

THE WEARY BLUES

Langston Hughes



RESOURCE GUIDE

Reading + Writing + Analysis

NO PREP

PRINT & GO

HIGH SCHOOL ELA

About the Text

The Weary Blues by Langston Hughes is a collection of poems that explores identity, culture, struggle, and expression during the Harlem Renaissance.

Hughes uses rhythm, repetition, and vivid imagery to reflect everyday experiences and emotions, often inspired by music and life in Black communities.

Through these poems, readers explore themes of resilience, voice, and cultural pride.

Selected Poems

- **The Weary Blues**
- **Dream Variations**
- **I, Too**
- **Mother to Son**
- **The Negro Speaks of Rivers**

Writing Prompt

Choose one poem and explain how Langston Hughes uses imagery, repetition, or symbolism to express a central idea. Use at least one example from the poem to support your response.

Comprehension Questions: The Weary Blues

1. Where is the speaker when they hear the music?
2. What is the musician doing?
3. How is the music described?
4. What emotions are shown in the poem?
5. What happens after the music ends?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

*How does music help express emotions
in this poem?*

Comprehension Questions

Dream Variations

1. What does the speaker say they want to do in the daytime?
2. What happens at night in the speaker's dream?
3. What images are used to describe freedom and peace?
4. What might the dream represent?
5. What new information changes the direction of the story?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

Why is the speaker's dream important?

Comprehension Questions

I, Too

1. How is the speaker treated at the beginning of the poem?
2. What does the speaker do when they are sent away?
3. How does the speaker describe the future?
4. What message is the speaker sending to others?
5. How does the tone change from beginning to end?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

What message does the speaker want others to understand?

Comprehension Questions

Mother to Son

1. Who is speaking in the poem?
2. What does the staircase represent?
3. What challenges does the speaker describe?
4. What advice is given throughout the poem?
5. What is the overall message about life?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

*How does the mother's advice
apply to real life?*

Comprehension Questions

The Negro Speaks of Rivers

1. What rivers are mentioned in the poem?

2. What does the speaker say about their soul?

3. How are the rivers connected to history?

4. What does the poem suggest about identity?

5. What is the overall tone of the poem?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

*Why is it important to remember history
and identity?*

Understanding the Big Ideas

1. Identity and Voice

Each poem explores what it means to find and express one's identity.

2. Struggle and Resilience

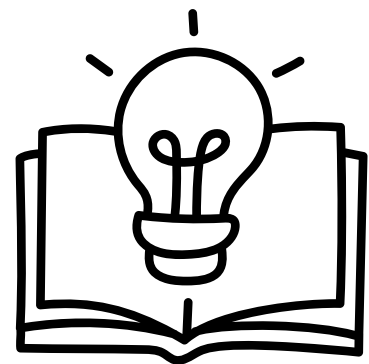
The poems reflect challenges and the strength needed to keep going.

3. Freedom and Hope

Many of the poems look toward a better future and the idea of equality.

4. Culture and History

The poems connect personal experience to a larger cultural and historical story.



Extension Activities

Choose one:

- Compare two poems and explain how they share a common theme
- Write your own poem inspired by one of the themes in the collection
- Create a visual or creative representation of one poem

Final Project

Choose one:

- Compare two poems and explain how they explore the same theme
- Analyze how Hughes uses language and structure across the poems
- Create a presentation explaining the main ideas of the collection