



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
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The African-American Experience in the 20th Century through the Art and Life of Jacob Lawrence and the Novels of Bruce Brooks and Lorene Cary

Curriculum Unit 92.04.04
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I teach developmental reading, grades 5 to 8, at Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School. It is a special school in that it offers classes in dance, drama, band, music, photography, and visual arts. My students are selected partially by teacher recommendation, but primarily by EERA guidelines. That is the students have scored 1 to 2 years below grade level in reading or math on either the Connecticut Mastery Test or the Metropolitan Test. These standardized tests are not perhaps the best indicators of reading ability; however, they are readily available and are, in fact, what is used to group students according to federal guidelines for Chapter One and EERA programs. Parents may of course request that their child be in the reading class, and the language teachers may recommend that a student be removed from the foreign language program and placed by default into reading. So there is a degree of flexibility as to who ends up in the reading classes.

Fifth and sixth grade students often graduate out of the reading program. It becomes more difficult to schedule seventh and eighth grade students out of reading and into a foreign language class. As a result, the seventh and eighth grade classes contain students who read on or above grade level as well as those who read below it. These students can be and frequently are discipline problems. They are capable of working independently, but do not always choose to do so. Their interests are adult.

The racial mix of the entire school and of my classes is approximately a third African-American, a third Latino and a third white. This year one of my eighth grade classes has a Cambodian for whom English is a second language. I mention this ethnic diversity because I try to vary the trade books we read throughout the year so that every ethnic group gets to identify closely with the main character at some point in the curriculum. It is easy to find books with white main characters both male and female. I use Betsy Byars' *House of Wings* and *Summer of the Swans*. African-American writers such as Walter Dean Meyers and Virginia Hamilton have made adolescent literature with African-American characters available. I use *Hoops*, *Won't Know Til I Get There*, and *Miss Zeely*. I also like to use Armstrong Perry's novel, *Call it Courage*, which is set in Polynesia and has a Polynesian main character. Every student then has to stretch to imagine himself or herself in Mafatu's place. Recently the HBJ basal series Discoveries in Reading has become the required text in the middle school reading program. It's stories are at the students' interest level. The illustrations make it very clear that the characters are multiethnic and evenly divided between male and female.

These trade books and basals are fine, but if I have had a student since fifth grade, by the time he or she

reaches the eighth grade he or she has read these books. The student is impatient with adolescent literature and adolescent themes. I perceive a need to develop a curriculum using ethnically diverse material which is set in the United States and which deals with adult issues. My goal is to use art, film and literature to present a broad overview of the African-American experience in the twentieth century. By incorporating the art of Jacob Lawrence and “The Eyes on the Prize” video to introduce the novels *The Moves Make the Man* by Bruce Brooks and *Black Ice* by Lorene Cary, I believe that the African-American students will be motivated to succeed academically. I want my students to see themselves as part of a movement. In many cases their families were a part of the Northern Migration which started after the Civil War and continued into the twentieth century. These families came north to find better paying jobs and to put their children in better schools. Also my students are the heirs of the Civil Rights Movement. They, at least, attend a fully integrated school. Lawrence’s art and life lay out the historical background. The video shows the sheer numbers of African-Americans engaged in a successful mass movement to change the law so as to integrate the public schools. The two novels present the picture of what it is to be one of the first in a new situation—African-American students in white schools. I hope that it will be motivating for the African-American students to see themselves as part of larger, ongoing events.

The question this unit raises is where do the African-American, the Latino and the white students take race relations in the United States from this point?

The first goal of this unit is that African-American students identify with their modern heritage and see themselves as part of an on-going progressive movement which is changing American society for the better.

The second goal of this unit is Latino and white students are sensitized to the position of African-Americans in American society.

The third goal is all students will evaluate their future behavior in terms of the modern history of race relations in the United States, that when given a choice they will act fairly and without prejudice.

The educational objectives to achieve these goals are as follows:

The students will listen to and take notes on an illustrated lecture on the life and art of Jacob Lawrence. If possible an artist from the community will give this lecture and speak on his or her personal experiences as an African-American artist.

The students will choose a picture by Lawrence and write at least three paragraphs on it.

The students will view the video “Eyes on the Prize, Fighting Back” and discuss the issue of desegregation.

The students will read one of two novels *The Moves Make The Man* or *Black Ice*.

