



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1989 Volume II: Poetry

Introduction

This seminar was meant to be pretty much a repeat of the seminar on Poetry I led in 1985, but thanks to the interests of its members it actually developed quite in its own way, or ways. We spent a lot of time discussing poems we ourselves had written, poems by classic authors such as Dante and Yeats as well as the standard American authors, and poems by Afro-American authors, of whom Langston Hughes emerged as a particular favorite. There is hardly a unit that doesn't include some of his work, and several (by Pat Casey, Vickie Mallison, Jean Sutherland, and Barbara Trader) concentrate especially on Afro-American poetry. I think all of us reached a new level of commitment to poetry by writing a poem, discussing it, revising it. It turned us on in a powerful way, and sensitized us newly to poems by others. It leaves me with the strong feeling that any teacher who offers instruction in poetry *must* insist that students write their own.

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