.
I used to take a seat on top of the gate-post and watch the world go by. One way to Orlando ran past my house, so the carriages and cars would pass before me. The movement made me glad to see it. Often the white travelers would hail me, but more often I hailed them, and asked, “Don’t you want me to go a piece of the way with you?” They always did. I know now that I must have caused a great deal of amusement among them, but my self-assurance must have carried the point, for I was always invited to come along. I’d ride up the road for perhaps a half-mile, then walk back. I did not do this with the permission of my parents, nor with their foreknowledge. When they found out about it later, I usually got a whipping. My grandmother worried about my forward ways a great deal. She had known slavery and to her my brazenness was unthinkable.

“Git down offa dat gate-post! You li’l sow, you! Git down! Setting up dere looking dem white folks right in de face! They’s gowine to lynch you, yet. And don’t stand in dat doorway gazing out at ’em neither. Youse too brazen to live long.”

1. Hail means “to greet”

2. Gowne is dialect for “going”
Nevertheless, I kept right on gazing at them, and “going a piece of the way” whenever I could make it. The village seemed dull to me most of the time. If the village was singing a chorus, I must have missed the tune.

Perhaps a year before the old man died, I came to know two other white people for myself. They were women.

It came about this way. The whites who came down from the North were often brought by their friends to visit the village school. A Negro school was something strange to them, and while they were always sympathetic and kind, curiosity must have been present, also. They came and went, came and went. Always, the room was hurriedly put in order, and we were threatened with a prompt and bloody death if we cut one caper while the visitors were present. We always sang a spiritual, led by Mr. Calhoun himself. Mrs. Calhoun always stood in the back, with a palmetto switch in her hand as a squelcher. We were all little angels for the duration, because we’d better be. She would cut her eyes and give us a glare that meant trouble, then turn her face towards the visitors and beam as much as to say it was a great privilege and pleasure to teach lovely children like us. They couldn’t see that palmetto hickory in her hand behind all those benches, but we knew where our angelic behavior was coming from.

Usually, the visitors gave warning a day ahead and we would be cautioned to put on shoes, comb our heads, and see to ears and fingernails. There was a close inspection of every one of us before we marched in that morning. Knotty heads, dirty ears and fingernails got hauled out of line, strapped and sent home to lick the calf over again.

This particular afternoon, the two young ladies just popped in. Mr. Calhoun was flustered, but he put on the best show he could. He dismissed the class that he was teaching up at the front of the room, then called the fifth grade in reading. That was my class.

So we took our readers and went up front. We stood up in the usual line, and opened to the lesson. It was the story of Pluto and Persephone. It was new and hard to the class in general, and Mr. Calhoun was very uncomfortable as the readers stumbled along, spelling out words with their lips, and in mumbling undertones before they exposed them experimentally to the teacher’s ears.

Then it came to me. I was fifth or sixth down the line. The story was not new to me, because I had read my reader through from lid to lid, the first week that Papa had bought it for me.

That is how it was that my eyes were not in the book, working out the paragraph which I knew would be mine by counting the children ahead of me. I was observing our visitors, who held a book between them, following the lesson. They had shiny hair, mostly brownish. One had a looping gold chain around her neck. The other one was dressed all over in black and white with a pretty finger ring on her left hand. But the thing that held my eyes were their fingers. They were long and thin, and very white, except up near the tips. There they were baby pink. I had never seen such hands. It was a fascinating discovery for me. I wondered how they felt. I would have given those hands more attention, but the child before me was almost through. My turn next, so I got on my mark, bringing my eyes back to the book and made sure of my place. Some of the stories I had re-read several times, and this Greco-Roman myth was one of my favorites. I was exalted by it, and that is the way I read my paragraph.

3. The old man, a white farmer who was a friend of Hurston’s family, took Zora Neale fishing and gave her advice.
4. Cut one caper is slang for “play a trick or prank” or “behave extravagantly or noisily.”
5. A palmetto switch, a whip used for discipline, was made from the flexible stem of a leaf from a palmetto palm.
6. Cut her eyes is slang for “look at with scorn or contempt.”
7. Lick the calf is slang for “get cleaned up.”
8. Flustered means “nervous” or “agitated.”
9. The myth of Pluto and Persephone (pər sel’ a ne) explains the origin of the seasons. Pluto is god of the underworld, and Persephone is his wife.

Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance What do these details reveal about the United States at the time?

Reading Strategy Analyzing Language Why does the author include phrases such as “lick the calf”?

Vocabulary

exalt (i zəlt) v. to lift up; to put in high spirits
“Yes, Jupiter had seen her (Persephone). He had seen the maiden picking flowers in the field. He had seen the chariot of the dark monarch pause by the maiden’s side. He had seen him when he seized Persephone. He had seen the black horses leap down Mount Aetna’s fiery throat. Persephone was now in Pluto’s dark realm and he had made her his wife.”

The two women looked at each other and then back to me. Mr. Calhoun broke out with a proud smile beneath his bristly moustache, and instead of the next child taking up where I had ended, he nodded to me to go on. So I read the story to the end, where flying Mercury, the messenger of the Gods, brought Persephone back to the sunlit earth and restored her to the arms of Dame Ceres, her mother, that the world might have springtime and summer flowers, autumn and harvest. But because she had bitten the pomegranate while in Pluto’s kingdom, she must return to him for three months of each year, and be his queen. Then the world had winter, until she returned to earth.

The class was dismissed and the visitors smiled us away and went into a low-voiced conversation with Mr. Calhoun for a few minutes. They glanced my way once or twice and I began to worry. Not only was I barefooted, but my feet and legs were dusty. My hair was more uncombed than usual, and my nails were not shiny clean. Oh, I’m going to catch it now. Those ladies saw me, too. Mr. Calhoun is promising to ‘tend to me. So I thought.

Then Mr. Calhoun called me. I went up thinking how awful it was to get a whipping before company. Furthermore, I heard a snicker run over the room. Hennie Clark and Stell Brazzle did it out loud, so I would be sure to hear them. The smart-aleck was going to get it. I slipped one hand behind me and switched my dress tail at them, indicating scorn.

“Come here, Zora Neale,” Mr. Calhoun cooed as I reached the desk. He put his hand on my shoulder and gave me little pats. The ladies smiled and held out those flower-looking fingers towards me. I seized the opportunity for a good look.

“Shake hands with the ladies, Zora Neale,” Mr. Calhoun prompted and they took my hand one after the other and smiled. They asked me if I loved school, and I lied that I did. There was some truth in it, because I liked geography and reading, and I liked to play at recess time. Whoever it was invented writing and arithmetic got no thanks from me. Neither did I like the arrangement where the teacher could sit up there with a palmetto stem and lick me whenever he saw fit. I hated things I couldn’t do anything about. But I knew better than to bring that up right there, so I said yes, I loved school.

“I can tell you do,” Brown Taffeta gleamed. She patted my head, and was lucky enough not to get sandspurs in her hand. Children who roll and tumble in the grass in Florida are apt to get sandspurs in their hair. They shook hands with me again and I went back to my seat.

When school let out at three o’clock, Mr. Calhoun told me to wait. When everybody had gone, he told me I was to go to the Park House, that was the hotel in Maitland, the next afternoon to call upon Mrs. Johnstone and Miss Hurd. I must tell Mama to see that I was clean and brushed from head to feet, and I must wear shoes and stockings. The ladies liked me, he said, and I must be on my best behavior.

The next day I was let out of school an hour early, and went home to be stood up in a tub of suds and be scrubbed and have my ears dug into. My sandy hair sported a red ribbon to match my red and white checked gingham dress, starched until it could stand alone. Mama saw to it that my shoes were on the right feet, since I was careless about left and right. Last thing, I was given a handkerchief to carry, warned again about my behavior, and sent off, with my big brother John to go as far as the hotel gate with me.

10. In Roman mythology, Jupiter is king of the gods and Pluto’s brother.
11. Mount Aetna (et’na) (also spelled Etna) is a volcano in eastern Sicily, Italy.
12. Sandspurs (also called sandburs) are spiny burs that grow on a grass of the same name.
First thing, the ladies gave me strange things, like stuffed dates and preserved ginger, and encouraged me to eat all that I wanted. Then they showed me their Japanese dolls and just talked. I was then handed a copy of *Scribner's Magazine*, and asked to read a place that was pointed out to me. After a paragraph or two, I was told with smiles, that that would do.

I was led out on the grounds and they took my picture under a palm tree. They handed me what was to me then a heavy cylinder done up in fancy paper, tied with a ribbon, and they told me goodbye, asking me not to open it until I got home.

My brother was waiting for me down by the lake, and we hurried home, eager to see what was in the thing. It was too heavy to be candy or anything like that. John insisted on toting it for me. My mother made John give it back to me and let me open it. Perhaps, I shall never experience such joy again. The nearest thing to that moment was the telegram accepting my first book. One hundred goldypenny new pennies rolled out of the cylinder. Their gleam lit up the world. It was not avarice that moved me. It was the beauty of the thing. I stood on the mountain. Mama let me play with my pennies for a while, then put them away for me to keep.

That was only the beginning. The next day I received an Episcopal hymn-book bound in white leather with a golden cross stamped into the front cover, a copy of *The Swiss Family Robinson*, and a book of fairy tales.

I set about to commit the song words to memory. There was no music written there, just the words. But there was to my consciousness music in between them just the same. “When I survey the Wondrous Cross” seemed the most beautiful to me, so I committed that to memory first of all. Some of them seemed dull and without life, and I pretended they were not there. If white people liked trashy singing like that, there must be something funny about them that I had not noticed before. I stuck to the pretty ones where the words marched to a throb I could feel.

A month or so after the two young ladies returned to Minnesota, they sent me a huge box packed with clothes and books. The red coat with a wide circular collar and the red tam pleased me more than any of the other things. My chums pretended not to like anything that I had, but even then I knew that they were jealous. Old Smarty had gotten by them again. The clothes were not new, but they were very good. I shone like the morning sun.

__13. Avarice is greed, or excessive desire for wealth.__

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**Viewing the Art:** How does the girl in the painting compare with your picture of the girl in the story? Support your response.

*Gwendolyn, 1918. John Sloan. Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC.*

Viewing the Art: How does the girl in the painting compare with your picture of the girl in the story? Support your response.

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**Reading Strategy**

How would you characterize the language in this passage?

** Literary Element**

Voice What does Hurston’s choice of words suggest about her faith in her own sense of judgment?
But the books gave me more pleasure than the clothes. I had never been too keen on dressing up. It called for hard scrubblings with Octagon soap suds getting in my eyes, and none too gentle fingers scrubbing my neck and gouging in my ears.

In that box were Gulliver’s Travels, Grimm’s Fairy Tales, Dick Whittington, Greek and Roman Myths, and best of all, Norse Tales. Why did the Norse tales strike so deeply into my soul? I do not know, but they did. I seemed to remember seeing Thor swing his mighty short-handled hammer as he sped across the sky in rumbling thunder, lightning flashing from the tread of his steeds and the wheels of his chariot. The great and good Odin, who went down to the well of knowledge to drink, and was told that the price of a drink from that fountain was an eye. Odin drank deeply, then plucked out one eye without a murmur and handed it to the grizzly keeper, and walked away. That held majesty for me.

Of the Greeks, Hercules moved me most. I followed him eagerly on his tasks. The story of the choice of Hercules as a boy when he met Pleasure and Duty, and put his hand in that of Duty and followed her steep way to the blue hills of fame and glory, which she pointed out at the end, moved me profoundly. I resolved to be like him. The tricks and turns of the other Gods and Goddesses left me cold. There were other thin books about this and that sweet and gentle little girl who gave up her heart to Christ and good works. Almost always they died from it, preaching as they passed. I was utterly indifferent to their deaths. In the first place I could not conceive of death, and in the next place they never had any funerals that amounted to a hill of beans, so I didn’t care how soon they rolled up their big, soulful, blue eyes and kicked the bucket. They had no meat on their bones.

But I also met Hans Andersen and Robert Louis Stevenson. They seemed to know what I wanted to hear and said it in a way that tingled me. Just a little below these friends was Rudyard Kipling in his Jungle Books. I loved his talking snakes as much as I did the hero.

I came to start reading the Bible through my mother. She gave me a licking one afternoon for repeating something I had overheard a neighbor telling her. She locked me in her room after the whipping, and the Bible was the only thing in there for me to read. I happened to open to the place where David was doing some mighty smiting, and I got interested. David went here and he went there, and no matter where he went, he smote ‘em hip and thigh. Then he sung songs to his harp awhile, and went out and smote some more. Not one time did David stop and preach about sins and things. All David wanted to know from God was who to kill and when. He took care of the other details himself. Never a quiet moment. I liked him a lot. So I read a great deal more in the Bible, hunting for some more active people like David. Except for the beautiful language of Luke and Paul, the New Testament still plays a poor second to the Old Testament for me. The Jews had a God who laid about Him when they needed Him. I could see no use waiting till Judgment Day to see a man who was just crying for a good killing, to be told to go and roast. My idea was to give him a good killing first, and then if he got roasted later on, so much the better.

14. In Norse mythology, Thor is the god of thunder. His magical hammer returns to him like a boomerang after being thrown.
15. Odin (ō din), the father of Thor, is the supreme god in Norse mythology and the creator of the first man and woman. Odin traded an eye for a drink from the well of wisdom, which was guarded by a giant.
16. Resolved means “decided.”
17. Passed is short for “passed on” or “passed away” and means “died.”

**Vocabulary**

**indifferent** (in dif’ər ənt) adj. lacking feeling or concern

**Reading Strategy** Analyzing Language Why is the language in this passage humorous?

**Literary Element** Voice What do you infer about Hurston from the language in this passage?
AFTER YOU READ

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

1. **Respond**
   How did you react to the narrator? Cite passages to support your response.

2. **Recall and Interpret**
   (a) What does the young Hurston do at the beginning of the selection? (b) What does this action tell you about her character?

3. (a) How do the teachers and students react to the white visitors? (b) Why do you think they behave this way?

4. (a) Which gifts from the white women does Hurston enjoy most? (b) What do those gifts provide for her that the other gifts do not?

5. **Analyze and Evaluate**
   In your opinion, does Hurston do a good job of portraying the setting (the time and place) in which she grew up? Explain.

6. Think back to what you were like in the fifth grade. Do you think Hurston accurately recreates the thoughts of a fifth grader? Support your answer with examples.

7. (a) When Hurston reads aloud from the story of Persephone, what does she reveal about her personality and abilities? (b) Where else in the selection does she reveal these traits? Explain the overall impression of Hurston that you received.

8. **Connect**
   **Big Idea** The Harlem Renaissance
   The Harlem Renaissance emphasized the value of African Americans’ contributions to the country as a whole. How is this emphasis reflected in the selection? Explain.

