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2008 Volume II: American Voices: Listening to Fiction, Poetry, and Prose

Voice in Poetry: Dream a World with Langston Hughes

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This curriculum unit entitled "Voice in Poetry: Dream a World with Langston Hughes" is designed to teach voice in poetry to 3rd - 5th grade students. The students, who are predominantly African American, have diverse learning needs, experiences, and ways of learning. Poetry by Langston Hughes is used to teach voice in poetry. Hughes expresses different voices through his poetry using language, experiences, and musical forms of the African American culture. Hughes's poetic voice calls attention to words and sounds. This unit is implemented in a standard-based classroom during the two-hour literacy block. The three-part lesson framework is used during Reader's and Writer's Workshop. The three-part lesson framework consists of a mini-lesson (before the learning), student work time (during the learning), and sharing (after the learning). Students will be provided with oral and written language experiences that enable them to develop their unique voices in writing. During Reader's Workshop, students will read aloud, analyze, and listen to the powerful voices in the poems by Hughes. During Writer's Workshop, students will learn about poetic devices and elements of voice. Hughes's poems will be used as writing samples, as students follow the steps of the writing process to write their own poems.

(Developed for Language Arts, grade 3; recommended for Language Arts, grades 3-5)

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