



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1994 Volume II: Poetry in the Classroom: Incentive and Dramatization

Poetry: A View of African American Life

Guide for Curriculum Unit 94.02.11
by Jean Sutherland

Through the use of poetry, this unit attempts to increase pupils' knowledge of African American life in the United States as it has existed and changed. Its primary objective is to provide the opportunity for pupils to gain a more personal understanding and appreciation of people, places, feelings, and events that mark the course of African American history and intermingle with the present including points that are omitted in many traditional history books.

Besides the inclusion of plans for a weekly poem, poetry will be presented throughout the year in connection with our other studies. Poems have been divided into categories: Folk Poetry, Spirituals, People (Famous and Family), Problems (and sometimes solutions), and Self-esteem, which seem to best fit into our curriculum. Examples of lessons and suggestions for presentation and related activities are included. There are also a number of possibilities for cooperative learning across grade levels which are mentioned.

Designed for a self-contained fifth grade, the unit could easily be adapted to many middle school classrooms and perhaps to some levels below fifth.

(Recommended for Self-Contained Class [Social Studies, Reading, Language Arts, Social Development], Reading, Literature or U.S. History, grades 5-8)

Key Words

Afro-American Poetry History

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>