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**LITERARY ANALYSIS**

**Literary Element** Voice

In *Dust Tracks on a Road*, key information about the author is conveyed through the narrator’s voice. For instance, when Hurston writes, “If the village was singing a chorus, I must have missed the tune,” the wit and informality of the language suggest an opinionated girl with common sense. Hurston’s distinctive voice also affects the work’s tone, plot, and setting.

1. How would you describe Hurston’s voice in this selection? Explain.

2. What tone, or attitude toward her subject matter, did the voice allow Hurston to convey? Explain.

**Review: Allusion**

An allusion is a reference in a work of literature to a character, place, or situation from history or from music, art, or another work of literature.

**Partner Activity** Hurston makes an allusion to a figure in the Bible named David, a shepherd boy who grows up to become the king of Israel. In one of his many exploits, David kills the giant Goliath with a single stone fired from a sling. With a partner, reread the final paragraph of the selection. Make a web like the one below to show the character traits young Hurston may have felt she had in common with David.
Reading Strategy  Analyzing Language

Hurston specialized in using colloquial, or everyday, language to bring to life the customs, geography, feelings, and way of speaking of the people she was writing about. In *Dust Tracks on a Road*, the inclusion of colorful regional expressions and local dialect lends the narration a powerful authenticity.

1. List examples of dialect or regional expressions that Hurston uses to evoke the people of Eatonville.

2. What ideas about or impressions of Eatonville do you glean from these examples? Explain.

Vocabulary  Practice

**Practice with Analogies**  Complete each analogy below using vocabulary words from *Dust Tracks on a Road*. Use a dictionary if you need help.

1. shyness : brazenness :: calmness :
   a. timidity  b. serenity  c. turbulence

2. snicker : laugh :: smirk :
   a. giggle  b. grin  c. frown

3. exalt : celebration :: weep :
   a. contest  b. trial  c. funeral

4. indifferent : fascinated :: ignorant :
   a. enlightened  b. aggravated  c. inundated

Academic Vocabulary

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86. These words will help you think, write, and talk about the selection.

**range** (rānj)  n. extent to which or limits between which something varies

**complex** (kom′pleks)  adj. difficult to understand, analyze, or execute

**Practice and Apply**

1. In *Dust Tracks on a Road*, what was the range of the narrator’s reading by the time she had finished her first week in fifth grade?

2. What complex story did the young speaker read several paragraphs of aloud for the white visitors?

Writing About Literature

**Analyze Cultural Context**  The context of a work is the overall environment that surrounds it. In this selection, the context is the United States in the early years of the last century, when Hurston was growing up. What do you learn about Eatonville within this larger context? Discuss your answer in a brief essay, explaining how Hurston’s language, characters, and the events she describes contribute to your ideas about Eatonville.

Before you draft, use a graphic like the one below to organize your analysis. Include any additional elements that you feel are significant. Refer to the organizer as you draft to keep on track.

After you complete your draft, meet with a partner. Exchange drafts and suggest revisions. Then proofread and edit your draft for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

**Literature Groups**

**Evaluating an Autobiography**  Critics have complained that Hurston’s autobiography is not always factual. In a small group, discuss the following: Does it matter to you if Hurston’s autobiography is absolutely true or not? What reasons might a writer have for distorting the facts in his or her autobiography? Do you think these are valid reasons? Why or why not? Share your conclusions with the class.

**Web Activities**  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

798  UNIT 5  BEGINNINGS OF THE MODERN AGE
Vocabulary Workshop

Word Meanings

Understanding Homonyms

“Often the white travelers would hail me, but more often I hailed them, and asked, ‘Don’t you want me to go a piece of the way with you?’”

Connecting to Literature Homonyms are words that sound alike but have different meanings and sometimes different spellings. They can also be different parts of speech. For example, the words hail and hale are homonyms. Consider Zora Neale Hurston’s use of the word hail in the quote from Dust Tracks on a Road above. We know from the context that here hail is a verb and means “to greet someone.” The word hail as a noun means “pellets of ice.”

The English language is full of homonyms. Here is a sample list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bear</td>
<td>an animal to endure</td>
<td>The brown bear came dangerously close to our campsite. The entire team must bear the burden of defeat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bank</td>
<td>a mound or border a place where money is kept</td>
<td>We stood on the river’s bank and watched the swift current. My bank informed me that my account was overdrawn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>break</td>
<td>to crack, split, or smash to stop a movement</td>
<td>Enslaved people endeavored to break their bonds. The negligent driver failed to brake for the pedestrian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hear</td>
<td>to listen in this place</td>
<td>In the village, we could hear the pealing of church bells. I am resolved to remain here until I am evicted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peace</td>
<td>a part of something tranquility</td>
<td>I completed the last piece of the puzzle. In the midst of war, people long for peace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holy</td>
<td>sacred completely full of holes</td>
<td>The pilgrims consider the shrine to be holy. I am not wholly convinced of your arguments. My holey socks are in need of repair.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise

Choose the correct homonym to fit each sentence. Consult a dictionary if you need help.

1. The angler tried to (real, reel) in the fish.
2. The lion is the (main, mane) attraction at the zoo.
3. Most graduates considered the commencement speaker to be a (boar, bore).
4. This is a perfect (sight, site, cite) for the new museum.
5. The (scent, cent, sent) of exotic spices emanated from the Indian restaurant.
6. Upon his release, the prisoner told a (tail, tale) of woe.
7. Coffee is one of the (principle, principal) exports of Colombia.
8. On a dark (knight, night), I lost my way.
9. The new student was intimidated by the hostile (stares, stairs) of the class.
10. The teacher could not be heard in the back of the room because he was a little (horse, hoarse).

Test-Taking Tip

To determine the meaning of a homonym, use context clues. The part of speech can sometimes help you understand the intended meaning.

Reading Handbook

For more about homonyms, see Reading Handbook, p. R20.

eFlashcards For eFlashcards and other vocabulary activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

OBJECTIVES
- Recognize homonyms.
- Distinguish meanings of homonyms.
If We Must Die and The Tropics in New York

MEET CLAUDE MCKAY

Some critics have identified the publication of “If We Must Die” in 1919 as the spark that ignited the Harlem Renaissance. Though he was not an innovator in modern verse—his sonnets were strongly influenced by British literary traditions—McKay’s focus on the African American experience distinguished him as a new, outspoken voice in American literature. The poets of the Harlem Renaissance, such as Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen, hailed McKay as a leader because of his frank approach to racial and social issues in his work.

McKay was born and educated in rural Jamaica. His brother Uriah Theophilus, a schoolteacher, and Englishman Walter Jekyll, a British scholar collecting Jamaican folklore, encouraged McKay’s creativity. With access to their books, McKay read Victorian authors, as well as the medieval Italian writer Dante and the French poet Baudelaire.

Culture Shock After winning an award for his poetry in 1912, McKay used the money to come to the United States. McKay was drawn to this country, seeing it as “a new land to which all people who had youth and a youthful mind turned,” and believing that “surely there would be opportunity in this land, even for a Negro.” However, when McKay arrived, he was shocked by the blatant racism and violence he found, and he spent much of his life looking for ways to counter the “ignoble cruelty” of racism through his poetry and his actions.

McKay admired poets who wrote about their own struggles in society, and he strove to do the same in his own writing: “In their poetry I could feel their race, their class, their roots in the soil . . . I could not feel the reality of them without that. So likewise I could not realize myself writing without conviction.”

A later work, Home to Harlem, follows a protagonist, Jake, through Jazz-Age Harlem, as he explores its seedy cabarets, poolrooms, and dining cars. With its focus on the racial and social realities of the United States, Home to Harlem reached the best seller list—the first novel by an African American to do so.

Lost and Then Found McKay truly represented the spirit of the “New Negro.” Through his poem “If We Must Die,” he captured a universal sentiment of resistance in the face of injustice. So universal was this theme that Winston Churchill quoted the poem to rally the British people during World War II.

By the time of his death, McKay had become virtually unknown. It was only years later that he was rediscovered and fully recognized for his achievements. In 1973 author Jean Wagner concluded that “McKay remains beyond a doubt the immediate forerunner and one of the leading forces of the Renaissance, the man without whom it could never have achieved what it did.”

Claude McKay was born in 1890 and died in 1948.

“All my life I have been a troubadour wanderer, nourishing myself mainly on the poetry of existence. And all I offer here is the distilled poetry of my experience.”

—Claude McKay

Author Search For more about Claude McKay, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poems

Have you or has someone you know ever faced prejudice? In “If We Must Die,” Claude McKay advocates facing hatred with courage. As you read, consider the following questions:

• What is the best response to prejudice?
• What different purposes can heroism serve?

Building Background

“If We Must Die” reflects the atmosphere of racial strife in the United States just after World War I. During the summer of 1919, McKay worked as a waiter in a railroad dining car, and he and his coworkers feared being attacked. As McKay later wrote, “We were less light-hearted. We did not separate from one another gaily to spend ourselves in speakeasies or gambling joints. . . . We stayed in our quarters all through the dreary ominous nights, for we never knew what was going to happen. It was during those days that the sonnet, ‘If We Must Die,’ exploded out of me. And for it the Negro people unanimously hailed me as a poet.”

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  The Harlem Renaissance

As you read McKay’s poems, pay attention to the different ways in which the two poems address the social and cultural challenges faced by African Americans at the time of the Harlem Renaissance.

Literary Element  Meter

Meter is the regular pattern of stressed (‘) and unstressed (”) syllables that gives a line of poetry a predictable rhythm. The basic unit of meter is the foot, and the length of a metrical line can be expressed in terms of the number of feet it contains. Notice how McKay uses meter in both “If We Must Die” and “The Tropics in New York.”

• See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R11.

Vocabulary

noblly (nō’bly adv. with superior morals or character; p. 802 The businessman nobly gave his fortune to the poor.

constrained (kan strànd’) v. forced or limited; p. 802 In the 1800s strict laws constrained African Americans and women from voting.

kingsmen (kinz’ men) n. those who share the same racial or cultural background as another; p. 802 Although not brothers by birth, the two friends were kingsmen by culture.

benediction (ben’a dik’ shan) n. a blessing or something that fosters goodness; p. 803 The homeless shelter was a benediction for the men and women who needed it.

OBJECTIVES

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

• understanding and analyzing meter
• analyzing characteristics of the Harlem Renaissance

• analyzing tone
If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious\(^1\) spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed\(^2\) lot.

If we must die, O let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained\(^3\) to honor us though dead!
O kinsmen\(^4\) we must meet the common foe!

Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one deathblow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

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1. Inglorious means “shameful” or “disgraceful.”
2. Accursed (əˈkərzd) means “being under a curse” or “doomed.”
3. Constrained (kənˈstrānd) v. forced or limited
4. Kinsmen (kinzˈ mən) n. those who share the same racial or
cultural background as another

Reading Strategy
Analyzing Tone
What tone does McKay establish here? What type of words does he use to achieve this?

Vocabulary

nobly (nôˈ bly) adv. with superior morals or character
constrained (konˈstrand) v. forced or limited
kinsmen (kinzˈ mən) n. those who share the same racial or
cultural background as another
Bananas ripe and green, and ginger-root,
Cocoa in pods and alligator pears,
And tangerines and mangoes and grape fruit,
Fit for the highest prize at parish fairs,
Set in the window, bringing memories
Of fruit-trees laden by low-singing rills,
And dewy dawns, and mystical blue skies
In benediction over nun-like hills.

My eyes grew dim, and I could no more gaze;
A wave of longing through my body swept,
And, hungry for the old, familiar ways,
I turned aside and bowed my head and wept.

Big Idea  The Harlem Renaissance  How does this detail reflect the African American experience during the Harlem Renaissance?

Vocabulary  benediction (ben´ a dik´ shan)  n. a blessing or something that fosters goodness
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. (a) Which images from the poems stand out in your mind? (b) What effects do these images have on you?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) In “If We Must Die,” what two animals does the speaker name? Which animals are the hunters, and which are the hunted? (b) With which animals does the speaker identify? Explain.

3. (a) How does the speaker want his kinsmen to behave? (b) Why is this important to him?

4. (a) In “The Tropics in New York,” what does the speaker see in the window? (b) What memories does that sight bring?

5. (a) How does the speaker react when he recalls his homeland? (b) Why might he have this reaction?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. Some critics believe the publication of “If We Must Die” marked the beginning of the Harlem Renaissance. Why might this poem have led to such a creative outpouring?


8. “The Tropics in New York” is broken into three stanzas. What does each of the stanzas present? Why do you think McKay chose to organize the poem in this way?

Connect
9. Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance The thinkers, writers, and artists of the Harlem Renaissance struggled with problems of racism and identity. (a) What lesson about racism does McKay present in “If We Must Die”? (b) What message about identity is implied in “The Tropics in New York”?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Meter
The metrical foot that McKay uses in both poems is the iamb, consisting of one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable, as in the word divide. Most lines have five iambic feet, or beats, forming the meter known as iambic pentameter.

1. How regular is McKay’s use of iambic pentameter in these two poems?

2. How does the meter’s effect differ in these poems?

Writing About Literature
Evaluate Sound Devices Writers use sound devices to enhance the sense of rhythm, to emphasize particular sounds, or to add a musical quality to their writing. Examples of sound devices are alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, and rhyme. Write a brief essay comparing the sound devices used in these two poems.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Tone
The subject matter of these two poems is extremely different, and McKay uses a different tone in each to convey that subject matter.

1. Look at the chart you created as you read the poems. What words or images helped you understand the tone of each poem?

2. How would you describe the tone in each poem?

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Word Origins Match each word with the meaning of its root. Use a dictionary for assistance.

1. nobly a. “to constrict”
2. kinsmen b. “notable”
3. constrained c. “to speak well”
4. benediction d. “birth or race”

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
OBJECTIVES
- Scan text to locate specific information.
- Clarify understanding of informational texts by creating graphic organizers.

Media Link to African American Culture

Preview the Article
In “Stanzas from a Black Epic,” the author describes how Harlem artist Jacob Lawrence depicted the Great Migration, the mass movement of African Americans from the South to the North during the early 1900s.

1. Examine the title. What might the author mean by a “black epic”?
2. Look at the paintings on pages 806–808. What can you predict about the content of the article from these images?

Set a Purpose for Reading
Read to learn how a Harlem artist viewed the African American experience.

Reading Strategy
Scanning Text to Find Specific Information
Scanning is the process of searching quickly through text for a particular fact. When you scan text, your eyes sweep across a page in search of key words and specific information.

Scan the article for the key words Harlem and painting. What do you learn about these topics? Use a graphic organizer to record information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harlem</td>
<td>Lawrence—younger than and different from Harlem Renaissance artists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 60 paintings in Jacob Lawrence’s great Migration series present piercing images of the African American experience.

By ROBERT HUGHES

The sixty paintings that make up Jacob Lawrence’s Migration series are works that anyone interested in African American cultural history—or, in a wider way, the story of American painting as a whole—should see.