The students will complete the questions in the study guide for either *The Moves Make the Man* or *Black Ice* .

The students will complete one of the following long term projects:

1. Write a research paper 3-5 pages long on the Civil Rights Movement particularly pertaining to the desegregation of schools.

- Debate in teams. Fill out at least 10 note cards on being a token. Resolved that the experience of being a token separates the individual from his or her race thus creating a
2. person who does not fit in American society. Or resolved that doing what few members of one's race, sex or family have never done before—is a positive, broadening experience for oneself as well as for one's race, sex or family.
 3. Write a report at least 3-5 pages long on a basketball player and execute 5 of the basketball shots described in *The Moves Make the Man*.
 4. Write a letter to the Ritz cracker company asking for the recipe for mock apple pie. Bake and bring into class a mock apple pie that the class can eat.
Write a letter to either Bruce Brooks or Lorene Cary. Tell them just what their novel meant to you. Send this letter in care of the book's publisher and enclose a self stamped addressed envelop in case the author wishes to reply.
 5. In the style of Jacob Lawrence paint a picture of a scene from *Black Ice* or *The Moves Make the Man* . Be prepared to give a talk at least 5 minutes long on your picture.

There are several reasons for beginning the unit with a study of the art and life of Jacob Lawrence. Though a modern artist, his art is figurative and thus easily accessible to novice connoisseurs. Also Jacobs himself is a role model. Lawrence's mother brought her family north to Harlem in 1927 when Lawrence was about ten. At that time Harlem was the center of African-American life. He grew up influenced by the ideals of the Harlem Renaissance: W.E.B. Dubois' call for African-American professionals, Alain Locke's appreciation of African heritage in the arts, and the rise of African-American political organizations: the NAACP, the Urban League and Marcus Garvey's UNIA. Lawrence even attended Adam Clayton Powell, Sr.'s Abyssinian Baptist Church.

However, by the time Lawrence was a teenager, the Harlem Renaissance had given way to the Great Depression. Lawrence, a young man with artistic talent, was able to make his way. He took inexpensive art class at the Harlem Art Workshop, a WPA project that employed artists to teach. There he met Charles Alston whose studio was a center for Harlem artists and intellectuals. He met Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes and Ralph Ellison to name a few. Lawrence held several part time jobs and even worked for the Civil Conservation Corp until at twenty-one he got a job on the WPA Federal Arts Project where he was paid to paint pictures. Even at this early age his work was being shown and sold at art exhibitions.

Lawrence's early work took its subject matter from the streets of Harlem and from African-American history. The paintings use water-based primary colors. The figures are flattened and look primitive though the compositions themselves are a sophisticated combination of color, geometric shape and line. Each picture tells a story often with humor.

It is easy to see Lawrence's stories in his pictures. "Street Orator," 1936 has the word "BLIND" spelled out in the middle of it. In "Street Scene—Restaurant," 1934-5 the women are obviously selling more than food. In "The Funeral," 1938 a well dressed relatives are walking out of a house with jewelry, furniture and a guitar even before the deceased is removed from the church.

Lawrence expanded his story telling in his series of paintings on Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman and General Toussaint of Haiti. In so doing he was carrying on the ideas of the Harlem Renaissance by drawing on his African-American heritage. These paintings are accompanied by written commentary which reinforces the story.

By the forties Lawrence was awarded Rosenwald Foundation Fellowships which allowed him to continue to

support himself as an artist. In 1941 he married Gwendolyn Knight who was a talented artist. World War II affected Lawrence's life as it did so many others. He was drafted into the Navy. He worked on public relations as the ship's artist. His art reflected the grim reality of the war's wounded on naval transport ships. After the war he taught art at Black Mountain College in North Carolina.

During the forties Lawrence completed the Migration series, a work of sixty panels on the movement of African-Americans from the South to the North. His reputation grew steadily, and Edith Halpert sold his works in her gallery. At this point in his career he was becoming a black artist among white artists, yet his strength lay in his African-American themes. His next series was on John Brown, and he continued to do scenes from Harlem street life such as: "Tombstones," 1942, "Woman with Grocery Bags," 1943, and "Barber Shop," 1946. His series of war pictures met with critical success.

