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Let America Be America Again By Langston Huges

Langston Huges throughout the poem expresses his desire for America becoming as united as it once was. This poem caught my attention because of how the author talks from different perspectives of the issue going on. A line that caught my attention was “America never was America to me,” it displays the way that America hasn’t treated him the way he wished he would have been treated, but yet still he has hopes that someday America will change. The author’s purpose to writing this poem was to inform the readers that America should change back to the old ways to treat everyone equally. In the poem, the author included “I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart, I am the Negro bearing slavery’s scars. I am the red man driven from the land, I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek,” those lines stood out to me because of how America didn’t only affect African Americans, but it also had an impact on everyone else in the world. Not only African Americans were in seek of a change. During the Harlem Renaissance, the main point that they wanted to get recognized by Americans. This poem ties into the Harlem Renaissance by the way that the poem is trying to persuade “America” that they are equal and are suffering the same amount as any other person.

Incident By Countee Cullen

The main purpose of writing this poem was to inform the reader about the author's personal experience of racism. The theme of the poem is words could scar you for a lifetime. "And so I smiled, but he poked out. His tongue, and called me, "Nigger."," those lines are referring to an African-American man's encounter with racism. "From May until December: of all the things that happened there, that's all that I remember," demonstrates the consequences of racism. The title of the poem was brought to my attention because of how it ties into the poem. The title was a very broad noun, that causes the reader to gain interest in reading the poem. The incident in the "Incident" stuck with the speaker for a long time. The act of racism told in the poem was experienced firsthand. The poem is not occurring in the present day, it occurred in the past. The African American male is having a flashback of what had happened when he was younger. In comparison to other poems, this poem is straightforward. The poem doesn't have any hard metaphors or similes that you wouldn't be able to understand. In a way, we have two speakers in the poem. We have the current-day speaker, who recollects a moment from his childhood, and the speaker as an eight-year-old boy, who is living that moment.

Nineteen-Twenty-Nine By William Waring Cuney

The main reason for the author writing this poem was to inform people about how African Americans have been struggling since before the Great Depression even came around. The Great Depression started in 1929, which was a worldwide economic “depression.” William Waring would repeat the line “some folks hollered hard times,” which emphasizes the importance of that line. “Some folks hollered hard times,” is referring to the way that Americans would complain about how they were in a terrible situation, but African Americans have been struggling since before the Great Depression. This poem makes the readers feel sympathy for African Americans because it’s basically saying, “you think these are bad times? But that’s all I’ve been living.” The theme of this poem is to not complain about unstable situations that you’re going through because other people are going through worse situations. The author stated “in nineteen-twenty-eight say I was way behind,” which ties into the theme because the African American in the poem was already in an unstable place before everyone else. Based on the poem, you can infer that the character in the poem has had a hard past. The speaker of the poem aims to speak clearly and directly in order to impress upon his readers the shock and outrage that he once felt. And that's exactly what he does.

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America By Claude Mckay

This poem is about an African American who lives in America, he or she thinks the laws aren't fair, but still loves America. The theme shown in the poem is patriotism. To support the theme, the author included "I love this cultured hell that tests my youth," the line shows how the African American show patriotism towards America. Although America treats African Americans in an unfair manner, African Americans would rather stay. If you were to compare America to their country, America would be a better place to live at. The author throughout the poem compares America to a tiger. "Sinks into my throat her tiger's tooth," is an example of a metaphor, referring to America causing pain or trouble to African Americans. The poem, America, was a very touching poem that communicates its theme by the use of personification, metaphors and other forms of literary devices. The structure of this poem was set into two main stanzas. The first one was about Mckay's feelings of contempt and appreciation for America. The second stanza shows appreciation towards the reader. Mckay's point of view on America despite the difficulties is a positive manner. America was his new home, it was a place where he struggled at, but yet still has a love for. As any regular human being, we all have something we love even through the hardships and disappointment.