More than 60 years have passed since Lawrence made these little pictures, on store-bought panels in his Harlem studio; and they are of far greater power than almost all the acreage of Works Progress Administration (WPA) murals that preceded them in the 1930s. They were almost immediately bought, half by the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., and half by the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York City, and were in fact the first paintings by a black artist to enter MOMA’s collection. It seemed to the directors of both museums that Lawrence’s series represented a unique combination of African American experience, history painting, and a modernist style. They were right. From Benjamin West to Robert Rauschenberg, American art is sown with attempts, varying between saccharine sentimentality and stunning success, to image forth the American story. And for reasons that are sadly obvious, few of these were created by African Americans, until Lawrence appeared.

Younger than the painters and writers who took part in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, Lawrence was also at an angle to them: He was not interested in the kind of idealized portrayals of African Americans that others tended to produce. These fake-primitive images were being created as an antidote to the vile stereotypes with which white popular art had flooded the culture since Reconstruction. Nevertheless, Lawrence gained self-confidence from the cultural climate of
Harlem—in particular, from Alain Locke, a Harvard-trained art critic. Locke believed strongly that art created by African Americans could speak explicitly to their community and still embody the values of modernism. Or, in Locke’s words: “There is in truly great art no essential conflict between racial or national traits and universal human values.”

The Great Migration
What are the paintings about? A huge subject, which no artist could touch and only an African American one could have handled with the depth of feeling it required. The migration of African Americans from the rural South to the industrial North, as it unfolded in the first decades of the 20th century, had an epic character. It was a collective Odyssey to match the Iliad of the Civil War. This migration was forced by the merciless Southern white reaction that came in the wake of Reconstruction. The African American population—all poor, nearly all rural—of the Southern states was plunged into a hell where their rights were abolished.

In the South, 1900 to 1925 brought the high tide of Jim Crow laws, lynchings, and the terrorism of the Ku Klux Klan. Unable to vote, powerless to change their political status, Southern blacks voted with their feet. By the end of the 1930s more than a million of them (the exact figures will probably never be known) had flocked to mid-Atlantic, Northeastern, and Midwestern cities, looking for a better America than the one they had known. Some of them no doubt imagined they were going to a promised land; and in this they were sharply disappointed, especially after 1929, when they arrived in a North economically devastated by the Depression. But there was no way back. The South was drained of its black workforce, while the North acquired a new one. From these migrants grew a radically altered conception of African American culture: distinctively urban but still Southern in its origins and collective memory. This was the culture that produced the Harlem Renaissance. In it, African Americans reinvented themselves.

A Harlem Education
Born in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in 1917, Lawrence was schooled in Harlem and grew up among migrants and their children. When, years later, he told an interviewer that “I am the black community,” he was neither bragging nor kidding. He
trained as a painter at the Harlem Art Workshop, inside the public library's 135th Street branch. Indeed the library itself, with its Schomburg Collection, Manhattan's chief archive on African American life and history, was to shape his series. Lawrence did months of painstaking research there to get the historical background right, even though the final paintings rarely allude to specific events. He took on the task with a youthful earnestness (he was in his early 20s) that remains one of the most touching aspects of the final work and goes far beyond self-expressiveness. You sense that something is speaking through Lawrence.

One of the remarkable things about the Migration series is the language it does not use. Lawrence was not a propagandist. He avoided the caricatures used in Popular Front, Social Realist art, then at its peak in America. Considering the violence and suffering of so much of his subject matter—prisons, deserted communities, city slums, race riots, labor camps—his images are restrained, and all the more piercing. When he painted a lynching, for instance (No. 15), he left out the dangling body and the jeering crowd: there is only bare earth, a branch, an empty noose, and the huddled lump of a grieving woman. He set aside the muralist influence that lay so heavily on other artists—he wasn't painting murals but images closer in size to single pages, no more than 18 inches by 12 inches.

**Painting an Epic**

Nevertheless, Lawrence imagined the paintings as integrally connected—a single work of art, no less united than a mural is, but portable. The Migration series has the effect of a visual ballad, with each painting a stanza: taut, compressed, pared down to the barest requirements of narration. Number 10, *They Were Very Poor*, takes the elements of a Southern sharecropper's life down to the static minimum. It shows a man and a woman staring at empty bowls on a bare brown plane and an empty basket hung on the wall by an enormous nail—the sort of nail you imagine in a crucifixion. There is no trace of sentimentality. Lawrence called his style “dynamic Cubism,” and its debt to late Cubism is obvious—the flat, sharp overlaps of form, legible silhouettes, and generally high degree of abstraction in the color. Yet, his style also tends to an Egyptian stillness, friezelike even when you know the subject was in motion, like the crowd surging into the narrow slot between two railroad cars in Number 23, “And the Migration Spread.”

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*They Were Very Poor* Panel 10 from the Migration series by Jacob Lawrence. The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, New York.
Lawrence’s style gives his pictures a solid gravity. His dense and well-locked compositions are prime illustrations of the permanence and resistance that are his key themes. These themes are integral to the African Americans depicted throughout Lawrence’s Migration series—the first, and arguably still the best, treatment of the African American historical experience by an African American artist.

—Updated 2006, from TIME, December 6, 1993

And the Migration Spread Panel 23 from the Migration series by Jacob Lawrence. The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC.

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. How do you react to the paintings of Jacob Lawrence?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What was the Great Migration? (b) How do Lawrence’s paintings show this event?
3. (a) Name four or more subjects of the paintings in the Migration series. (b) How did Lawrence treat these subjects differently than others before him did?
4. (a) What is the artistic style of the paintings in the Migration series? (b) What is the effect of the style on the subject matter?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) According to Hughes, why is the Migration series so important? (b) How well does Hughes back up his claim?
6. (a) What does Hughes mean by “stanzas from a black epic”? (b) How well does his title fit his essay? Explain.
7. The art critic Alain Locke said, “There is in truly great art no essential conflict between racial or national traits and universal human values.” How is this idea evident in Lawrence’s work?

Connect
8. How does this selection relate to the Harlem Renaissance? How does it go beyond it to tell more about African American history and culture?
Langston Hughes’s Poetry and Prose

MEET LANGSTON HUGHES

In 1921 Langston Hughes moved to New York City and enrolled at Columbia University to learn more about poetry—in the nightclubs and streets of Harlem. “To see Shuffle Along was the main reason I wanted to go to Columbia,” Hughes said. “When I saw it, I was thrilled and delighted.” The first musical written and performed by African Americans, Shuffle Along became a Broadway sensation and launched several careers. Many African Americans were moving north for good-paying jobs and vibrant city life, yet Hughes knew their life was bittersweet. The remnants of slavery and the struggle with segregation held back African Americans from the American dream that was readily available to many whites during the Roaring Twenties.

Hughes’s writing celebrated the dignity of ordinary, working-class African Americans, helping many realize that black was beautiful. “They seemed to me like the gayest and the bravest people possible—these Negroes from the Southern ghettos—facing tremendous odds, working and laughing and trying to get somewhere in the world,” Hughes said. This sentiment fit into the Modernist notion that everyday images, speech, and events belong in the highest forms of literature.

Many Homes Born in Joplin, Missouri, Hughes lived in six different cities by the time he was twelve. It was a childhood of books, music, and poverty. His father moved to Mexico, and his mother moved frequently in search of employment. When his mother sought work, Hughes stayed in Lawrence, Kansas, with his grandmother. After finishing high school, he visited his father, by then a prosperous lawyer in Mexico. Crossing the Mississippi River on the train gave Hughes the inspiration for his poem “The Negro Speaks of Rivers.” “I put it down on the back of an envelope I had in my pocket, and within the space of ten or fifteen minutes, as the train gathered speed in the dusk, I had written this poem.” His father offered to pay his college tuition if Hughes left the United States. He refused, wanting to try life in New York City. The city captivated him, but he was unhappy at school. He dropped out—later he would finish his degree elsewhere—and worked odd jobs while traveling to Africa and France.

Harlem’s Bard Returning to the United States, Hughes worked as a hotel busboy in Washington, D.C. In 1925 he left three poems by the plate of well-known poet Vachel Lindsay, who was astounded by Hughes’s work. Newspapers reported the next day that Lindsay had discovered an astonishing poet, who happened to be an African American busboy. Hughes soon moved back to Harlem, able to support himself through his writing. His career began in 1926 with the publication of a book of his poetry, The Weary Blues. Hughes, considered the poet laureate of Harlem, also wrote novels, nonfiction, plays, and children’s books. Even death could not dampen his sense of humor. Hughes arranged for a jazz trio to play the Duke Ellington tune “Do Nothing Till You Hear from Me” at his funeral in New York City.

His legacy as a spokesperson of the Harlem Renaissance lives on in contemporary culture. Critic Kevin Powell writes, “The very people that he documented so well...were the people who created hip-hop. ...We’re still asking the same questions that Langston Hughes was asking.”

Langston Hughes was born in 1902 and died in 1967.

Author Search For more about Langston Hughes, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poems
With what group of people do you feel most closely associated? Are you a part of the computer culture? Sports culture? Hip-hop culture? Langston Hughes decided to align himself with his fellow African Americans. As you read the poems, ask yourself the following questions:

• In what ways does Hughes assert that he is as American as anyone else?
• In what ways does Hughes claim a share in the history of the world?

Building Background
When Hughes began writing in the 1920s, little progress had been made in securing basic rights for African Americans. In the South, laws legalized segregation. In the North, African American workers were generally hired only for low-wage jobs. Hughes’s father had left for Mexico because he was fed up with discrimination in the United States. Hughes’s college-educated mother moved from city to city looking for work but found only menial jobs. In Harlem, many artists, writers, and intellectuals hoped their artistic movement would help bring about an end to such discrimination.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance
As you read, notice how Hughes insists not only on the place of African Americans in American culture but insists as well on the beauty and dignity of African American people.

Literary Element Repetition
Repetition is the recurrence of sounds, words, phrases, lines, and other elements in a literary work. Repetition increases the sense of unity in a work and can call attention to particular ideas. As you read, notice how Hughes uses repetition to create refrains.

• See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R15.

Reading Strategy Making Predictions About Theme
Making predictions about the theme of a literary work can help you give a purpose for reading. Verifying predictions can help you understand a work. Read the titles of the poems. What do you predict these poems will be about?

Reading Tip: Use Titles to Make Predictions
A title like “I, Too” implies a connection. Ask yourself, “a connection to what?” Start with the phrase I, too and mentally extend it into a sentence.

I, too, (am) ___________________________.

I, too, (can) ___________________________.

Now complete the sentence to make predictions about the theme of the poem.

Use a similar approach for the second poem. What does the title imply? What might an African American want to say about rivers?

Vocabulary

Lull (lul) v. to soothe or cause to sleep; p. 812 The mother rocked her baby to lull him to sleep.

Bosom (booz’ am) n. the chest or heart; p. 812 The frantic woman pressed her child to her bosom once she found him again.

Dusky (dus’ kē) adj. murky or dark in color; p. 812 The sailors could not see the bottom of the muddy, dusky water.

Vocabulary Tip: Denotation and Connotation
The denotation is the literal definition of a word. The connotation is its implied meaning. For example, dark can have a negative connotation suggesting mysteriousness or wickedness.
I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
5 But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I’ll be at the table
10 When company comes.
Nobody’ll dare
Say to me,
“Eat in the kitchen,”
Then.

15 Besides,
They’ll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.
The Negro Speaks of Rivers

Langston Hughes

I’ve known rivers:
I’ve known rivers ancient as the world and older than the
flow of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans, and I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I’ve known rivers:
Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

1. The Euphrates (yoo’ro tes) River flows from Turkey through Syria and Iraq. Many ancient civilizations flourished in the area between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.
2. The Congo, also called the Zaire, is a river in central Africa.
3. The Nile, which runs through northeast Africa, is the longest river in the world.
4. According to legend, Abraham Lincoln decided that slavery should be abolished after witnessing his first slave auction in New Orleans, Louisiana, along the Mississippi River.

Reading Strategy Making Predictions About Theme What do you expect this poem to be about, after reading the title and the first line?

Literary Element Repetition What idea does the repetition in line 10 emphasize?

Vocabulary

lull (lul) v. to soothe or cause to sleep
bosom (booz’əm) n. the chest or heart
dusky (dus’kē) adj. murky or dark in color
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which lines from the poems would you most like to have Langston Hughes explain? Put your response in the form of a question.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What is the identity of the speaker and of the other people in “I, Too”? (b) Does the speaker feel at one with these people or separate from them?
3. (a) How is the speaker treated? (b) How does the speaker respond to this treatment?
4. (a) How does the speaker in “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” describe the rivers he has known? (b) For what reason might he emphasize their age?
5. (a) What do the activities associated with these rivers communicate about the history of African Americans? (b) In your opinion, what do the rivers symbolize, or stand for?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) How would you describe the mood of “I, Too”? (b) What elements of the poem contribute to this mood?
7. (a) What historical realities does the poem “I, Too” reflect? (b) In what ways has the speaker in “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” been affected by the history of his people?
8. (a) One of these poems looks toward the future, and one looks toward the past. Which of these positions do you find more persuasive? Why? (b) Which of these poems do you think might have found more acceptance among the white Americans of the 1920s? Why?

Connect
9. **Big Idea** The Harlem Renaissance How do these poems affirm the place of African Americans in the cultural history of this country?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Repetition

Repetition is the recurrence of sounds, words, phrases, lines, or other elements. Repetition can call attention to particular ideas.

1. What words are repeated in two lines of “I, Too”? How does the difference between these lines develop the theme of the poem?

2. What does the refrain in “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” contribute to the theme of the poem?

**Reading Strategy** Making Predictions About Theme

Recall your predictions about the poems. How accurate were they?

**Academic Vocabulary**

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86.

- **distribute** (di trib’ *at*) v. to share among many; to scatter over an area
- **emerge** (i murj’) v. to come into view; to rise from an inferior position

**Practice and Apply**

1. Was opportunity **distributed** equally among races in this country during Hughes’s time?
2. How did Vachel Lindsay help Langston Hughes **emerge** as an important poet?

WEB ACTIVITIES For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Autobiography

Are you a “with it” kind of person? Are you constantly where the action is? By moving to Harlem, Langston Hughes put himself in the right place at the right time, in the burgeoning art movement. As you read, think about the following questions:

• Who determines what is the right place and the right time?
• Do people and places of importance usually last a long time? Why or why not?

Building Background

Langston Hughes was nineteen years old when he moved to New York City. His first book of poetry, The Weary Blues, was published in 1926. To help his mentor, Carl Van Vechten, with his introduction to that book, Hughes wrote a brief essay, “L’histoire de ma vie” (“History of My Life”) that so dazzled Van Vechten and publisher Alfred A. Knopf that they urged Hughes to write an autobiography. But Hughes replied, “I am still too much enmeshed in the effects of my young life to write about it.” It was not until he was thirty-eight that he would write his autobiography, The Big Sea.