Lawrence's life, however, was not without personal suffering. He had a nervous breakdown in 1949 and was hospitalized. His painting was an important part of his therapy, and the "Hospital" series is the result. When he left the sanitarium, he painted a group of street scenes titled "Slums," and a more decorative series on the theater.

His next major work which he started in 1955 and completed in 1956, was the "Struggle" series. It depicted American history from the Revolutionary War to the westward expansion. Lawrence explained his motivation. "Years ago, I was just interested in expressing the Negro in American life, but a larger concern, an expression of humanity and of America, developed. My history series grew out of that concern."

Despite the popularity of abstract art, Lawrence continued to paint with figures. He wanted his art to contain "humanity." When he and his wife Gwen visited Africa, he painted crowd scenes of the open air markets.

Back in the United States, his art reflected the suffering and violence of the Civil Rights Movement. "The Ordeal of Alice," 1963 shows an African-American school girl surrounded by grotesque figures of hate. Obviously, she is one of the first to integrate a public school. "Confrontation at the Bridge," 1975 shows a moment during a Civil Rights march led by Martin Luther King. Lawrence is telling modern stories with these pictures and he is using symbols as well as figures.

Toward the end of the sixties the Lawrences left New York City; eventually, he became a full professor at the University of Washington where he continues to live. He illustrated several books, *Harriet and the Promised Land*, and *Aesop's Fables*. He even did a portrait of Jesse Jackson for the cover of Time Magazine. Not surprisingly some of his work at this time reflects the university setting. "University" 1977 shows people of all colors carrying books, listening to lectures, and taking notes. "Library," 1978 has the same sort of energy. Sorting the books and choosing the right book is shown as a job that requires muscle and concentration.

My favorite picture from this period is the self portrait "The Studio," 1977. Lawrence shows himself climbing a stair into a bright and airy room. He is smiling and in total control. He holds his brushes in one hand and balances a compass in the other. He is the master of his tools and on the walls and floor are his creations. Through the window is a colorful city scene much like the streets of Harlem, his source of inspiration. In both his life and this picture Lawrence has climbed to a secure and happy place.

In the later part of Lawrence's life, he continued to exhibit his paintings, garner awards and accept honorary degrees. His two major series were "Builders," 1980 and "Hiroshima Series," 1983. The WPA influence seems very strong in "Builders." In these pictures men of many races are working together purposefully. In contrast the "Hiroshima" pictures have figures with white skulls bloodied with red foreheads. The figure in "Man with

Birds” seems to represent Death itself as it rips apart the thread of life.

Jacob Lawrence’s art is so appropriate for the classroom because it can be didactic. His work carries on that earnest message of the Harlem Renaissance to know your heritage and build on it to help yourself and your people. Lawrence saw his heritage as being not only the histories of Frederick Douglas and Harriet Tubman but also the life of the streets of Harlem and the markets of Nigeria. His life as well as his art were affected by the struggle of the northern migration, and the Civil Rights Movement. His pictures tell these stories so forcefully that even a person who is not African-American “gets it.”

Lawrence used his prominent position to reach and teach a wide audience. His “War Series” speaks to Americans of all ethnic groups with its unsparing depiction of the wounded from WW II. So too, his “Hiroshima Series” reaches a global audience as a testament against atomic warfare. And he shows young people the way. In “Builders” it’s by working together. In the “University Series” it’s by getting an education.

And finally, a study of Lawrence’s life is particularly apt for students from an arts magnet school. They like Lawrence have artistic talent. Lawrence used his talent to make a better life for himself. On a practical note he worked hard, but he also had help from his friends, fellow artists in the Harlem community. Charles Alston gave him studio space, and Augusta Savage got him a job with the WPA. He went from supporting himself with federal funds to earning private grants from the Rosenwald Foundation and the Yaddo Colony. Gallery owners Edith Halpert and Charles Alan sold his works. He entered competitions, won awards, and he taught at the university level. Lawrence’s life itself is an example of a career path for an aspiring artist.

The video “Eyes on the Prize,” in particular the episodes “Fighting Back” that show the marches to desegregate public schools, brings the Civil Rights Movement theme that Lawrence illustrated home to students of the nineties. They sit in an integrated magnet school in a city where most of the students are African-American and Latino, a city that is surrounded by suburbs in which the students are mostly white.

