

CAGED BIRD

Maya Angelou



RESOURCE GUIDE

Reading + Writing + Analysis

NO PREP

PRINT & GO

HIGH SCHOOL ELA

About the Poem

Caged Bird is a powerful poem that contrasts freedom and confinement. Maya Angelou uses imagery and symbolism to show the difference between a bird that is free and one that is trapped.

The poem explores themes of oppression, voice, and hope, showing how even in difficult situations, the desire for freedom remains strong.

Comprehension Questions:

SECTION 1

1. Who is Bigger Thomas and what is his situation at the start of the novel?
2. How is the setting introduced and what does it reveal about his life?
3. What role does fear play in Bigger's actions early on?
4. How are power and control shown in this section?
5. How does Bigger's environment shape the way he thinks and behaves?

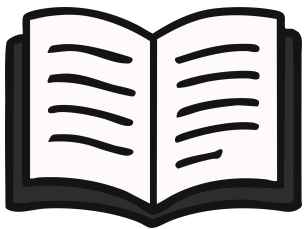
Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

Why is having a voice important, even in difficult situations?

Extension Activity

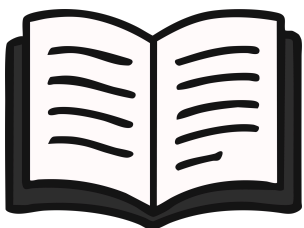
Choose one activity to complete.



- Compare the free bird and the caged bird using a chart



- Write a paragraph explaining what the birds represent

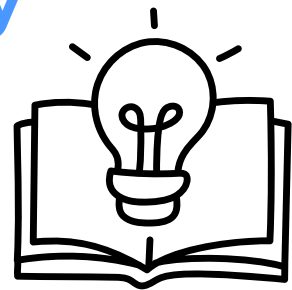


- Create a visual representation of the poem's message

Understanding the Big Ideas

This poem explores:

- **Freedom vs restriction**
- **Voice and expression**
- **Oppression and inequality**
- **Hope and resilience**



How does Maya Angelou use symbolism to show the difference between freedom and oppression in *Caged Bird*? Use at least one example from the poem to support your response.
