

LESSON FOR ESL READING – High Intermediate to Advanced
Christine Hall, English Language Institute

USING PRINT LIBRARY REFERENCE MATERIALS

OUTCOMES: Upon completion of the lesson, students will be able to

- locate reference materials in the B.C.C. library
- identify potential print reference sources in the library to find specific information
- skim and scan for specific information
- understand how the life of Langston Hughes and the times in which he lived influenced his writing
- use critical thinking skills to help find specific information

LIBRARY SOURCES:

- Encyclopedias
- Dictionaries
- Almanacs
- Atlases
- Biography reference materials
- Chronicle of the 20th Century
- People's Century 1900-1999

NOTE: Prior to the lesson, students will have studied the following:

- Basic library and research vocabulary
- MLA citation format (see the BCC library resources at www.bcc.ctc.edu)

LESSON

1. In the library students will be introduced to the above mentioned printed reference materials and given a brief description of the various information which can be found in each source. A brief tour of the reference section of the library will be included.

2. In order for students to understand how to use each reference source, the class should discuss which reference sources would most likely have the answers to the questions about Langston Hughes in Worksheet 1. Students will then be divided into pairs and assigned two of the questions from the worksheet to look for.

Worksheet 1

1. How old was Langston Hughes when he died?
2. Where was Langston Hughes born?
3. On what day (not date) did Langston Hughes die?
4. Who was the president of the U.S. when Langston Hughes was born?
5. Find the name of a poem by Langston Hughes using reference materials in the BCC library
6. Find the name of a short story by Langston Hughes using reference materials in the BCC library.
7. Find a picture of Langston Hughes using only reference books.
8. What is the capital of the state in which Langston Hughes was born?

3. Students should share their answers and discuss the strategies they used to find the information.
4. Students should then be divided into new pairs and told to find the answers to the questions in Worksheet 2, all related to the stories and poems of Langston Hughes which they will be reading in subsequent classes. (I suggest giving them about a week to complete the assignment.) Each answer will need to be accompanied with a correct MLA citation of their printed reference source.
5. The class should go over the answers, discuss the students' successes and challenges in finding the information and share their understanding of what life was like for African-Americans in the first half of the 20th century.

Worksheet 2

1. What does it mean to "segregate" groups of people from one another? Give two examples of places in which African-Americans were segregated in the U.S.. When was segregation declared illegal in the U.S.?
2. Explain how Rosa Parks was important in stopping segregation in the U.S.?
3. Several of Langston Hughes' stories take place in Harlem. In which big city in the U.S. is Harlem located? Why do you think Hughes chose Harlem as the setting for much of his writing?
4. One of the Hughes' stories takes place in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Where is North Carolina and approximately how far is it in miles from Winston-Salem to Harlem?
5. What was life like for most Americans in the 1930's? Explain why.
6. One of Hughes' most well-known stories, *Cora Unashamed*, takes place in the state of Iowa. What percentage of the population of Iowa in 1929 was native-born white?
7. One of the stories we will be reading contains the following line, "It's snowing like the deuce." What does this mean?
8. Most states in the southern part of the U.S. before 1950 had laws prohibiting interracial marriage. What were these laws called and how did the states determine who was black?
9. When did slavery end in the U.S.?
10. What is the meaning of illiterate? What percentage of the white population of Iowa in 1929 was illiterate? What percentage of the black population of Iowa in 1929 was illiterate?

After completing the lesson, the class should read and discuss the pieces of literature listed below. One of the components of the discussion should be to explain how their research helped them more fully understand the characters.

Short Stories: *Cora Unashamed*, *One Christmas Eve*, *Passing*
Poetry: *I, Too*; *My People*, *Theme for English B*

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES:

Hughes, Langston. *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. Knopf and Vintage Books, 1994.
Hughes, Langston. *The Langston Hughes Reader*. New York: G. Braziller, 1958.
Hughes, Langston. *Not Without Laughter*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1930.
Hughes, Langston. *The Ways of White Folks*. New York: Vintage Books, 1962.

www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/americancollege/cora/tg_teachingcora.html

www.nps.gov/malu/documents/jim_crow_laws.htm

<http://library.lhs.usd497.org/LongstonHughes.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/ihas/poet/hughes.html>

www.poets.org/poems/

ANSWERS TO WORKSHEETS. (Because students may find the information in a variety of resources, citations for their sources are not included.)

Worksheet 1

1.60

2. Missouri in the U.S.

3. Monday (May 22, 1967)

4. 1902 = Theodore Roosevelt

5. answers will vary

6. answers will vary

7. -----

8. Missouri = Jefferson City

Worksheet 2

1. The separation, often by force, of a specific racial, religious, or other group from the body of society. Schools, public transportation, theaters, restaurants, court houses, churches, etc... 1964.
2. Rosa Parks was an African-American woman who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger. Subsequently, the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Modern Civil Rights' Movement in the U.S. began and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it illegal for segregation and discrimination of African Americans to continue openly.
3. New York City. In the early 20th century, Harlem became a predominantly black community where many African American artists and civil rights' leaders congregated.
4. In the Southeast part of the U.S.; approximately 470 miles
5. Life in the 1930's was very difficult ad the U.S. was in the Depression. Consequently, the unemployment rates were extremely high and there were many homeless and poor.
6. 89.8%
7. It means that it's snowing like the "devil." In other words, very hard.
8. The Jim Crow Laws or the Black Code.
9. After the Civil War in 1865.
10. Illiterate means to be unable to read and write. ½ of 1% of whites were illiterate in Iowa in 1929; 8.1% of Blacks in Iowa in 1929 were illiterate.