This introduction using both art and film should prepare the students to read *The Moves Make the Man* by Bruce Brooks or *Black Ice* by Lorene Cary. These novels begin after the Supreme Court mandated that schools be desegregated. In both novels the main character is a trailblazer. Both enter high schools that had been all white. Both make discoveries about white people and about themselves as they make a place for themselves in American society.

In *The Moves Make the Man* Jayfox does not want to be the only African-American in an all white school. He introduces himself as a trickster, a subtle allusion to African folk tales. His game is basketball, the sport absolutely dominated by African-Americans. Jayfox knows all the moves and is working to perfect his fake. Going to the white school is bringing his game to a different court.

Jayfox first sees the white kid Bix at a Little League game. The game draws the picture of race relations in the town. The Little Leagues are segregated, but once during the season an African-American team plays a white team. It’s a token game which is sponsored by the local Seven Up Company. Jayfox dislikes baseball because it is straight forward and to his mind boring. However, Bix is an exceptional shortstop and Jayfox admires his play in spite of himself. So that when Bix leaves without even bothering to pretend to socialize after the game, Jayfox is angry at his white indifference.

That summer, Jayfox plays basketball with himself in an isolated court in the woods. For a while he pits himself against an imaginary player until he realizes that he’s playing against Bix in his mind and stops it. This incident foreshadows the plot of the entire novel. Jayfox can only be himself when he stops trying to get inside

Bix's head.

At Chestnut Junior High School he encounters racism. Turk wanted to fight; Jayfox fought and won. The guidance counselor tried to steer him into communications when Jayfox wanted French; Jayfox took French. And the basketball coach didn't want an African-American on the team; Jayfox put on a dazzling display of shooting so that the members of the team wanted him on the team. But the coach was a bigot and as the captain of the basketball team observed, they lost the player who could take them to the state championship.

At home, however, Jayfox's mother gets injured in an elevator accident. She has to stay in the hospital and her three sons are left to run the house themselves. They pull together and Jayfox adds home economics to his class schedule so that he can cook meals for his brothers. It's in home ec. that he and Bix become friends. They unite in a protest over the classes that teach apron folding, and Mock Apple Pie baking using Ritz crackers. Jayfox protest because he really needs to learn how to cook some meals, and Bix backs him up because Mock Apple Pie is a lie.

When Jayfox's mother comes home from the hospital, he gets to play basketball again. One evening a train stops and he plays against Bobo for stakes: his basketball against the conductor's lantern. Jayfox wins, and the lantern enables him to play at night. The lantern becomes a symbol in this novel. It's literally a light in the darkness. Metaphorically, it stands for the light of reason amid the darkness of insanity.

Jayfox uses his reason to make his way in school, at home, and on the court, but he doesn't expect his world to be reasonable or fair. He can fake; he has humor, and he knows the moves. Bix, on the other hand, refuses to fake. He demands "no lies" from the Home Ec. teacher, his stepfather, and Jayfox. Bix can not cope in the world as it is.

So when Jayfox agrees to teach Bix basketball the two get along fine until Jayfox tries to teach Bix to fake. Bix refuses. He won't lie. They quarrel and stop playing until Bix apologizes. He tells Jayfox about his mother who is in a mental hospital undergoing shock therapy. His stepfather won't let him see her, unless Bix can beat him in a game of basketball. It's a game Bix will lose unless he can fake.

Both the stepfather and Bix play hard. In the middle of the game the story comes out explaining why Bix's mother was committed to a mental institution. She was having a nervous breakdown. When she woke Bix up in the middle of the night, she was naked and holding a knife. She asked him if he loved her and Bix said no. The mother then slit her wrists. The stepfather was furious with Bix because he wouldn't tell his mother a white lie to ease her insecurity. Bix is disgusted with his stepfather because he blames his mother's breakdown on her second marriage.

They continue to play; Bix fakes and wins. But it's at a personal cost. Jayfox commented "Once he started making that first move, it was like the moves themselves took over and started making him." Bix is invited over to Jayfox's house for dinner and he brings a Mock Apple Pie. Bix and his mother are not fooled, but are saddened. On the way to the institution Bix insists that they stop at a redneck diner. The stepfather knows better than to bring Jayfox into such a place, but Bix throws a tantrum. Jayfox copes very well with the racist scene that follows, but Bix is deeply upset to find out once again that the world is less than ideal. The institution is a world even more out of kilter, and the people in it are crazier than the racists. Bix uses his basketball fakes to get himself through the scene with his mother, and then he runs away.