Setting Purposes for Reading

The Harlem Renaissance

As you read, think about why Harlem was thought of as the center of the renaissance of African American arts in the 1920s and 1930s.

Juxtaposition

The placing of two or more distinct things side by side is called juxtaposition. This is commonly done to contrast or compare the things and may evoke an emotional response in the reader. As you read, notice how Hughes juxtaposes the Harlem natives with the “Nordics,” or white tourists. Does either group appear in a more favorable light from being “Nordics,” or white tourists. Does either group appear


Vocabulary

scintillating (sin′ tə lā′ ting) adj. brilliant; sparkling; p. 815 Her scintillating conversation drew a large number of partygoers to her side.
vogue (vōg) n. fashion; style; p. 815 It seems to be the vogue today to wear sunglasses indoors.
patronage (pā′ trə nij) n. business; trade; custom; p. 816 A large part of the restaurant’s patronage comes from local people.
millennium (mi le′ nē am) n. a period of great happiness, peace, or prosperity; p. 818 For Roger, being a movie critic was like the millennium.
impromptu (im promp′ tō) adj. offhand; without preparation; p. 818 The comic had developed quite a reputation for impromptu characterizations.

Objectives

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:
• analyzing concrete details
• analyzing literary periods
• responding to juxtaposition

814 UNIT 5 BEGINNINGS OF THE MODERN AGE
The 1920's were the years of Manhattan’s black Renaissance. It began with Shuffle Along, Running Wild, and the Charleston. Perhaps some people would say even with The Emperor Jones, Charles Gilpin, and the tom-toms at the Provincetown. But certainly it was the musical revue, Shuffle Along, that gave a scintillating send-off to that Negro vogue in Manhattan, which reached its peak just before the crash of 1929, the crash that sent Negroes, white folks, and all rolling down the hill toward the Works Progress Administration.

Shuffle Along was a honey of a show. Swift, bright, funny, rollicking, and gay, with a dozen danceable, singable tunes. Besides, look who were in it: The now famous choir director, Hall Johnson, and the composer, William Grant Still, were a part of the orchestra. Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle wrote the music and played and acted in the show. Miller and Lyles were the comics. Florence Mills skyrocketed to fame in the second act. Trixie Smith sang “He May Be Your Man But He Comes to See Me Sometimes.” And Caterina Jarboro, now a European prima donna, and the internationally celebrated Josephine Baker were merely in the chorus. Everybody was in the audience—including me. People came back to see it innumerable times. It was always packed.

To see Shuffle Along was the main reason I wanted to go to Columbia. When I saw it, I was thrilled and delighted. From then on I was in the gallery of the Cort Theatre every time I got a chance. That year, too, I saw Katharine Cornell in A Bill of Divorcement, Margaret Wycherly in The Verge, Maugham’s The Circle with Mrs. Leslie Carter, and the Theatre Guild production of Kaiser’s From Morn Till Midnight. But I remember Shuffle Along best of all. It gave just the proper push—a pre-Charleston kick—to that Negro vogue of the 20’s, that spread to books, African sculpture, music, and dancing.

Put down the 1920’s for the rise of Roland Hayes, who packed Carnegie Hall, the rise of Paul Robeson in New York and London, of Florence

Vocabulary

scintillating (sin’tə lā’ ting) adj. brilliant; sparkling
vogue (vōg) n. fashion; style

1. The Charleston is an energetic dance to jazz music. The Lindy Hop and the black-bottom, mentioned later, are similar dances.
2. The Works Progress Administration was a government agency established in 1935 to give employment to out-of-work people.
3. A prima donna (prē’ ma don’ a) is a principal or featured woman singer.

Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance What factors helped make New York the center of African American culture?
Mills over two continents, of Rose McClendon in Broadway parts that never measured up to her, the booming voice of Bessie Smith and the low moan of Clara on thousands of records, and the rise of that grand comedienne of song, Ethel Waters, singing: “Charlie’s elected now! He’s in right for sure!” Put down the 1920’s for Louis Armstrong and Gladys Bentley and Josephine Baker.

White people began to come to Harlem in droves. For several years they packed the expensive Cotton Club on Lenox Avenue. But I was never there, because the Cotton Club was a Jim Crow club for gangsters and monied whites. They were not cordial to Negro patronage, unless you were a celebrity like Bojangles. So Harlem Negroes did not like the Cotton Club and never appreciated its Jim Crow policy in the very heart of their dark community. Nor did ordinary Negroes like the growing influx of whites toward Harlem after sundown, flooding the little cabarets and bars where formerly only colored people laughed and sang, and where now the strangers were given the best ringside tables to sit and stare at the Negro customers—like amusing animals in a zoo.

The Negroes said: “We can’t go downtown and sit and stare at you in your clubs. You won’t even let us in your clubs.” But they didn’t say it out loud—for Negroes are practically never rude to white people. So thousands of whites came to Harlem night after night, thinking the Negroes loved to have them there, and firmly believing that all Harlemites left their houses at sundown to sing and dance in cabarets, because most of the whites saw nothing but the cabarets, not the houses.

Some of the owners of Harlem clubs, delighted at the flood of white patronage, made the grievous error of barring their own race, after the manner of the famous Cotton Club. But most of these quickly lost business and folded up, because they failed to realize that a large part of the Harlem attraction for downtown New Yorkers lay in simply watching the colored customers amuse themselves. And the smaller clubs, of course, had no big floor shows or a name band like the Cotton Club, where Duke Ellington usually held forth, so, without black patronage, they were not amusing at all.

Some of the small clubs, however, had people like Gladys Bentley, who was something worth discovering in those days, before she got famous, acquired an accompanist, specially written material, and conscious vulgarity. But for two or three amazing years, Miss Bentley sat, and played a big piano all night long, literally all night, without stopping—singing songs like “The St. James Infirmary,” from ten in the evening until dawn, with scarcely a break between the notes, sliding from one song to another, with a powerful and continuous underbeat of jungle rhythm. Miss Bentley was an amazing exhibition of musical energy—a large, dark, masculine lady, whose feet pounded the floor while her fingers pounded the keyboard—a perfect piece of African sculpture, animated by her own rhythm.

But when the place where she played became too well known, she began to sing with an accompanist, became a star, moved to a larger place, then downtown, and is now in Hollywood. The old magic of the woman and the piano and the night and the rhythm being one is gone. But everything goes, one way or another. The ‘20’s are gone and lots of fine things in Harlem night life have disappeared like snow in the sun—since it became utterly commercial, planned for the downtown tourist trade, and therefore dull.

The lindy-hoppers at the Savoy even began to practise acrobatic routines, and to do absurd things for the entertainment of the whites, that probably never would have entered their heads to attempt merely for their own effortless amusement. Some of the lindy-hoppers had cards printed with their names on them and became dance professors teaching the tourists. Then Harlem nights became show nights for the Nordics.8

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4. Droves are large crowds.
5. Jim Crow refers to segregation or discrimination against African Americans.
6. Cordial (kôr’ jal) means “warm and friendly.”
7. An influx is a continual coming in of people or things.

**Vocabulary**

- patronage (pə’ trə nij) n. business; trade; custom

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Element</th>
<th>Juxtaposition How does the juxtaposition of whites and African Americans at the same Harlem nightclubs develop Hughes’s theme?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Reading Strategy | Analyzing Concrete Details What do the dancers’ cards contribute to Hughes’s criticism of Harlem nightlife? |
Some critics say that that is what happened to certain Negro writers, too—that they ceased to write to amuse themselves and began to write to amuse and entertain white people, and in so doing distorted and over-colored their material, and left out a great many things they thought would offend their American brothers of a lighter complexion. Maybe—since Negroes have writer-racketeers, as has any other race. But I have known almost all of them, and most of the good ones have tried to be honest, write honestly, and express their world as they saw it.

All of us know that the gay and sparkling life of the so-called Negro Renaissance of the '20's was not so gay and sparkling beneath the surface as it looked. Carl Van Vechten, in the character of Byron in Nigger Heaven, captured some of the bitterness and frustration of literary Harlem that Wallace Thurman later so effectively poured into his Infants of the Spring—the only novel by a Negro about that fantastic period when Harlem was in vogue.

It was a period when, at almost every Harlem upper-crust dance or party, one would be introduced to various distinguished white celebrities there as guests. It was a period when almost any Harlem Negro of any social importance at all would be likely to say casually: “As I was remarking the other day to Heywood—,” meaning Heywood Broun. Or: “As I said to George—,” referring to George Gershwin. It was a period when local and visiting royalty were not at all uncommon in Harlem. And when the parties of A'Lelia Walker, the Negro heiress, were filled with guests whose names would turn any Nordic social climber green with envy. It was a period when Harold Jackman, a handsome young Harlem school teacher of modest means, calmly announced one day that he was sailing for the Riviera for a fortnight, to attend Princess Murat’s yachting party. It was a period when Charleston preachers opened up shouting churches as sideshows for white tourists. It was a period when at least one charming colored chorus girl, amber enough to

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**Literary Element**  **Juxtaposition** Hughes often juxtaposes two distinct people or situations. What is he saying about the situation in Harlem with this juxtaposition?
pass for a Latin American, was living in a pent house, with all her bills paid by a gentleman whose name was banker’s magic on Wall Street. It was a period when every season there was at least one hit play on Broadway acted by a Negro cast. And when books by Negro authors were being published with much greater frequency and much more publicity than ever before or since in history. It was a period when white writers wrote about Negroes more successfully (commercially speaking) than Negroes did about themselves. It was the period (God help us!) when Ethel Barrymore appeared in blackface in Scarlet Sister Mary! It was the period when the Negro was in vogue.

I was there. I had a swell time while it lasted. But I thought it wouldn’t last long. (I remember the vogue for things Russian, the season the Chauve-Souris first came to town.) For how could a large and enthusiastic number of people be crazy about Negroes forever? But some Harlemites thought the millennium had come. They thought the race problem had at last been solved through Art plus Gladys Bentley. They were sure the New Negro would lead a new life from then on in green pastures of tolerance created by Countee Cullen, Ethel Waters, Claude McKay, Duke Ellington, Bojangles, and Alain Locke.

I don’t know what made any Negroes think that—except that they were mostly intellectuals doing the thinking. The ordinary Negroes hadn’t heard of the Negro Renaissance. And if they had, it hadn’t raised their wages any. As for all those white folks in the speakeasies and night clubs of Harlem—well, maybe a colored man could find some place to have a drink that the tourists hadn’t yet discovered.

Then it was that house-rent parties began to flourish—and not always to raise the rent either. But, as often as not, to have a get-together of one’s own, where you could do the black-bottom with no stranger behind you trying to do it, too. Non-theatrical, non-intellectual Harlem was an unwilling victim of its own vogue. It didn’t like to be stared at by white folks. But perhaps the downtowners never knew this—for the cabaret owners, the entertainers, and the speakeasy proprietors treated them fine—as long as they paid.

The Saturday night rent parties that I attended were often more amusing than any night club, in small apartments where God knows who lived—because the guests seldom did—but where the piano would often be augmented by a guitar, or an odd cornet, or somebody with a pair of drums walking in off the street. And where awful bootleg whiskey and good fried fish or steaming chitterling were sold at very low prices. And the dancing and singing and impromptu entertaining went on until dawn came in at the windows.

These parties, often termed whist parties or dances, were usually announced by brightly colored cards stuck in the grille of apartment house elevators. Some of the cards were highly entertaining in themselves.

Almost every Saturday night when I was in Harlem I went to a house-rent party. I wrote lots of poems about house-rent parties, and ate thereat many a fried fish and pig’s foot—with liquid refreshments on the side. I met ladies’ maids and truck drivers, laundry workers and shoe shine boys, seamstresses and porters. I can still hear their laughter in my ears, hear the soft slow music, and feel the floor shaking as the dancers danced.

9. During Prohibition, speakeasies were secret clubs where alcoholic drinks were sold illegally.

10. Augmented (ad) means “accompanied; enlarged.”
11. Bootleg means “made, transported, or sold illegally.”
12. Whist is a card game similar to bridge.

Reading Strategy Analyzing Concrete Details What do the details Hughes shares about rent parties tell you about the reason for their success?

Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance How does Hughes portray the effects of the Harlem Renaissance on society?

Vocabulary

millennium (mi le’ né am) n. a period of great happiness, peace, or prosperity

impromptu (im prom’ tō) adj. offhand; without preparation
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. If you had lived in Harlem in the 1920s, what aspect of its culture do you think you would have enjoyed most? Explain.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) How was the musical Shuffle Along instrumental in Hughes’s move to Harlem? (b) According to Hughes, what was the musical’s importance to the African American community?

3. How did the Jim Crow policy operate in the Cotton Club? (b) How did the residents of Harlem respond to the Jim Crow policy?

4. (a) What were house-rent parties? (b) How does Hughes compare them to other forms of entertainment?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. (a) How did the coming of white spectators to Harlem affect business there? (b) How did the regular club patrons respond to the coming of the whites?

6. (a) What did the “ordinary Negroes” who lived in Harlem think about the Renaissance? (b) Why did they think that way?

7. (a) What happened to the career of Gladys Bentley? (b) How does Hughes respond to the change in Gladys Bentley’s fortune?

8. (a) What did it mean for “the Negro” to be “in vogue”? (b) Put together what Hughes has to say about this vogue with what you know about vogues to write a generalization about why the Harlem Renaissance did not last.

Connect

9. Think about how Langston Hughes might respond to certain African American artists today. Put your response in the form of a question to Hughes.

10. **Big Idea** The Harlem Renaissance What expectations did some Harlemites have about how the Renaissance would affect race relations? Were they realistic?

DAILY LIFE AND CULTURE

**HARLEM**

By the middle of the 1920s, Harlem had become the largest community of people of African ancestry in the world. The 1920 census reported that over 150,000 African Americans lived in New York City.

Even though laws were less oppressive in the North than in the South, African Americans still faced prejudice. Hughes mentions the whites-only policy of the Cotton Club; some other theaters and nightclubs excluded Harlemites as well. In addition, Harlem was overcrowded, since its population kept growing rapidly and surrounding neighborhoods did not welcome African Americans.

Employment opportunities also were limited. Nearly half of African American men held service jobs as messengers, janitors, or waiters. Another sizeable number labored on the docks, loading and unloading ships. Few African Americans found work in the skilled trades, and many unions were closed to them.

Over 60 percent of African American women were employed—far more than for any other group of women at the time. More than half of them did laundry or worked as maids, both low-paying jobs.

Group Activity

Discuss the following questions with classmates.

1. What opportunities and difficulties might a person from the rural South have faced in Harlem?

2. What problems might a young family have faced if both parents held jobs?
LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element  Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition is the placing together of two or more distinct things for the purpose of comparing or contrasting them. In “When the Negro Was in Vogue,” Langston Hughes juxtaposes people, places, and activities.

