Harlem, Hughes, and Hip-Hop  
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Abstract:

“Harlem, Hughes, and Hip Hop” is a stimulating, vigorous, hands-on curriculum that allows students to not only learn pertinent information about the prolific and poignant writer Mr. Langston Hughes, but also examine one of his short stories and translate it into a play. This unit will take 8 weeks to complete and I plan to implement this in my twelfth grade drama classes next year. First, I will lead students as we study how essential the Harlem Renaissance was to Mr. Hughes’ career. Then, I will guide students as we read, analyze, and interpret the themes of a few of his poems and short stories. Next, we will study socially conscious, popular hip hop lyrics and compare their message to Hughes’. In addition, students will write narrative and persuasive essays demonstrating their understanding of Hughes’ influence on socially conscious hip hop lyrics studied in this unit. I will use graphic organizers, educational websites, power point presentations, and videos to help students better understand the subject. In addition, I will instruct students on the fundamentals of public speaking and acting so they may effectively communicate what they learned to their audience. Finally, I will direct my students as they narrate biographical events, rehearse the play, and recite some of Hughes’ poems. As a culminating event, students will perform this production during an assembly at Overbrook High School.