From his experiences with Bix Jayfox concludes, "If you are faking—somebody is taking.... There are no moves you truly make alone." The goals of this unit are imperfectly reflected in this book because Jayfox tries to

understand Bix who is not only white but also crazy. However, in this novel Jayfox deals with racism with aplomb. He doesn't lose his control. Some encounters he even wins. He will get the best education Chestnut High has to offer, and he will play his game on the court and in life.

Like *The Moves Make the Man*, Lorene Cary's book *Black Ice* is written in the first person. However, it is also an autobiography, and she states up front the African-American community's expectations for her to succeed in an elite prep school. "Hadn't I been told, hadn't they said all along, that each of us had work to do? Wasn't it time for me to play my part in that mammoth enterprise—the integration, the moral transformation, no less of America?"

Black Ice is a book of characters and ideas. The author develops her ideas as she shares her experiences with the people she meets and the reader. One of the first friends she makes at St. Paul's is Fumiko. Fumiko is an aggressive basketball player and Cary is embarrassed when she realizes that she'd seen Fumiko as a "geisha girl" instead of an athlete just because she's Japanese. She's regarded Fumiko as she had always assumed white people regarded her. With India Bridgeman she makes her first white friend. Instead of denying that African-Americans are any different, India begins to understand what Cary is up against, and the two become fast friends.

Her relations with boyfriends also leads to some self knowledge. Ricky Lockhart an African-American who attends another prep school date rapes her. She is furious with herself and begins to hate him. The incident reinforces a lesson she learned from her family folk lore. Her grandfather would tell his girls to jump off a step, that he would catch them. They jump, and he lets them fall. So that all of his girls learn to "trust no man." With difficulty by the end of the book Cary rejects this bit of advice. She has her daughter jump when her legs are strong enough so that she can land on her own two feet and jump higher the next time.

Cary faces more than one experience that could impede her progress. During final exams she's invited to smoke pot. On her summer job a kitchen worker harasses her. Her date with a working class cook is a total misadventure. Back at school a new boyfriend hopes that she won't be as politically involved in college as she is at St. Paul's so that she'll have more time for him. Cary recognizes his remark as an attempt to hold her back.

Even though there are other African-American students at St Paul's, Cary initially has trouble feeling that she belongs. She sees herself as being isolated from whites and also from other African-Americans. But she keeps her contacts with her old girlfriends Karen and Ruthie who come to her graduation. In her second year she befriends a black Spanish teacher who cooks greens and is respected. Miss Clinton is an African-American who is succeeding in a white world on her own terms. As an adult looking back Cary resolves this problem. She says of herself, "I'm a crossover artist, you know, like those jazz musicians who do pop albums too."

It's fascinating to read about the people who influence Cary. At tea with Archibald Cox, Cary, as a precocious teenager, reminds Cox that the African-American community did not put Nixon into the White House. Cox asks her if she knows "who Nixon hates worst of all?" He answers, "Our kind of people." Before Cary can get angry, Cox explains himself including her into "the educated Northeastern establishment."

Vernon Jordan of the National Urban League also addressed the difficulties of being elite African-Americans. "Just a few years ago, it was a lot clearer. You could point out outrageously racist laws. Now it's more subtle.... You've got to get as much as you can here, be the best that you can, so that when you come out you'll be ready.... The fact is there's no blueprint for what we're doing now. It's all uncharted water. We're going to need you. We're going to need every one of you."

The reader also gets to see and understand how her character changes and grows. A white friend of hers Janie, backs out of the election for vice-president of the senior class at the last minute. She urges her supporters to back Cary, and Cary wins the election. She's the first girl to have ever held this office in the history of the school. Her African-American friends accuse her of pulling a fast one by setting Janie up. Cary is hurt but as she assumes the duties of the office she finds herself caring more about the school. She changes from being a rebel who'd cut classes and smoke in her room to someone who sits on the disciplinary committee and sees acting out as a "symptom rather than disease." In the process she doesn't share a drink with Janie and loses a friend.