1. Why do you think Hughes juxtaposes “ladies’ maids and truck drivers, laundry workers and shoe shine boys, seamstresses and porters” in his description of the house-rent parties?

2. The white tourists are juxtaposed to the regular customers in the cabarets and bars. What is the effect?

3. What is Hughes’s conclusion from his juxtaposition of the “intellectual” African Americans and the “ordinary” Harlem African Americans?

Review: Historical Narrative

As you learned on page 402, a historical narrative is a work of nonfiction that tells the story of important historical events or developments.

Partner Activity  Meet with another classmate and talk about the many people that Hughes mentions in this historical narrative. Sort them out, as best you can, using the context in which Hughes mentions them. Use a chart like this one to take notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African Americans in Harlem</th>
<th>Writers &amp; Poets</th>
<th>Singers &amp; Actors</th>
<th>Musicians &amp; Composers</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

When you have listed all the names, go back and highlight any that you have heard of before. Why do you suppose Hughes does not identify each of the people he mentions, such as George Gershwin, the songwriter and jazz composer?

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy  Analyzing Concrete Details

Concrete details help readers visualize a scene. Writers who want to create a vivid picture include specific details relating to the senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.

1. List some of the concrete details Hughes mentions in his description of the rent parties.

2. Can you picture the scene? Contribute three more concrete details Hughes does not mention but that you think you might find if you went to one of these parties.

Vocabulary  Practice

Practice with Synonyms  For each numbered vocabulary word from “When the Negro Was in Vogue,” find the lettered synonym. You will not use all the lettered words. Use a dictionary or thesaurus if you need help.

1. impromptu a. business
2. millennium b. not legal
3. patronage c. fashion
4. scintillating d. unknown thing
5. vogue e. young people
   f. brilliant
   g. time of happiness
   h. tragic
   i. unclear
   j. without preparation

Academic Vocabulary

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on p. R86.

label (lāˈ bāl) v. to name; identify

dimension (di menˈ shən) n. scope or importance

Practice and Apply

1. How does Hughes label the white tourists who flocked to Harlem for entertainment?

2. Did the dimension of the Harlem Renaissance extend throughout the country? Explain.
Writing About Literature

**Explore Author’s Purpose** An author’s purpose for writing may be to entertain, to inform, to express, or to persuade—or a combination of these. Write a brief essay explaining what you think was Langston Hughes’s purpose in writing “When the Negro Was in Vogue.” (It is an excerpt from his autobiography, *The Big Sea*.) In your essay, explore how Hughes’s purpose for writing may have influenced the choices he made about things such as form, voice, diction, and use of personal references and opinions.

As you draft, write from start to finish. Follow the writing path shown here to help you organize your essay.

1. **START**
   - **Introduction**
     - State Hughes’s purpose and mention elements it influenced.
   - **Body Paragraph(s)**
     - Show influence on each element in turn.
   - **Conclusion**
     - Briefly summarize what you have written and how you have supported your points.

After you complete your draft, meet with a peer reviewer to evaluate each other’s work and to suggest revisions. Then proofread and edit your draft for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

**Interdisciplinary Activity: Art**

Work with a small group of classmates to research a Harlem Renaissance artist, such as Jacob Lawrence, Aaron Douglas, Palmer Hayden, Malvin Gray Johnson, Hale Woodruff, or Augusta Savage. Plan a brief presentation that includes music from the time or a dramatic reading about the artist.

**Hughes’s Language and Style**

**Using Rhythmic Language** Many critics praise Hughes’s poetry for its use of the strong, shifting rhythms of jazz and blues music. You know that rhythm in literature is the pattern of beats created by the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables, especially in poetry. Notice how the rhythm shifts in this line from “The Negro Speaks of Rivers.”

```
I’ve known rivers ancient as the world and older
than the flow of human blood in human veins.
```

The line begins with three stresses, continues with a flow of mainly unstressed syllables, and ends with a regular alternation of unstressed and stressed syllables.

Patterns of rhythm can also add emphasis to particular words. In these lines from “I, Too,” the repeated stresses emphasize “eat well” and “grow strong.”

```
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.
```

**Activity** Copy a few lines of one of the poems and mark the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. Does the pattern create a rhythm? Emphasize particular words? Now experiment with rephrasing the lines you copied to keep the meaning but change the rhythm. How does the rephrased version compare with the original?

**Revising Check**

**Rhythm in Prose** Reread the essay you wrote about author’s purpose. Do you see any opportunities for adding rhythmic language by repeating similar sentence structures? Decide whether such rhythm would enhance the effect of your writing or would interfere with what you have to say. Revise your essay accordingly.

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**Web Activities** For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
BEFORE YOU READ

Your World

MEET GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON

Georgia Douglas Johnson was a generous and prolific writer, whose true contributions to the Harlem Renaissance may never be fully known. Much of her writing was thrown out on the day of her funeral by workers clearing out her house. In addition, Johnson used numerous pseudonyms during her lifetime.

Nevertheless, her known efforts form an impressive body of work. Johnson wrote hundreds of poems, numerous plays, and columns for twenty weekly newspapers. In addition, she edited almost one hundred books and hosted weekly literary gatherings that historian David Levering Lewis described as a “freewheeling jumble of the gifted, famous, and odd.” For ten years, she hosted lively salons, where African American writers met and supported each other.

Education and Family Life Georgia Douglas Camp was born in Atlanta, Georgia. Her background was racially mixed: one grandparent was English, one was Native American, and one was African American. She was well educated and attended college and two music schools. Although Johnson first dreamed of becoming a musician, she eventually decided against it. Instead she taught school, became an assistant principal, and then married Henry Lincoln Johnson, a lawyer. While teaching, Johnson began to publish stories and poems in newspapers and magazines.

Writer and Publisher In 1910 the family moved to Washington, D.C., where Johnson spent the rest of her life. While her husband disapproved of her writing, he did support her financially. Johnson's famous Saturday-night literary gatherings were attended by many other Harlem Renaissance poets, including Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston.

In 1918 Johnson published her first book of poetry, The Heart of a Woman. Within ten years she published two more: Bronze and An Autumn Love Cycle. In 1925 Johnson's husband died, and she had to return to work. She worked full-time at various jobs, and managed to put both her sons through college and graduate school.

It seems to me an art to forget those things that make the heart heavy. If one can soar, he should soar, leaving his chains behind.

—Georgia Douglas Johnson

Despite her heavy work schedule, Johnson continued to write. The year after her husband died, she started writing plays that address serious racial issues such as lynching. Many were not published, and only three of her more than two dozen plays were produced.

Johnson wrote well into old age. In 1962 she published her last book of poetry, Share My World, which contained the poem “Your World.” One Johnson biographer, Valerie Jean, wrote, “I think this poem shows how this creative, giving soul would wish to be remembered.”

Georgia Douglas Johnson was born around 1880 and died in 1966.

Author Search For more about Georgia Douglas Johnson, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem

The following poem is one writer’s view of how life should be lived. As you read the poem, think about the following questions:

• What do you think is the best way to live life?
• How much of life is determined by attitude?

Building Background

Although Harlem is in New York City, the writers, artists, and composers who took part in the Harlem Renaissance lived in other places too. This poem was written toward the end of Johnson’s life, after she had overcome numerous challenges. The images in the poem directly relate to those used in the title poem of her first book, *The Heart of a Woman.* In that poem, she compares the heart of a woman to a lone bird that “tries to forget it has dreamed of the stars.”

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea**  The Harlem Renaissance

Johnson not only wrote but also provided a haven for other African American artists. She said that she called her home “Half-Way House” because “I’m halfway between everybody and everything, and I bring them together.” As you read, notice how “Your World” captures some of the ideals of the Harlem Renaissance.

**Literary Element**  Mood

The mood of a literary work is its emotional quality or general feeling. A writer creates mood through figurative language, diction, subject matter, tone, and sound devices such as rhythm. Mood is not the same as atmosphere, which refers more to the physical details—location and weather, for instance—in a poem or piece of fiction. As you read the poem, notice the different aspects that create the mood.

• See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R1

**Interactive Literary Elements Handbook**  To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

**OBJECTIVES**

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

• analyzing mood
• visualizing text
Your world is as big as you make it.
I know, for I used to abide\(^1\)
In the narrowest nest in a corner,
My wings pressing close to my side.

But I sighted the distant horizon
Where the sky line encircled the sea
And I throbbed with a burning desire
To travel this immensity.

I battered the cordons\(^2\) around me
And cradled my wings on the breeze
Then soared to the uttermost reaches
With rapture\(^3\), with power, with ease!

---

1. Here, *abide* may mean either “dwell” or “remain.”

2. *Cordon* are barriers.

3. *Rapture* is the condition of being carried away by strong emotions such as joy or love.

---

**Literary Element**  Mood  How does the contrast between these words and lines 2–4 help you identify the mood of this poem?

**Vocabulary**

- *Encircle* (en sur’kal) v. to create a circle around
- *Immensity* (i men’sa tē) n. greatness in size and degree
- *Batter* (bat’ər) v. to beat with blows; to attack fiercely and repeatedly
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. Which images in the poem remind you most of feelings that you have had in your own life? Explain.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a)To what does the speaker compare herself or himself? (b)How does the metaphor in the poem match the speaker’s message?

3. (a)Alliteration is the repetition of the consonant sounds at the beginnings of words. Find an example of alliteration in the first stanza of “Your World.” (b)How does it contribute to the poem’s effect?

4. (a)What does the speaker see in the second stanza? (b)How does the mood change in this stanza?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. How well does the speaker support the belief that “Your world is as big as you make it”? Use details from the poem in your response.

6. (a)How do you visualize the speaker at the end of the poem? (b)Compare that image with the way in which you visualized the speaker in the first stanza and explain why the images might be different.

7. Read aloud the last two lines of the poem and assess how the rhythm contributes to the poem’s emotional effect. Summarize your ideas.

Connect

8. **Big Idea** The Harlem Renaissance In what ways might historical events have influenced the author’s attitudes?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Mood

The mood of a literary work is the overall emotion created by that work. Usually mood can be described with one or two words, such as melancholy or optimistic. Note that the mood of a work can shift.

1. What words or images contribute to the mood in the first and last stanzas?
2. What words suggest struggle? Success?

Performing

**Dramatic Reading** With a group, prepare a dramatic reading of “Your World.” Decide who will read each line or stanza: an individual, a pair, or the whole group. Discuss how each line should be read, then practice your lines individually and as a group. Finally, perform your dramatic reading for your classmates.

READING AND VOCABULARY

**Reading Strategy** Visualizing

Visualizing is an effective method of comprehending a literary work and remembering details. If you are having trouble visualizing a particular image, reread that section of the text. Look for patterns in the images and try to determine their meanings from the context.

1. Read the details used to describe the speaker and the place the speaker “used to abide.” What do these images make you visualize?
2. What are three actions you can picture in the last stanza? How do these actions differ from one another?

**Vocabulary** Practice

**Practice with Word Roots** Look at each vocabulary word. Find the other word with the same root below it. Use a dictionary to identify the meaning of the root.

1. encircled → battering  
   2. immensity → circles  
   3. battered → immensely

**Web Activities** For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
A black man talks of reaping

MEET ARNA BONTEMPS

As a historian, an educator, and an author of poems, plays, and novels, Arna Bontemps helped draw attention to the misleading education he felt many U.S. citizens had received about the heritage and accomplishments of African Americans. He has been credited with helping to create the “trickle of interest in Negro American literature—that trickle which is now a torrent.” Bontemps wrote, “Had I not gone home summers and hobnobbed with Negroes, . . . I would have come out [of college] imagining that the story of the Negro could be told in two short paragraphs: a statement about jungle people in Africa and an equally brief account of the slavery issue in American history.”

“In the Harlem Renaissance poetry led the way for the other arts. It touched off the awakening that brought novelists, painters, sculptors, dancers, dramatists, and scholars of many kinds to the notice of a nation that had nearly forgotten about the gifts of its Negro people.”

—Arna Bontemps

A Childhood Teacher

Bontemps was born in Alexandria, Louisiana, but racism there led his father to take the family to Los Angeles, California, when Bontemps was three years old. During Bontemps’s childhood, his great-uncle Buddy shared with Bontemps his love of variety shows, folk stories, and dialect, all of which were staples of African American culture at the time. Bontemps would go on to incorporate the rich cultural achievements of African Americans in his work.

When Bontemps was a student at UCLA, he discovered a book by Claude McKay, a poet whose work eventually helped to spark the Harlem Renaissance. Bontemps read McKay’s book twice in one day and then “began telling everybody I knew about it.” In 1923, when he moved to New York, he became friends with Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and other Harlem Renaissance artists.

Adult Achievements

Bontemps’s father wished his son would become a mason, but Bontemps preferred to try his luck as a writer. He believed that literature could both educate and empower. Soon after his arrival in Harlem, he won recognition for his poetry and for his first novel, God Sends Sunday. He also began writing literature for children.

In 1943 Bontemps became the librarian at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, where he devoted himself to recording the history of African Americans. He said that his book The Story of the Negro “consists mainly of things I learned after I left school that I wish I had known much earlier.” Bontemps went on to write more than twenty-five books, including The Harlem Renaissance Remembered and Golden Slippers, the first children’s anthology of African American poetry.

Arna Bontemps was born in 1902 and died in 1973.

For more about Arna Bontemps, go to www.glenco.com.
Connecting to the Poem
In “A black man talks of reaping,” Bontemps evokes the feelings of people who have been deprived of the fruits of their labor. As you read the poem, ask yourself the following questions:

- How you would feel if others benefited from your work but you did not?
- How would you feel if you unfairly benefited from someone else’s work?

Building Background
Langston Hughes’s vision of the role of African American artists greatly influenced Bontemps. Hughes wrote, “We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn’t matter. We know we are beautiful. And ugly too. The tom-tom cries and the tom-tom laughs. If colored people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, their displeasure doesn’t matter either.” Bontemps admired Hughes’ unapologetic embrace of the African American experience.

Setting Purposes for Reading
Big Idea  The Harlem Renaissance
As you read, notice the way that Bontemps’ poem addresses injustices stemming from racial inequality.

Literary Element  Metaphor
A metaphor is a figure of speech that compares two seemingly unlike things. In contrast to a simile, a metaphor does not use the words like or as in making a comparison. For example, the phrase “the car was lightning and thunder” compares a noisy and speedy car to lightning and thunder. “A black man talks of reaping” includes an implied extended metaphor—a metaphor that is developed over more than one line.


Reading Strategy  Connecting to Personal Experience
To gain a deeper understanding of what you read, try connecting the events and ideas of a literary work to your own life or to other works you’ve read. As you read, try asking yourself: Do I know someone like this? Have I ever felt this way? What else have I read that reminds me of this poem?

