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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1987 Volume III: Writing About American Culture

Portraits: The Black Experience in American Culture

Guide for Curriculum Unit 87.03.03
by Doreen S. Peterson

The purpose of this unit is to expose middle school special education students to Black writers who have written of the Black experience in American culture, both fiction and non-fiction. The Black writers will include novelists, Lorraine Hansberry, Richard Wright, Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, Nikki Giovanni, Nella Larson, and Gwendolyn Brooks. Students will view specific works which examine the Black struggle to survive in our American culture as well as the search for self-identity. In addition, students will have the opportunity to examine various forms of writing, specifically play, narration and poetry.

(Recommended for English classes, grades 7-10)

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