The story she tells to explain the self she has become begins with one of her great grandfather's African folk tales. At night a woman steps out of her skin and flies around in the sky. Her husband sees her do this and wants her to stop it. So he goes to a wise woman who tells him to rub salt in the skin. Then when the woman comes back just before sunrise, she tries to get back into her skin, and screams "Skin, skin, ya na know me?" Cary promises herself that her stories will show her the way out. She will fly around the dark sky and "My skin will know me and I will not have to fear my skin."

Cary's novel is more rich than Brooks' and more neatly matches the goals of this unit. Both books, however, belong in modern classrooms because, almost as a plus, they have main characters who value education and who actively pursue learning.

I am departing from the typical lesson plan format to present two study guides. These study guides allow the teacher to have a greater flexibility with her lesson plans. The guides can be used with individual students who read at their own rate and answer the questions as they go along. They can be used in cooperative learning groups, or they can be used as prereading questions in class reading writing and discussion activities. The questions themselves are either inferential or conclusive which require the student to think about what he has read before answering. Few if any of the questions are literal.

Interspersed with the study guide questions are discussion points that the teacher may wish to bring up or elicit from the students using Socratic questioning. These discussion points frequently relate to the broader themes of the unit: the African American experience in the twentieth century, how they are a part of it, and how to build on the past to succeed on a personal level in the future.

STUDY GUIDE FOR *THE MOVES MAKE THE MAN* by BRUCE BROOKS

DIRECTIONS: Answer each question in a sentence.

Chapter 1 pp. 3-5 Why is Jayfox writing this book?

Chapter 2 pp. 6-9 What do the words "SPIN LIGHT" mean to you at this point in the book?

Chapter 3 pp. 10-13 Why does Jayfox like basketball, but not baseball?

Chapter 4 pp. 14-19 Contrast the appearance of the two teams.

Point: In a society which gives advantages based on race one needs to be like Jayfox, a trickster, in order to succeed.

Chapter 5 pp. 20-23 Describe Bix's momma.

Chapter 6 pp. 24-27 Give your opinion. Do you think "the secret of life" is "YOU LIKE IT, IT LIKES YOU"? Tell why you think so.

Chapter 7 pp. 28-30 Why is Jayfox "angry as a wasp?"

Point: Jayfox's idea of white home life is not literally realistic, but it does work as a

metaphor—hence his anger.

Chapter 8 pp. 33-34 Jayfox goes away to find himself. Where does he go?

Chapter 9 pp. 35-39 Compare Jayfox and Poke.

Chapter 10 pp. 40-44 Against whom is Jayfox competing when he plays with himself?

Point: Jayfox is an individual. He's not like Poke, nor like Maurice's idea of a well rounded kid. He's also more than a reaction to whites.

Chapter 11 pp. 45-51 Why is Jayfox's mom so angry about Chestnut High School being integrated? Isn't that what the Civil Rights Movement was all about?

Point: Consider the word "hypocrisy." Define it. Apply it to this story.

Chapter 12 pp. 52-58 Why does Jayfox like his French class?

Chapter 13 pp. 59-70 Why doesn't Jayfox make the basketball team?

Chapter 14 pp. 71-81 What has changed in Jayfox's life?

Chapter 15 pp. 82-83 What two things do Bix (Braxton Rivers III) and Jayfox (Jerome Foxworthy) have in common.

Chapter 16 pp. 84-86 What did Jayfox learn how to cook in Home Ec. class?

Chapter 17 pp. 87-91 What did Jayfox and Bix learn how to cook in Home Ec. class the following day?

Chapter 18 pp. 92-97 What do Jayfox and Bix have against mock apple pie?

Chapter 19 pp. 98-105 Why is Bix upset?

Chapter 20 pp. 109-113 Jayfox calls all the ways of being intelligent "fragile." Name a way of being intelligent. How did Jayfox's mother show that she was intelligent despite her accident.

Chapter 21 pp. 114-130 What are some of the conductor's moves and what kind of man do they make him?

Chapter 22 pp. 131-146 Name one thing that Bix does that shows he is out of touch with reality.

Point: Note the use of light and dark, reason and insanity imagery. Jayfox is at home in the dark, but he brings a light to play. Bix is also at home in the dark, but he plays in the dark. If the light symbolizes the light of reason, then Jayfox has his ability to reason. Bix, on the other hand, takes the lantern and spins it just as he spins his reasoning.

Chapter 23 pp. 149-162 Over what do Jayfox and Bix argue?