Reading Tip: Taking Notes  Use a chart like the one below to record the connections you find between the events, ideas, and feelings of “A black man talks of reaping” and your own experiences or beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events, ideas, or feelings in the poem</th>
<th>My connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Vocabulary
sown (sōn) v. planted; p. 828 Two weeks after the seeds were sown, the plants sprouted.

lean (lēn) adj. unproductive; lacking; p. 828 The farmers fear that this year will be a lean one.

reap (rēp) v. to gather or to harvest; p. 828 Each fall, the farmers reap the grain in the fields.

Vocabulary Tip: Using Context Clues  Context clues are the words and sentences around an unfamiliar word that can help you figure out the word’s meaning. When you come across an unfamiliar word, consider its most likely meaning given the details that surround it.
A black man talks of reaping

Arna Bontemps

I have sown beside all waters in my day.
I planted deep, within my heart the fear
that wind or fowl would take the grain away.
I planted safe against this stark, lean year.

5 I scattered seed enough to plant the land
in rows from Canada to Mexico
but for my reaping only what the hand
can hold at once is all that I can show.

Yet what I sowed and what the orchard yields
my brother's sons are gathering stalk and root;
small wonder then my children glean\(^1\) in fields
they have not sown, and feed on bitter fruit.

---

1. *Glean* means "to gather grain left on a field after reaping."

**Literary Element** | **Metaphor** | What might be the underlying reason that the speaker has profited little from the hard work of sowing (lines 7–8)?

**Vocabulary**

- **sown** (sōn) v. planted
- **lean** (lēn) adj. unproductive; lacking
- **reap** (rēp) v. to gather or to harvest
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. How did this poem affect you? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What is the work done by the speaker in the poem? (b) How would you explain the fears and concerns expressed in the first stanza?
3. (a) Who are "my brother’s sons," and what are they doing? (b) Why do you think they are able to act in such a way?
4. (a) What does the speaker mean by “my children glean in fields they have not sown”? (b) What might be the “bitter fruit” the children feed on? Explain.

Analyze and Evaluate
5. In this poem, Bontemps uses end rhyme, or words that rhyme at the end of each line of poetry. What ideas might Bontemps be trying to emphasize through his use of rhyme?
6. African American author James Baldwin wrote, "Color is not a human or a personal reality; it is a political reality." How well does this poem illustrate Baldwin’s point? Explain.
7. How well does the title of the poem help you understand the poem’s overall meaning? Explain. Cite details from the poem in your answer.

Connect
8. **Big Idea** The Harlem Renaissance The Harlem Renaissance encouraged authors to make the experiences and concerns of African Americans central to their writing. In what ways does this poem reflect both the history of African Americans and the goals of the Harlem Renaissance?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Metaphor
An extended metaphor is a metaphor that is developed over more than one line. In "A black man talks of reaping," the metaphor is implied rather than directly stated.

1. What comparison is Bontemps making?
2. What details in the poem convey the metaphor?
3. How does the metaphor help support the theme, or underlying message, of the poem?

Learning for Life

**Interview an Activist** Locate an educator or activist in your community who is working to improve what he or she feels is an unjust situation. Conduct an interview with the person and ask him or her to explain the unjust situation and how he or she is working to change it. Share the results of your interview with the class.

**Web Activities** For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

READING AND VOCABULARY

**Reading Strategy** Connecting to Personal Experience
Arna Bontemps hoped to bring his experiences and those of other African Americans to the attention of others. Look at the chart you made noting the links between the situation and feelings described in the poem and your own feelings, ideas, and experiences.

1. How do your ideas and experiences compare with the ideas and experiences Bontemps wrote about?
2. Think of a time you were treated unfairly. How did you respond? Explain what you learned from this.

**Vocabulary** Practice

**Practice with Context Clues** For each of the following sentences, use context clues to write a definition of the boldfaced word.

1. I plan to reap the benefits of my studying once exam time comes.
2. Our tomato plants produced far fewer tomatoes than they did last season; it was a lean crop.
MEET COUNTEE CULLEN

Probably more than any other writer during the Harlem Renaissance, Countee Cullen embodied the ideal of the “New Negro” and fulfilled the goals of African American leaders W. E. B. DuBois and James Weldon Johnson. He successfully reached both African American and white audiences and eloquently addressed the issues of racism and injustice in the United States. Though some argued that Cullen spurned his African American heritage because he considered himself simply a poet and not an African American poet, he never denied his African American culture. His verse—even as it showed the influence of English Romantic poetry—echoed the struggle and violence of the times.

Cullen was born Countee Porter. His birthplace remains a mystery, but most scholars believe it was Louisville, Kentucky. Cullen was raised by a woman who was thought to be his grandmother, and when she died in 1917, he went to live with Reverend Frederick A. Cullen, pastor of the Salem Methodist Episcopal Church in Harlem, and his wife, Carolyn. Although not legally adopted by the Cullens, he eventually took their last name.

Cullen excelled in school and won several poetry awards, including a citywide contest. Before he graduated from New York University, his first book of poems, Color, was published to good reviews. By the time he received his master’s degree from Harvard, Cullen had become the most esteemed African American poet of his time.

“I shall not write of Negro subjects for the purpose of propaganda. That is not what a poet is concerned with. Of course, when the emotion rising out of the fact that I am a Negro is strong, I express it.”

—Countee Cullen

Contradictions Unlike some of his contemporaries, Cullen wrote his poems in highly structured and traditional European forms. He wanted to prove that African Americans could write poetry as well as whites could. His belief in art’s ability to unite people of all races often prompted him to caution other African American poets, such as Langston Hughes, against becoming “racial poets.” Although James Weldon Johnson understood Cullen’s desire to avoid the “Negro poet” label, he also noted the paradox between Cullen’s beliefs and his work, observing, “Strangely, it is because Cullen revolts against . . . racial limitations—technical and spiritual—that the best of his poetry is motivated by race.”

Legacy Cullen published several collections of poetry after Color. Although critical acclaim for his works waned in later years, Cullen’s popularity never suffered, and today his literary legacy remains due to the eloquent, artfully crafted poems that he wrote during the Harlem Renaissance.

Countee Cullen was born in 1903 and died in 1946.

Author Search For more about Countee Cullen, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem
In “Any Human to Another,” Countee Cullen reflects on how sorrow unites all human beings. As you read the poem, think about the following questions:

- How much can we empathize with—very deeply feel—another human being’s troubles?
- Which do you think unites us more with other people: sharing our joys or sharing our sorrows?

Building Background
Growing up in Harlem, Cullen was part of an expanding African American cultural awareness and learned about African American pride, unity, and art. Yet Cullen was also immersed in white U.S. culture: he was formally educated in primarily white upper-class schools, he read the works of European writers, and he modeled his writing after that of John Keats and other English Romantic poets. This combination of influences—white and African American, formal and informal—is reflected in his work.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea** The Harlem Renaissance
Although Cullen did not want to be known as a “racial poet,” much of his work addresses the issue of racism in the United States. As you read “Any Human to Another,” be aware of how he envisioned the world and the role of art as a means of breaking down racial barriers.

**Literary Element** Stanza
A stanza is a group of lines forming a unit in a poem or song. A stanza tends to focus on a certain topic or feeling. Typically, stanzas are separated by a line space and often have the same number of lines, the same meter, and the same rhyme scheme. As you read “Any Human to Another,” notice the focus of each stanza and how the stanzas are arranged.


Reading Strategy Connecting to Contemporary Issues
Cullen’s poem reflects his desire to see people as individuals rather than as representatives of a group by focusing on what unites human beings. As you read, think about his outlook on life in the context of the contemporary world.

**Reading Tip: Record Your Observations** To assess the values you identify in Cullen’s poem in the context of contemporary issues, you might record your observations in a chart like the one below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cullen’s Beliefs</th>
<th>Contemporary Issues</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sorrow unites people</td>
<td>Terrorist attacks</td>
<td>Cullen would understand why people unite after terrorist attacks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

- **fused** (ťüz’d) adj. blended; p. 832 The jeweler crafted a bracelet made of fused metals.
- **diverse** (di vurs’ ) adj. composed of different elements; p. 832 Because of newcomers from Asia and Latin America, the town had become more ethnically diverse.
- **unique** (ú nēk’ ) adj. unusual; p. 832. The artist generally paints religious paintings, so this landscape painting is unique.
- **unsheathed** (un shēthd’ ) adj. removed from a protective case; p. 832 The unsheathed sword appeared both menacing and beautiful.

**Vocabulary Tip: Antonyms** Antonyms are words that have opposite meanings, such as gloomy and cheerful. Note that antonyms are always the same part of speech.

**OBJECTIVES**
In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:
- understanding and analyzing stanzas
- analyzing characteristics of the Harlem Renaissance
- connecting to contemporary issues
The ills I sorrow at
Not me alone
Like an arrow,
Pierce to the marrow,
Through the fat
And past the bone.

Your grief and mine
Must intertwine
Like sea and river,
Be fused and mingle,
Diverse yet single,
Forever and forever.

Let no man be so proud
And confident,
To think he is allowed
A little tent
Pitched in a meadow
Of sun and shadow
All his little own.

Joy may be shy, unique,
Friendly to a few,
Sorrow never scorned to speak
To any who
Were false or true.

Your every grief
Like a blade
Shining and unsheathed
Must strike me down.
Of bitter aloes1

My sorrow must be laid
On your head like a crown.

1. Aloes refers to the spiny leaves of the aloe plant, whose juices are used to make a bitter medicine.

Big Idea  Harlem Renaissance What types of people might the speaker be referring to here?

Vocabulary

fused (fūzd) adj. blended
diverse (dī vurs′) adj. composed of different elements
unique (ú nēk′) adj. unusual
unsheathed (un shēthd′) adj. removed from a protective case
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. (a) What did you first think of when you read the poem’s title? (b) How did your response change after you read the poem?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Who is the speaker in this poem? (b) Whom does the speaker address?
3. A simile is a comparison that uses words such as like or as. What similes does Cullen use in the first and second stanzas?
4. What image of human isolation and self-sufficiency does the speaker introduce in the third stanza, and what is his view of it?
5. (a) What point does the speaker make about joy in the fourth stanza? (b) How does the speaker contrast this point to the effect of sorrow?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) What comparisons are introduced in the last stanza? (b) Why might Cullen have selected those particular comparisons?
7. In this poem, Cullen personifies, or gives human attributes to, the emotions of joy and sorrow. (a) What might be the purpose of this personification? (b) Is it effective? Explain.

Connect
8. Big Idea The Harlem Renaissance Racism is not specifically mentioned anywhere in “Any Human to Another.” What attitude toward racism can be inferred from this poem?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Stanza

Stanzas of a poem are often similar in structure and have the same rhyme scheme, number of lines, and meter. However, some poems have stanzas with different numbers of lines or different rhyme schemes.

1. (a) How many stanzas does “Any Human to Another” have? (b) How many lines are in each stanza? (c) How do Cullen’s stanzas reflect the definition of a stanza?
2. What idea is presented in each stanza?
3. What effect does Cullen create through his choice of stanza form?

Writing About Literature

Respond to Theme Do you agree with the argument Cullen makes? Write a short essay stating why you do or do not agree with Cullen. Use examples from the poem to support your points.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Connecting to Contemporary Issues

Look back over the chart you made on page 831 in which you recorded your observations about the values expressed in “Any Human to Another.”

1. What beliefs did you identify?
2. What contemporary issues did you identify?
3. How relevant do you think Cullen’s poem is today?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Antonyms Choose the best antonym for each vocabulary word.
1. diverse
   - a. rare
   - b. uniform
   - c. varied
2. fused
   - a. separated
   - b. joined
   - c. stuck
3. unique
   - a. distinctive
   - b. terrible
   - c. common

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

COUNTEE CULLEN 833
Analyzing a Poem

“[Robert Frost’s] sense of the human tragedy fortified him against self-deception and easy consolation. ‘I have been’ he wrote, ‘one acquainted with the night.’ And because he knew the midnight as well as the high noon, because he understood the ordeal as well as the triumph of the human spirit, he gave his age strength with which to overcome despair.”

—John F. Kennedy, from “Remarks at Amherst College”

**Connecting to Literature** In the passage above, John F. Kennedy examines the aspects of Frost’s character revealed through his poetry in order to honor Frost’s achievement as a whole. Similarly, in a literary analysis, you examine the parts of a text to understand better the meaning of the text as a whole. The rubric below will help you learn the goals and strategies for writing a successful expository literary analysis of a poem.

**Features of Literary Analysis Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To analyze the meaning and techniques used in a poem</td>
<td>✓ Show how form, meter, language, and speaker contribute to meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| To write a concise interpretation of the poem | ✓ In your introduction, state your interpretation of the poem’s meaning  
✓ In the conclusion, summarize your interpretation and major points |
| To support your analysis with evidence | ✓ Use direct quotations and concrete examples from the poem for support |
| To organize your analysis logically | ✓ Organize your discussion of elements in a logical, coherent way |

**OBJECTIVES**
- Analyze a poem to demonstrate an understanding of the poem’s meaning and appreciation of the effects that create that meaning.
- Advance a judgment of a poem supported by evidence.

**WEB RESOURCES**
For models and other writing activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Assignment

Analyze a poem by identifying its meaning and then write an expository literary essay that explains how various techniques help create that meaning. As you move through the stages of the writing process, keep your audience and purpose in mind.

**Audience:** peers, classmates, and teachers who are familiar with the poem  
**Purpose:** to demonstrate an understanding of the poem’s meaning and an appreciation of the effects that create that meaning

Analyzing a Professional Model

In his expository literary analysis, Lawrence Raab argues that Robert Frost’s “Mending Wall” is less about revealing a particular meaning than showing the reader how to find meaning. As you read the analysis, pay attention to the comments in the margin. They point out features that you might want to include in your own literary analysis.

From “Robert Frost’s ‘Mending Wall’” by Lawrence Raab

“Mending Wall” opens with a riddle: “Something there is...” And a riddle, after all, is a series of hints calculated to make us imagine and then name its hidden subject. The poem doesn’t begin, “I hate walls,” or even, “Something dislikes a wall.” Its first gesture is one of elaborate and playful concealment, a calculated withholding of meaning. Notice also that it is the speaker himself who repairs the wall after the hunters have broken it. And it is the speaker each year who notifies his neighbor when the time has come to meet and mend the wall. Then can we safely claim that the speaker views the wall simply as a barrier between human contact and understanding?

Speaker and neighbor work together and equally. Although the job is tedious and hard, the speaker considers it “just another kind of outdoor game / One on a side.” He acknowledges that his whimsical spell—“Stay where you are until our backs are turned!”—is useless, and that the result is impermanent and perhaps less important than something else. For all practical purposes this particular wall is not needed. But the project of mending it has taken on significance: “Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder / If I could put a notion in his head...”
The speaker’s mischievous impulse is to plant an idea. He does not say that he wants to change his neighbor’s mind, to make him believe what he himself believes. He wants to nudge the neighbor’s imagination, just as a teacher might wish to challenge a student. So he asks questions: “Why do they make good neighbors? Isn’t it / Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.”