If We Must Die by Claude McKay

The poem was about African Americans who lived in “white” neighborhoods. I personally enjoyed this poem because of the metaphors that referred African Americans to hogs and Americans to dogs. The image you typically receive of Americans is that they are vicious based off of the way that the author describes the dogs. By associating his human enemies with dogs, the speaker is using a metaphor. This metaphor gives us the message that the speaker's enemies are crazed, vicious, and less than human. The dogs also serve as a symbol of "unfair" fighting, but that shows up later. Throughout the poem, the author emphasizes how African Americans have knowledge of what could happen to them for living there. “If we must die, O let us nobly die, so that our precious blood may not be shed,” demonstrates that although African Americans may die, they rather die that way so that their name will be forever known. “Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,” while living in a “white” neighborhood, they were surrounded with Americans. During that time period, it was rare to see black people in “white” neighborhoods. Another reasoning to African Americans staying in a white neighborhood is to prove their bravery to Americans. To demonstrate to Americans that although they are outnumbered, they are still more powerful.

Smothered Fired By Georgia Douglas Johnson

This poem is about a woman who doesn't have hope after the disappointments she has gone through. The author included metaphors that would compare her hopes to fire and her hopes being put down to ashes. The woman would avoid any sort of hope that came her way to prevent herself from having a sensation of dissatisfaction. "Sometimes a baleful light would rise from out the dusky bed, and then the woman hushed it quick," shows how the woman had no desire to have hope. That line also had an example of a metaphor which compared light to her hope. "At last the weary war was done," after the war was over the woman in the poem was feeling more tranquil. "She breathed a soft—good-night! ," doesn't literally mean she's going to sleep, but it's referring to a sign of relief. "At last the weary war was done," is an example of alliteration cause of the repeated "w" which emphasizes the importance of the war. That same line could also be allusion because "weary war" is referring to World War I. "She hid it deep and smothered it with tears," based on that line the woman in the poem is someone who is closed about her feelings and doesn't really like to be open about her thoughts.

My Little Dreams By Georgia Douglas Johnson

Georgia Douglas Johnson wrote this poem to spread a message to others. The theme of the poem was to not give up on your dreams or else you will regret it later on. Since she never fulfilled her dream now it's haunting her with regret in the present. "I'm folding up my little dreams within my heart tonight," is referring to the author giving up on her dreams of having an equal lifestyle as Americans. Throughout the poem, that line is repeated to show importance. The dreams that she had are turning into nightmares and she is trying to never look at them. The tone of this poem was depressed and hopeless. In the poem, there were many examples of imagery and personification. The way that this poem ties into the Harlem Renaissance was that the poem addresses the fundamental theme of having a dream. The mood received after reading this poem is sympathetic because of all the way that the woman has no hope in her life. This poem wasn't my favorite because of how the woman didn't follow her dreams, she gave up on them. That's not the type of mindset that I would have if I were here because that wouldn't just impact her present, but also her future. When the woman thinks about her past, she will feel regret for not working hard enough for her dreams.

I, too By Langston Huges

This poem was about an African American who was always sent to somewhere else instead of the kitchen table to avoid contact with Americans. Until one day, he is determined to bring an end to that situation. He decides to eat at the kitchen table because he's just as equal as any other person. "They'll see how beautiful I am and be ashamed," is the outcome that he is hoping to receive after eating with Americans. He hopes that Americans will see that he's equally as important as them and be ashamed of discriminating him. "I, too, am America," is repeated in the poem and it expresses the author's point of view on how African Americans are part of America as well. "I, Too" is about the segregation of African Americans, whites and how soon the segregation will end. Throughout the poem, the word "I" is used several times, it makes the poem be said from a first point of view perspective. "Nobody'll dare say to me, "eat in the kitchen," then," demonstrates how confident the man is that nobody will have a problem with him eating at the kitchen table. The author doesn't necessarily have a low point of view on America. The African American man has an imagine of this joy, beauty, and unity when he thinks of America. He also counts himself as a part of it, whether people know it or not.