Chapter 24 pp. 163-179 What is at stake in the game between Bix and his stepfather?

Chapter 25 pp. 180-202 Why is Bix so obsessed with telling the truth?

Chapter 26 pp. 203-219 Why does Jayfox's mother look at Bix with such sad understanding?

Chapter 27 pp. 220-246 What is Bix's last move and why does Jayfox admire it?

Point: Bix, the believer in truth, is very upset by Jeb's racist behavior. Jayfox, however, who doesn't expect the world to be perfect, is not surprized. He handles himself with dignity and gets in the last word.

Chapter 28 pp. 247-252 What does Jayfox learn from his association with Bix?

Point: Apply "There are no moves you truly make alone" to race relations in American society.

STUDY GUIDE FOR *BLACK ICE* by LORENE CARY

June 1989 pp. 3-6 What is Lorene Cary's opinion concerning African-Americans and American culture.

Chapter 1 pp. 7-18 What was the purpose of Lorene's mother's story.

Chapter 2 pp. 19-34 Why do Lorene's parents and Lorene herself want to go to St. Paul's School?

Chapter 3 pp. 35-55 With what tradition does Cary identify?

Chapter 4 pp. 56-80 Even though Cary starts making friends, she feels isolated. Find the quote from James Baldwin, a respected African-American essayist. Comment upon this quote.

Chapter 5 pp. 81-100 How has Cary's attitude changed in this chapter?

Chapter 6 pp. 82-114 How did Cary cope with date rape?

Chapter 7 pp. 115-133 Why does Cary decide to adopt a pose?

Point: Black ice in this chapter is defined as "nature condescending to art." It's a powerful symbol for and the title of Cary's novel. By the end of the book Black ice is again used as a symbol for the ideal of life's potential. Cary wants her children to skate on black ice, "smooth and unbroken like grace, and they'll know as they know my voice that they were meant to have their share."

Chapter 8 pp. 134-155 What does Cary learn about aloneness from the vice-president election and the reaction of the other students?

Chapter 9 pp. 156-174 Compare Cary's two boyfriends Ricky and Brooker.

Chapter 10 pp. 175-193 How does working on the disciplinary committee change Cary?

Chapter 11 pp. 194-206 What advice does Vernon Jordan give to Cary? How does she help her people in this chapter?

Chapter 12 pp. 207-222 At graduation Cary regrets that she hadn't "loved enough." What does she mean and do you agree with her?

June 1989 pp. 223-238 Cary talks of the importance of her stories, of changing the stories and passing them on. How does she change the story about the wife who leaves her skin? How does she change Izzy's story? How do these stories apply to Cary?

Notes

1. Wheat, Ellen Harkins, *Jacob Lawrence American Artist* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986) Subsequent factual information on Lawrence's life is taken from this source.
2. Brooks, Bruce, *The Moves Make the Man* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1984) p. 200.
3. Brooks, p. 239.
4. Brooks. p. 252.
5. Cary, Lorene, *Black Ice* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1991) pp. 32-33.
6. Cary, p. 132.
7. Cary, p. 233.
8. Cary, p. 201.
9. Cary, p. 202.
10. Cary, p. 193.
11. Cary, p. 130.
12. Cary, p. 237.

Student Bibliography

Brooks, Bruce, *The Moves Make the Man* , Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., New York, 1984.

Adolescent coming of age literature which examines race relations, insanity and the loyalties of friendship. Plenty of basketball action keep the male reader's interest. In paperback.

Cary, Lorene, *Black Ice* , Random House, Inc., New York, 1991.

Autobiographical account of a young African-American girl's experiences at an exclusive prep school. Rich in African-American heritage. In paperback.

Teacher Bibliography

Brooks, Bruce, *The Moves Make the Man* , Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., New York, 1984.

Cary, Lorene, *Black Ice* , Random House, Inc., New York, 1991.

Wheat, Ellen Harkins, *Jacob Lawrence American Painter* , University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1986.

Biography and art work of Jacob Lawrence with helpful commentary.

Classroom Materials

52 transparencies of the art of Jacob Lawrence copied from the illustrations in *Jacob Lawrence American*
Curriculum Unit 92.04.04

Painter by Ellen Harkins Wheat.

Video “Eyes on the Prize, Part I, Episode 2, Fighting Back” Connecticut Public Broadcasting System.

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