But the neighbor is unwilling to play this game of teacher and student. He won’t answer the questions, or consider the riddle. . . .

This is the poem’s essential challenge, which the neighbor will not accept. But the challenge is ours as well—our work, our play. The relationship between speaker and neighbor is like the relationship between poem and reader, another kind of indoor game, one on a side.

But this is a relationship between poem and reader, not poet and reader. Frost, I want to believe, is not the speaker exactly. He is behind the whole poem, rather than narrowly inside it. We need to be at least a little skeptical of the speaker and not associate him automatically with the side of upholding freedom, reason, and tolerance. At the end, because the neighbor won’t play his game, the speaker imagines him as “an old-stone savage,” a harsh judgment to apply even to the most recalcitrant student. Because the neighbor will only repeat what he remembers his father having said, he seems to “move in darkness . . . Not of woods only and the shade of trees.” . . . It’s his refusal to be playful and imaginative that irks the speaker, and his unwillingness to consider work as anything more than a job to be accomplished. The speaker, after all, does not ask the neighbor to give up his father’s notion. He wants him to “go behind” it. If, as I want to suggest, the poem is about education, this distinction is important. The poem does not merely advocate one position over another. It asks neither for advocacy nor for application, but for investigation. It is not a statement but a performance. It enacts its meanings. . . .

“Mending Wall” is a poem that lures the unwary reader into believing that thinking is merely voting, choosing up sides, taking out of the poem what most fits our own preconceived ideas. It adopts this subversive tactic because its ultimate purpose is to challenge us to go behind what we might find initially appealing in the formulas that lie on its surface. “We ask people to think,” Frost says, “and we don’t show them what thinking is.” “Mending Wall” is less a poem about what to think than it is a poem about what thinking is, and where it might lead.
**Prewriting**

**Choose a Poem to Analyze** When choosing a poem to write about, think about a poem in this unit you find provocative or challenging, one that you would like to understand better. Make sure that the poem you choose is substantive enough to discuss in your essay.

**Explore Your Poem** After you select a poem, explore its meaning and the techniques the poet uses to convey that meaning. You may find it helpful to make a copy of the poem to mark up as you analyze. Try these strategies:

- Paraphrase the poem’s general meaning in your own words. Then focus on specific words, punctuation, sounds, and figures of speech. Analyze the ways these elements contribute to the meaning of the poem.
- Reread the poem. You probably will not notice everything at once.
- Focus on smaller sections of the poem in detail. Explore the images in each section and think about how they bring out the poet’s message.

**Analyze the Elements** Remember that when you analyze something, you break it into parts and examine each part, determining how the parts work together as a whole. A chart like the one below can help you work out your analysis of a poem and can serve as evidence to support your thesis in your draft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem</th>
<th>“I, Too” by Langston Hughes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>5 stanzas; 18 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhyme Scheme</td>
<td>unrhymed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Lines nearly repeat: “When company comes” (lines 4 and 10) and “eat in the kitchen” (lines 3 and 15).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td>image of eating in kitchen repeated in stanzas 2 and 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative Language</td>
<td>“I, too, sing America” (line 1); “I, too, am America” (line 18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker/Characters</td>
<td>African American speaker; “They” (Americans excluding African Americans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>Confident and proud in stanzas 1, 2, 3, and 5; uncertain and doubting in stanza 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>The speaker wants not only to be able to participate in what “America” is but also to be admired and seen as an individual.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Clarify Your Thesis** Look at your analysis chart and decide which elements are most important in the poem you chose. You need not discuss every element in your analysis, only the most important ones. Then examine your paraphrase and the notes in your chart to sum up your interpretation of the meaning of the poem in a thesis statement. Your thesis should explain how particular literary elements illustrate or contribute to the theme of the poem.

**Make a Plan** As you write, use the elements in your chart to support your thesis. Organize your major points so that your analysis follows a logical, effective order.

**Every Word Counts**

Poets choose each word in a poem specifically to give the poem meaning and impact. Always look for multiple meanings of a word and note how different meanings may enhance or complicate the meaning of the poem.

**Test Prep**

When you analyze a poem for a timed test, examine the literary elements first. This analysis will form the support for your thesis.
Drafting

Use Your Plan as a Guide
You may begin drafting by incorporating your thesis into an introduction, or you may choose to focus on the body of the essay first. Organize your main points in a straightforward way in the body of your essay, supporting each point with direct evidence from the poem. Explain the significance of quotations and examples and make clear how they support your thesis.

Analyzing a Workshop Model

Here is the final draft of a literary analysis essay. Read the essay and answer the questions in the margin. Use the answers to these questions to guide you as you write your own essay.

Part of America: Langston Hughes’s “I, Too”

Langston Hughes’s poem “I, Too” comments on the past, present, and possible future treatment of African Americans in the United States. Strong imagery, repetition, changing tone, and a varying formal arrangement in Hughes’s poem are employed as the speaker questions the limited definition of *America*. The poem reflects the speaker’s desire not only to be able to participate in what America is but also to be recognized as an individual, as part of the very definition of America.

Hughes’s poem can be interpreted as a direct response to Walt Whitman’s poem “I Hear America Singing.” Whitman writes about America’s diversity by describing how each individual sings a unique song. In “I, Too” the speaker’s response is a wish to be recognized as one of those individual voices. The opening line of the poem, set apart for emphasis, suggests a direct reply to Whitman. “I, too, sing America,” proclaims the speaker, pleasing for attention and recognition and wondering why he was excluded from Whitman’s poetic list of Americans (line 1).

The second stanza of the poem describes the speaker’s current situation. The line “I am the darker brother” implies that there is a relation to the rest of America, but by describing the speaker as “darker,” Hughes identifies the speaker as an African American (line 2). Hughes describes an ambiguous “they” who send the speaker away “when company comes,” segregating and hiding him from other people (lines 3, 4). Although he is shoved aside, he attempts to make the best of his situation by laughing, eating, and getting stronger (lines 5–7). Hughes illustrates how, even when they are being discounted, African Americans remain optimistic, knowing that a better future lies ahead.
The third stanza shifts from present to future tense and point of view, as the speaker speculates on how the treatment of African Americans will change “Tomorrow.” To highlight this shift, the speaker repeats the main image of the second stanza and follows a similar structure in both stanzas. The turning point, “When company comes,” from line 4 is repeated exactly in line 10 but to a different effect. In the third stanza, the speaker looks forward to the day when he will sit at the table with everybody else, in a time when nobody will even consider telling him to “Eat in the kitchen” (line 13). In this stanza, Hughes cements the symbolism of “the table,” which represents the basic rights and freedoms of a participating American. The speaker describes a time when he will be allowed to join in with the rest of Americans without being told that he cannot or should not.

The fourth stanza continues in the present tense as the speaker further speculates on the changes the future will bring for African Americans. The three-line structure of this stanza sharply diverges from the structure of other stanzas, and the “Besides” introduces this stanza as an aside that similarly diverges from the main text of the poem (lines 15–17). In this stanza, the speaker shifts from affirming that “they” will allow him (and all African Americans) to participate, or “eat at the table,” to affirming that “they” will eventually recognize him as beautiful and be ashamed of their past treatment of him (line 16–17). Therefore, the speaker wants—and expects—not only to be allowed to share the same freedoms and liberties as other American citizens, to participate in what “America” is, but also to be admired and seen as an individual. Line 17 ends abruptly with a dash, however, suggesting that the speaker suddenly doubts his own statement. This dash serves to undercut the proud, confident, determined tone of the speaker in the first three stanzas, each of which ends with a period. The speaker seems to acknowledge that the future he described may not happen.

With the final line, Hughes brings the poem full circle, concluding with “I, too, am America” (line 18). This line, in effect, repeats the opening of the poem, lending a sense of symmetry and closure to the whole. The speaker is not just participating in (“singing”) America; he is also a part of it—he is America. Yet even this confident closing line cannot erase the hint of doubt from the preceding line. The speaker expresses his feeling that the exclusion and degradation must stop, although he does not seem convinced that it will happen in the near future. Placing the final line in the present tense, as if it were already true, emphasizes the pain behind the statement, as well as the insistence on strength and hope, even as “Tomorrow” seems further and further away.
Revising

Peer Review Exchange your finished draft with that of a partner to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each draft. Partners should make sure that each analysis is logically organized and should comment on the tone of the essay. Analyses should be interesting but formal in tone.

Use the rubric below to evaluate your writing.

Rubric: Writing an Effective Literary Analysis of a Poem

- Do you analyze the techniques in the poem to show how they contribute to the poem’s meaning?
- Do you state your interpretation in a concise thesis statement?
- Do you support your analysis with quotations and examples from the poem?
- Do you organize your analysis in a logical, coherent way?
- Do you restate your thesis and summarize your major points in your conclusion?

Focus Lesson

Sharpening the Precision of Word Choice

Concrete, precise writing appeals to readers because it evokes feelings and images that help them personally relate to what is being discussed. In your essay, help your readers understand your ideas by replacing abstract statements with precise words and vivid examples. Review your thesis and major points in particular, making sure your ideas are as accurate and precise as possible.

Draft:

The poem, however, shifts toward a sense of doubt, suggesting that the speaker and his views have changed. The tone and the punctuation in the final stanza contribute to this effect.

Revision:

Line 17 ends abruptly with a dash, however, suggesting that the speaker suddenly doubts his own statement. This dash serves to undercut the proud, confident, determined tone of the speaker in the first three stanzas, each of which ends in a period.

1. Be concise and concrete.
2. Give specific rather than general explanations.
3. Replace vague examples with vivid, precise examples.
Editing and Proofreading

Get It Right When you have completed the final draft of your essay, proofread it for errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling. Refer to the Language Handbook, pages R46–R60, as a guide.

Focus Lesson

Embedding Quotations in Text

In your essay, much of your direct evidence will be in the form of quotations embedded within your analysis. Remember to place quotation marks around only the quotation, excluding any introductory or explanatory remarks. In general separate such remarks from the actual quotation with a comma. When a quotation is interrupted by an explanatory remark, use two sets of quotation marks.

Problem: Direct evidence is not set off in quotation marks and is not set off with a comma from the introductory remarks.

The turning point when company comes from line 4 is repeated exactly in line 10, but to a different effect.

Solution: Place quotation marks around the quotation and set off with commas the introductory remark from the actual quotation.

The turning point, “When company comes,” from line 4 is repeated exactly in line 10 but to a different effect.

Problem: Quotation marks include material not in the quotation.

Hughes describes an ambiguous “they who send the speaker away when company comes,” segregating and hiding him from other people (lines 3, 4).

Solution: Place quotation marks around only quoted material, using two or more sets of quotation marks if necessary.

Hughes describes an ambiguous “they” who send the speaker away “when company comes,” segregating and hiding him from other people (lines 3, 4).

Presenting

The Final Touch After you finish editing and proofreading your analysis, and check that all quotations are cited correctly, focus on presentation. Make sure your analysis is typed in a legible font and type size, with reasonable margins and spacing. Give your analysis an interesting title that will make your essay stand out. Check with your teacher about any additional presentation guidelines.

Quoting Poetry

When you quote poetry, be sure to give the line numbers (rather than page numbers) in parentheses after each quotation. Use a slash (/) to indicate a line break. Example:

“Tomorrow, / I’ll be at the table” (lines 8–9)

Writer’s Portfolio

Place a clean copy of your literary analysis in your portfolio to review later.
Oral Interpretation of a Poem

**Connecting to Literature** What is “I, Too” by Langston Hughes about? One reader might say that it is about belonging; another might say that it is about rebelling. What image is strongest in Carl Sandburg’s poem about Chicago? Is it the dusty city, “laughing with white teeth,” or the faces of the women and children marked with “wanton hunger”? Think about these poems and others you have read and discussed in Unit 5. Have you noticed that there is no single “correct” way to interpret a particular poem? When you read a poem aloud and explain your understanding of it, you are presenting an oral interpretation of it.

**Assignment** Plan and deliver an oral interpretation of a poem.

**Planning Your Presentation**

To interpret a poem successfully, you should do the following:

- Understand the **literal** meaning. Read the poem several times to decide what the speaker is saying and why he or she is saying it. In other words, what is the meaning of the poem, and what action or image is being described?

- Understand the **implied** meaning. If the literal meaning is what the poet is saying, then the implied meaning is why the poet is saying it. How did you feel after reading the poem? Why might the poet want you to feel that way?

**Creating Your Visual Media**

Poetry is full of striking visual images, so it makes sense to include visual elements in your presentation. Possible visual aids include photographs of the poet or a painting or drawing representing the meaning of the poem. Use the chart below to help you brainstorm for other ideas about visual media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are some of the memorable images or ideas in the poem?</th>
<th>How can I find or create visual representations of those images or ideas?</th>
<th>What artifacts can I display to highlight those images or ideas?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Clarifying Meaning**

One of the best ways to check your understanding of the literal meaning of a poem is to paraphrase it—or rephrase it in your own words. You may paraphrase it line by line, stanza by stanza, or any other way that makes sense to you.

**Using Background Information**

You can draw information from a poet’s background into your interpretation. For example, many critics felt that T. S. Eliot’s poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” reflected Eliot’s sense of the growing alienation of modern industry. Elements such as economics, race, or politics can all influence a poet’s work.
Rehearsing

To perfect your oral interpretation, rehearse before you present it to your audience. Ask a friend to listen and to offer helpful feedback as you practice.

- Practice your oral interpretation often, experimenting with different tones, volumes, speeds, and other vocal devices.
- When you present your interpretation, first read the poem you have chosen to your audience. Plan ahead to decide where you will pause for breath during the reading. Pause at the end of a line only if a punctuation mark appears there or if it seems like a natural place to pause.
- Look for imagery and figurative language. Think about ways to communicate these images and figures of speech in your interpretation.
- Consider how the poet has used sound devices, such as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance, and consonance. Decide how you will emphasize these elements in your oral presentation.
- Read the poem to yourself several times, focusing on your own reactions to it. Think of ways to use your voice to communicate your reactions.

Rubric: Techniques for Delivering an Oral Interpretation of Poem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal Techniques</th>
<th>Nonverbal Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume</strong> Vary the volume of your voice as needed but speak loudly enough that everyone can hear you.</td>
<td><strong>Posture</strong> Stand up tall with your head straight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong> Speak clearly, enunciating all the words.</td>
<td><strong>Eye Contact</strong> Direct eye contact with members of the audience will convey that you are knowledgeable and confident in your interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pace</strong> Let the poem’s punctuation guide your pacing—pause for spaces and line breaks and stop briefly for periods.</td>
<td><strong>Facial Expressions</strong> Vary your facial expressions to reflect what you are saying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone</strong> To set a strong, fierce tone, speak loudly; speaking softly will create a quieter, softer tone.</td>
<td><strong>Gestures</strong> Use gestures to emphasize important ideas in the poem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emphasis</strong> Stress important words and ideas.</td>
<td><strong>Visual Aids</strong> Use photographs, drawings, or artifacts that express elements of the poem’s imagery and ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Listen to the Poet

If you have chosen a contemporary poet, visit the library to see if there are any recordings of the poet reading his or her work. This can guide you in your recitation and also make an interesting aid to your presentation.

