

Title: Harlem Renaissance Poetry: Origin, Ideas, & Legacy

Grade Level: 8

Subject(s): English Language Arts

Keywords: Harlem Renaissance, Central Idea

Lesson Plan:	Harlem Renaissance Poetry: Origin, Ideas, & Legacy
Subject:	English Language Arts
Grade:	8
Description/ Abstract of Lesson	Students will explore the poetry of the Harlem Renaissance: its origin, ideas, and legacy through writing and discussion.
LAFS.8.RL.1	Key Ideas and Details
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LAFS.8.W.4	Range of Writing
LAFS.8.SL.1	Comprehension and Collaboration
Objective(s):	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● analyze and interpret poetry from the Harlem Renaissance.● identify central ideas in poetry from the Harlem Renaissance.
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● A New African American Identity: The Harlem Renaissance - National Museum of African American History and Culture● Overview video: Harlem Renaissance● Harlem in the 1920s, African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross● Laptops● Banner paper● Markers● Venn Diagram
Duration:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 1-2 class periods● Block Scheduling (90 min.) 1 class period
Lesson Lead In/ Opening:	<p>Note: This lesson could be implemented in a unit on poetry or a unit about identity. Students should have some knowledge of reading and interpreting poetry before this lesson. English Language Arts and American History teachers may collaborate on an interdisciplinary unit to incorporate the Harlem Renaissance so that students have deeper historical context for their literature study.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Talk with students about the Harlem Renaissance in the United States during the 1920s and into the 1930s with an abundance of African American literature, music, and art.2. Show students the Overview video: Harlem Renaissance and Harlem in the 1920s, African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross. In discussion, ask students to name three things they learned from each video. List them on the board. Tell students that you will explore one aspect of Harlem Renaissance: the poetry - its origin, ideas, and legacy.
Activity 1:	<p>Warm-Up: In pairs, students read the articles A New African American Identity: The Harlem Renaissance - National Museum of African American History and Culture and An Introduction to the Harlem Renaissance & Poetry.</p> <p>After reading each article, student pairs create a common one-page summary: pictures with commentary, poetry, and/or prose. Next, students share and discuss their products with another partnership. The small group identifies the five most</p>

	important things they learned about the Harlem Renaissance and how it impacted poetry by African Americans. Debrief as a class.
Activity 2:	Review How to Read a Poem Out Loud - Poetry 180: A Poem a Day for American High Schools, hosted by Poet Laureate . Read and discuss Introduction to Poetry by Billy Collins with students. Remind students to read poetry like prose, to read for the sentences, emphasizing that the sentence is the smallest unit of meaning in a poem.
Activity 3:	Choose middle school appropriate, representative poems from the time periods represented in An Introduction to the Harlem Renaissance & Poetry : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1914-1919 ● 1920-1924 ● 1925-1929 ● 1930-1940. Assign a poem to each student partnership, providing hard copies of the poems. Student partnerships read and discuss their assigned poems; write a paragraph summary of the poem; and write down the central idea of the poem.
Activity 4:	Student pairs assigned poems from the same time period work in groups of four to have poetry sessions where they share their poems, summaries, and central ideas. They compare and contrast their findings on one Venn Diagram. With a piece of banner paper assigned per time period, students create a display of Venn Diagrams.
Activity 5:	Groups from each time period choose two spokespersons to share their findings with the class. Students complete a ticket out: Write one sentence to summarize your learning about poetry from each time period before, during, and after the Harlem Renaissance.
Activity 6:	Extended learning opportunities for students include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study the visual arts and music of the Harlem Renaissance. ● Research writers, artists, and musicians from the Harlem Renaissance. ● Research the impact of the Harlem Renaissance on African American identity. ● Students compare and contrast the poems of African American writers before, during, and after the Harlem Renaissance.
Higher Order Thinking Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do poets use imagery to convey central ideas? ● How do poets use narrative structure to communicate with their readers? ● What are the characteristics of African American poetry 1919-1940? ● What central ideas about African American culture trend across time periods in poetry before, during, and after the Harlem Renaissance?
Suggested Reading:	Harlem Renaissance Poets for Your Reading List
Web Resources	An Introduction to the Harlem Renaissance & Poetry The Harlem Renaissance [ushistory.org] Music of the Harlem Renaissance NEH-Edsitement Harlem Renaissance music playlist Harlem Renaissance - Definition, Artists & How It Started - HISTORY Harlem Renaissance - Visual Arts