



Understanding and Appreciating Poetry: Afro-Americans and Their Poetry

Guide for Curriculum Unit 87.03.04
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This unit, “Understanding and Appreciating Poetry: Afro-Americans and Their Poetry” is designed primarily for sixth grade, inner-city students who are studying poetry for the first time. The unit serves two primary goals: introducing poetry to the students by introducing the basic fundamental elements and forms of poetry in general and introducing Afro-American poetry to the students by presenting particular selections from the works of Paul Laurence Dunbar, Countee Cullen, Arna Bontemps, Langston Hughes and Gwendolyn Brooks in a bibliographical and historical context.

In the introduction to poetry, the students will learn poetic vocabulary that relates to the basic elements and forms of poetry, participate in listening activities that relate music to poetry, practice reading and recording poetry on tape.

In the study of selected Afro-American poetry, the students will learn the vocabulary of the chosen poems, examine the biographies of the poets, listen to readings of the selections, participate in discussions, answer questions that relate to the understanding of the themes, concepts, forms and elements of the poems, and finally participate in varied creative writing activities in response to the poetry selections.

(Recommended for Language Arts (Reading/English) classes, grade 6)

Key Words

Ethnicity Poetry Afro-American Literature Novels American History Family Life Hughes Langston

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