Use a Mirror

Practice your gestures in front of a mirror until your body language looks natural.

Sound Check

Record your presentation and play it back to check on whether your voice expresses the right mood and your words are understandable.

OBJECTIVES

- Present and perform interpretations of poems.
- Speak effectively to explain and justify ideas to peers.
For Independent Reading

Many post–World War I writers saw the war as an indication of the failure of the old ways and thus tried to explore new subject matter, styles, and themes. A common literary subject at the start of the Modern Age was the lifestyle of rich and fashionable members of society. Edith Wharton, who was a member of that society, and F. Scott Fitzgerald, who was not, brought different outlooks to this topic. Ernest Hemingway had a different attitude toward society: he turned his back on it and created characters who are outcasts rather than members of high society. With the publication of their influential works, Wharton, Fitzgerald, and Hemingway helped to create the modern novel.

The Age of Innocence
by Edith Wharton (1920)

Through the story of a doomed love, Edith Wharton presents an illuminating study of New York society in the 1870s. She describes the suffocating effects of living in the insulated world of the very rich, where deviation from accepted conventions resulted in unhappiness, scandal, and ruination. In an ideal match, worldly and wealthy Newland Archer is engaged to young and beautiful May Welland, a member of the same elite social circle. However, the presence of May’s cousin, the exotic and aristocratic Ellen Olenska who is estranged from her husband, disrupts the couple’s perfect union. Swept away by Olenska, Archer becomes torn between the two women. Wharton was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for this story of Archer’s struggle between passion and society’s conventions.

The Great Gatsby
by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925)

Both the glamour and the dark side of the Roaring Twenties are reflected in Fitzgerald’s story of Jay Gatsby, a man who possesses mysterious wealth, throws lavish parties, and lives for his idealistic but doomed pursuits of a woman, Daisy Buchanan, and the American dream. Told from the point of view of Gatsby’s wide-eyed neighbor, Nick Carraway, the story captures the spirit of the Jazz Age, a period that Fitzgerald called “an age of miracles, . . . an age of art, . . . an age of excess.”
“No amount of analysis can convey the quality of ‘The Sun Also Rises.’ It is a truly gripping story, told in a lean, hard, athletic narrative prose that puts more literary English to shame. Mr. Hemingway knows how not only to make words be specific but how to arrange a collection of words which shall betray a great deal more than is to be found in the individual parts. It is magnificent writing, filled with that organic action which gives a compelling picture of character.”

—The New York Times, October 31, 1926

**The Sun Also Rises**

*By Ernest Hemingway (1926)*

World War I, though long over, casts a deep shadow over this story of young people physically and perhaps psychologically damaged by the war. Set in the cafés of Paris and the bullrings of Spain, Hemingway's novel paints in poignant detail the aimless lives of a group of disillusioned characters. The story focuses on narrator Jake Barnes, a wounded war veteran, and Lady Brett Ashley, the love of his life. Barnes's love for Lady Brett and resentment toward her fiancé, Mike Campbell, fuel this story of longing and loss.

**From the Glencoe Literature Library**

**Ethan Frome**

*By Edith Wharton*

A tragic love triangle between the title character, his ailing wife, and her young cousin.

**My Ántonia**

*By Willa Cather*

A young boy moves west from Virginia to the Nebraska plains and must adjust to life on the American frontier.

**All Quiet on the Western Front**

*By Erich Maria Remarque*

A German soldier experiences the horrors of battle during World War I and later struggles to adjust upon his return home.
When Bill was very young, they had been in love. Many nights they had spent walking, talking together. Then something not very important had come between them, and they didn’t speak. Impulsively, she had married a man she thought she loved. Bill went away, bitter about women.

Yesterday, walking across Washington Square, she saw him for the first time in years.

“Bill Walker,” she said.

He stopped. At first he did not recognize her, to him she looked so old.

“Mary! Where did you come from?”

Unconsciously, she lifted her face as though wanting a kiss, but he held out his hand. She took it.

“I live in New York now,” she said.

“Oh”—smiling politely. Then a little frown came quickly between his eyes.

“Always wondered what happened to you, Bill.”

“I’m a lawyer. Nice firm, way downtown.”

“Married yet?”

“Sure. Two kids.”

“Oh,” she said.

A great many people went past them through the park. People they didn’t know. It was late afternoon. Nearly sunset. Cold.

“And your husband?” he asked her.

“We have three children. I work in the bursar’s office at Columbia.”
“You’re looking very . . .” (he wanted to say old) “. . . well,” he said.

She understood. Under the trees in Washington Square, she found herself desperately reaching back into the past. She had been older than he then in Ohio. Now she was not young at all. Bill was still young.

“We live on Central Park West,” she said.

“Come and see us sometime.”

“Sure,” he replied. “You and your husband must have dinner with my family some night. Any night. Lucille and I’d love to have you.”

The leaves fell slowly from the trees in the Square. Fell without wind. Autumn dusk. She felt a little sick.

“We’d love it,” she answered.

“You ought to see my kids.” He grinned.

Suddenly the lights came on up the whole length of Fifth Avenue, chains of misty brilliance in the blue air.

“There’s my bus,” she said.

He held out his hand, “Good-bye.”

“When . . .” she wanted to say, but the bus was ready to pull off. The lights on the avenue blurred, twinkled, blurred. And she was afraid to open her mouth as she entered the bus. Afraid it would be impossible to utter a word.

Suddenly she shrieked very loudly, “Good-bye!” But the bus door had closed.

The bus started. People came between them outside, people crossing the street, people they didn’t know. Space and people. She lost sight of Bill. Then she remembered she had forgotten to give him her address—or to ask him for his—or tell him that her youngest boy was named Bill, too.
1. What caused Bill and Mary to end their relationship?
   A. She impulsively married another man.
   B. They stopped speaking.
   C. They both moved to New York.
   D. Something came between them.

2. Why do you think Mary unconsciously lifts her face as though wanting a kiss?
   A. She is still in love with Bill.
   B. She is unhappy to see Bill in New York.
   C. She has momentarily forgotten the past.
   D. She hopes to make Bill less bitter.

3. Of what is the title of the story most symbolic?
   A. changing weather in New York
   B. the changing of a relationship
   C. the ages of Bill and Mary
   D. the time of the meeting

4. To what element of the story does the paragraph beginning in line 24 contribute?
   A. characters
   B. setting
   C. plot
   D. conflict

5. What does Mary “understand” in line 32?
   A. that Bill has a better life than hers
   B. that Bill has noticed her age
   C. that Bill is wealthy
   D. that Bill is unhappy

6. Where did Mary and Bill first meet?
   A. in Ohio
   B. in Washington Square
   C. in New York City
   D. in Central Park

7. What literary element is most evident in the sentence beginning in line 47?
   A. allusion
   B. imagery
   C. metaphor
   D. simile

8. In the context, what does the word brilliance in line 48 mean?
   A. intelligence
   B. sharpness
   C. preciousness
   D. brightness

9. Why do you think Mary is “afraid it would be impossible to utter a word”?
   A. Because Bill is bitter toward women, she is afraid of upsetting him.
   B. She is aware that Bill sees her as old.
   C. She senses that they can no longer really communicate.
   D. She thinks that Bill will ignore anything she might say.

10. In the paragraph beginning in line 57, which is an example of connotative language?
    A. very
    B. closed
    C. shrieked
    D. good-bye

11. Of what are the “space and people” in line 61 most symbolic?
    A. the emotional distance between Bill and Mary
    B. Bill’s and Mary’s children and spouses
    C. Bill and Mary’s youthful relationship
    D. the movement of the bus as it pulls away

12. In this passage, how does Hughes reveal the personality of Mary?
    A. metaphor
    B. symbolism
    C. direct characterization
    D. indirect characterization

13. From what point of view is this passage written?
    A. first person
    B. second person
    C. third-person omniscient
    D. third-person limited

14. What is the overall tone of this passage?
    A. serious
    B. humorous
    C. mischievous
    D. furious

15. Short Response In a short paragraph, describe the theme of this story. Support your answer with details from the story.
Vocabulary Skills: Sentence Completion

For each item in the Vocabulary Skills section, choose the best word or words to complete the sentence. Write your answers on a sheet of paper.

1. Ezra Pound _____ believed in the creation of a new, modern poetry built on the literature of the past.
   A. whimsically
   B. stoically
   C. vehemently
   D. tactfully

2. Much of the U.S. public was _____ to the conflict in Europe until the United States entered the war.
   A. indifferent
   B. ingenious
   C. withered
   D. dutiful

3. Many critics were unimpressed by the bold declarations and the _____ of some of the Modernist writers.
   A. piety
   B. dissembling
   C. brazenness
   D. snickers

4. The writers of the Harlem Renaissance refused to _____ themselves to second-class citizenship.
   A. jostle
   B. resign
   C. jilt
   D. exalt

5. In their writing, Imagists often tried to transform elements from the _____, everyday world into something remarkable.
   A. ominous
   B. mundane
   C. withered
   D. ingenious

6. With the spread of jazz came a great deal of _____ and disapproval among older people, who felt it was corrupting the youth.
   A. vanity
   B. piety
   C. patronage
   D. perturbation

7. The Jazz Age gradually eased, rather than _____, to a close as the Second World War approached.
   A. lurched
   B. exalted
   C. jilted
   D. jostled

8. There was a _____ on the face of many people in the United States the day the stock market crashed.
   A. millennium
   B. snicker
   C. contrivance
   D. grimace

9. Many African Americans felt _____ and alienated from the mainstream culture in the United States.
   A. withered
   B. tactful
   C. dutiful
   D. detached

10. Many were shocked by E. E. Cummings's unusual and often _____ use of punctuation, grammar, and syntax.
    A. ominous
    B. withered
    C. ingenious
    D. tactful
(1) The opening line immediately signals the reader that this poem will disclose something important. (2) That something—later revealed to be the wheelbarrow, the white chickens, and rainwater—is supporting “so much.” (3) The line stands out too, because it was the only line not dedicated to imagery. (4) Also, by never identifying what actually “depends,” Williams creates a host of possible interpretations for his poem. (5) Williams dedicates the next three stanzas almost entirely to the eye. (6) Each adds a detail to the poem’s imagery, each drops another puzzle piece into place. (7) The wheelbarrow is presented first. (8) Williams described it outright, without embellishment. (9) However, he unexpectedly breaks the word wheelbarrow between two lines. (10) By breaking this compound noun into its composite parts, the poet draws the reader’s attention to the word itself, more than to the word’s meaning. (11) The wheelbarrow is simultaneously an actual physical thing and the words that are used to describe it. (12) The next stanza, “which tells us that the wheelbarrow is glazed with rain/water,” similarly breaks the word rainwater between lines. (13) This, even more than the last, creates a situation in which things, and the language used to describe those things, become confused. (14) Williams is aided by the closeness in meaning of the words rain and water. (15) One is a component of the other, rain itself can never really be separated from the water that makes it up. (16) William Carlos Williams’s “The Red Wheelbarrow” is a deceptively simple poem. (17) Deceptively simple in that, although it is succinct and its imagery plain and concrete, it expresses complex ideas. (18) Williams has written a very simple poem. (19) In eight lines Williams created a poem that shines a light on the underlying notions of language, literature, and representation.

1. Which of the following is the best revision of sentence 2?
   A. That something—later revealed to be the “wheelbarrow, the white chickens and rainwater”—is supporting “so much.”
   B. That something—later revealed to be the wheelbarrow the white chickens and rainwater—is supporting “so much.”
   C. That something—later revealed to be the wheelbarrow, the white chickens, and rainwater—is supporting “so much.”
   D. That something later revealed to be the wheelbarrow the white chickens and rainwater is supporting “so much.”

2. Which of the following is the best revision of sentence 3?
   A. The line stands out too, because it was not dedicated to imagery.
   B. The line stands out too, because it is the only line not dedicated to imagery.
   C. These lines were the only lines not dedicated to the creation of the poem’s central image.
   D. This was the only line without imagery.

3. Which of the following errors appears in sentence 6?
   A. run-on sentence
   B. incorrect parallelism
   C. sentence fragment
   D. incorrect verb tense
4. Which of the following is the best revision of sentence 8?
   A. Williams describes it outright, without embellishment.
   B. Outright, Williams described it, without embellishment.
   C. Williams, describing it outright, without embellishment.
   D. Williams is without embellishment.

5. Which of the following is the best revision of sentence 12?
   A. The next stanza, which tells us that the wheelbarrow is glazed with rain / water, similarly breaks the word rainwater between lines.
   B. The next stanza, “which tells us that the wheelbarrow is glazed with rain / water,” similarly breaks the word rainwater across lines.
   C. The next stanza, which tells us that the wheelbarrow is glazed with rain / water, similarly breaks the word rainwater between lines.
   D. The next stanza, which tells us that the wheelbarrow is “glazed with rain / water,” similarly breaks up the word rainwater between lines.

6. Which of the following errors appears in sentence 17?
   A. run-on sentence
   B. incorrect parallelism
   C. sentence fragment
   D. incorrect verb tense

7. What information would best fit in a new paragraph inserted between the third and fourth paragraphs?
   A. biographical information about William Carlos Williams
   B. a discussion of the poem’s final stanza
   C. a discussion of other poems by Williams
   D. more background information concerning the writing of the poem

8. Which of the following sentences adds the least to the last paragraph?
   A. 16  C. 18
   B. 17  D. 19

9. Which of the following is the best revision of sentence 19?
   A. Williams created a poem that shines a light on the underlying notions of language literature and representation.
   B. In eight lines Williams created a poem that shines a light on the underlying notions of language, and literature, and representation.
   C. Williams shines a light on the underlying notions of literature.
   D. In eight lines, Williams created a poem that shines a light on the underlying notions of language, literature, and representation.

10. What is most noticeably missing from this essay?
    A. a concluding paragraph
    B. an opening paragraph
    C. evidence
    D. a visual aid

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**Essay: Writing Situation**

**Directions for Writing**

Imagine discussing with a Modernist writer the use of traditional forms in poetry. Think about how traditional forms, such as rhyme and meter, or the absence of these forms, function in a poem and their effect.

Now write an essay in which you argue for or against the use of these forms in modern poetry.

**REMEMBER TO:**

- write about the assigned topic
- make your writing thoughtful and interesting
- make sure that each sentence you write contributes to your composition as a whole
- make sure that your ideas are clear and easy for the reader to follow
- write about your ideas in depth so that the reader is able to develop a good understanding of what you are saying
- proofread your writing to correct errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure