

Topic/Objective: Locate Information about a Poet/District Task	Name
SWBAT: Write a brief biographical piece about a poet and write a poem that is indicative of the poet's style of writing.	ELA_____ Per.
Poet: Langston Hughes	Date:

Langston Hughes was born on February 1, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri. He published his first poem in 1921. He attended Columbia University, but left after one year to travel. His poetry was later promoted by Vachel Lindsay, and Hughes published his first book in 1926. He went on to write countless works of poetry, prose and plays, as well as a popular column for the *Chicago Defender*. He died on May 22, 1967.

Summarize paragraph 1 in a ten or more word sentence.:

James Mercer Langston Hughes was born on February 1, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri. His parents, James Hughes and Carrie Langston, separated soon after his birth, and his father moved to Mexico. While Hughes's mother moved around during his youth, Hughes was raised primarily by his maternal grandmother, Mary, until she died in his early teens. From that point, he went to live with his mother, and they moved to several cities before eventually settling in Cleveland, Ohio. It was during this time that Hughes first began to write poetry, and that one of his teachers first introduced him to the poetry of [Carl Sandburg](#) and [Walt Whitman](#), both whom Hughes would later cite as primary influences. Hughes was also a regular contributor to his school's literary magazine, and frequently submitted to other poetry magazines, although they would ultimately reject him.

Summarize paragraph 2 in a ten or more word sentence.:

Hughes graduated from high school in 1920 and spent the following year in Mexico with his father. Around this time, Hughes's poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" was published in *The Crisis* magazine and was highly praised. In 1921 Hughes returned to the United States and enrolled at Columbia University where he studied briefly, and during which time he quickly became a part of Harlem's burgeoning cultural movement, what is commonly known as the Harlem Renaissance. But Hughes dropped out of Columbia in 1922 and worked various odd jobs around New York for the following year, before signing on as a steward on a freighter that took him to Africa and Spain. He left the ship in 1924 and lived for a brief time in Paris, where he continued to develop and publish his poetry.

Summarize paragraph 3 in a ten or more word sentence.:

In November 1924, Hughes returned to the United States and worked various jobs. In 1925, he was working as a busboy in a Washington, D.C. hotel restaurant when he met American poet Vachel Lindsay. Hughes showed some of his poems to Lindsay, who was impressed enough to use his connections to promote Hughes's poetry and ultimately bring it to a wider audience. In 1925, Hughes's poem "The Weary Blues" won first prize in the *Opportunity* magazine literary competition, and Hughes also received a scholarship to attend Lincoln University, in Pennsylvania. While studying at Lincoln, Hughes poetry came to the attention of novelist and critic Carl Van Vechten, who used his connections to help get Hughes's first book of poetry, *The Weary Blues*, published by Knopf in 1926. The book had popular appeal and established both his poetic style and his commitment to black themes and heritage. Hughes was also among the first to use jazz rhythms and dialect to depict the life of urban blacks in his work. He published a second volume of poetry, *Fine Clothes to the Jew*, in 1927.

Summarize paragraph 4 in a ten or more word sentence.:

After his graduation from Lincoln in 1929, Hughes published his first novel, *Not Without Laughter*. The book was commercially successful enough to convince Hughes that he could make a living as a writer. During the 1930s, Hughes would frequently travel the United States on lecture tours, and also abroad to the Soviet Union, Japan, and Haiti. He continued to write and publish poetry and prose during this time, and in 1934 he published his first collection of short stories, *The Ways of White Folks*. In 1937 he served as a war correspondent for several American newspapers during the Spanish Civil War.

Summarize paragraph 5 in a ten or more word sentence.:

In 1940, Hughes's autobiography up to age 28, *The Big Sea*, was published. Also around this time, Hughes began contributing a column to the *Chicago Defender*, for which he created a comic character named Jesse B. Semple, better known as "Simple," a black Everyman that Hughes used to further explore urban, working-class black themes, and to address racial issues. The columns were highly successful, and "Simple" would later be the focus of several of Hughes's books and plays.

Summarize paragraph 6 in a ten or more word sentence.:

In the late 1940s, Hughes contributed the lyrics for a Broadway musical titled *Street Scene*, which featured music by Kurt Weill. The success of the musical would earn Hughes enough money that he was finally able to buy a house in Harlem. Around this time, he also taught creative writing at Atlanta University and was a guest lecturer at a university in Chicago for several months.

Summarize paragraph 7 in a ten or more word sentence.:

Over the next two decades, Hughes would continue his prolific output. In 1949 he wrote a play that inspired the opera *Troubled Island* and published yet another anthology of work, *The Poetry of the Negro*. During the 1950s and 1960s, he published countless other works, including several books in his "Simple" series, English translations of the poetry of [Federico García Lorca](#) and [Gabriela Mistral](#), another anthology of his own poetry, and the second installment of his autobiography, *I Wonder as I Wander*.

Summarize paragraph 5 in a ten or more word sentence.:

DEATH AND LEGACY

On May 22, 1967, Langston Hughes died from complications of prostate cancer. A tribute to his poetry, his funeral contained little in the way of spoken eulogy, but was filled with jazz and blues music. Hughes's ashes were interred beneath the entrance of the Arthur Schomburg Center for Research in Black culture in Harlem. The inscription marking the spot features a line from Hughes's poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." It reads: "My soul has grown deep like the rivers."

Summarize paragraph 5 in a ten or more word sentence.:

Hughes's Harlem home, on East 127th Street, received New York City Landmark status in 1981 and was added to the National Register of Places in 1982. Volumes of his work continue to be published and translated throughout the world.

Summarize paragraph 5 in a ten or more word sentence.:

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Cornell Notes: Langston Hughes	Date:

Essential Question: _____

Answer each question in a ten or more word sentence.

1. Who is the person you are researching today?	
2. When and where was this person born?	
3. Who were his parents/ grandparents and what was their occupation?	
4. What events shaped his life, and what do you think were his influences?	
5. Is this person still living? If not when and where did he/she die and how?	
6. What is the author's cultural and personal background?	
7. What about this author's background qualifies him or her to be a writer?	
8. What has shaped his life, and what do you think were his influences?	
9. What were some disappointments or challenges faced by the poet?	
10. Did this person earn or receive any awards, prizes, or accolades for his/service?	
11. What are some of the changes in our society that occurred during his your lifetime?	
12. What great historical events did he contribute to in his lifetime?	
13. What is something that he achieved or did that he should have been proud of and why?	

When people look back on his life, how is he remembered?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

pp.393 Literature Book: Dreams Connect to the Poem

Dreams and Goals	Actions I need to take to achieve my dreams and goals.
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____

Build Background

What was the Harlem Renaissance?	4. _____
What did many artists do during this time?	5. _____
What is the <u>big question</u> ?	6. _____

LITERARY ELEMENT: RHYME

7. What is <u>rhyme</u> ?		
8. What is an <u>example of rhyme</u> ?		
9. What is <u>end rhyme</u> ?		
10. What is <u>internal rhyme</u> ?		
11. What is <u>rhyme scheme</u> ?		
12. Copy the poem on page 393 a b c	13. Create a poem with the following rhyme scheme a b	14. Create a poem with the following rhyme scheme a b

Madam and the Phone Bill identify the rhyme scheme in each stanza

You say I O.K.ed
LONG DISTANCE?
O.K.ed it when?
My goodness, Central
That was *then*!

I'm mad and disgusted
With that man now.
I don't pay no REVERSED
CHARGES no how.

You say, I will pay it—
Else you'll take out my phone?
You better let
My phone alone.

I didn't ask him
To telephone me.
Roscoe knows darn well
LONG DISTANCE
Ain't free.

If I ever catch him,
Lawd, have pity!
Calling me up
From Kansas City.

Continued

Just to say he loves me!
I knowed that was so.
Why didn't he tell me some'n
I don't know?

For instance, what can
Others do
That Alberta K. Johnson
Can't do—*and more, too?*

What's that, Central?
You say you don't care
Nothing about my
Private affair?

Well, even less about your
PHONE BILL, does I care!

Un-humm-m! . . . Yes!
You say I gave my O.K.?
Well, that O.K. you may keep—

But I *sure* ain't gonna pay!

Complete Comprehension Questions

1. Who is the speaker?
2. Who is the audience or person addressed?
3. What is the setting or occasion?
4. Explain the significance of the title and the meanings of any unfamiliar words.

6. Read the poem and then paraphrase it.
7. Identify any **figurative uses of language** and their effect.
8. How do these conflicts and refusals work to create a larger picture?

Quotes by Langston Hughes

“Life is for the living.
Death is for the dead.
Let life be like music.
And death a note unsaid.”

— [Langston Hughes](#), *The Collected Poems*

I like to work, read, learn, and understand life.”

“I have discovered in life that there are ways of getting almost anywhere you want to go, if you really want to go.”

— [Langston Hughes](#)

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?”

— [Langston Hughes](#), *The Collected Poems*

Biography Graphic Organizer

Name: _____ Period: _____ Background Information Person: Date and place of birth: Where this person grew up: Other information about this person's history:	Description- What adjectives would you use to describe the person? Explain—what from the reference tells you that? (i.e. adventurous: the author ventured into many places to acquire information for their literature) 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
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Important Events- What events shaped or changed this person's life and/or others? 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Fun Facts (include on fact regarding his/her literary work): 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
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Quotations and what they mean to you.		In a four sentence paragraph, explain what you can personally learn from this person's life and actions?
Quote	What it Means to Me	

Dreams	Identify the Metaphor	Comparison of	Visualization	Emotions is t evokes in me(4)
<p>Hold fast to dreams For if dreams die Life is a broken-winged bird That cannot fly.</p> <p>Hold fast to dreams For when dreams go Life is a barren field Frozen with snow.</p>				
<p>Title of your original poem in the style of Langston Hughes</p> <p>A</p> <p>B</p> <p>C</p> <p>D</p> <p>B</p> <p>2nd Stanza</p> <p>A</p> <p>B</p> <p>C</p> <p>B</p>				

Now, write your five paragraph biography.

