

# Hear My Voice

Subjects: Language Arts  
Suggested Grade Levels: 7  
Time Frame: Variable

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## Overview

Students will identify cultural experiences, analyzing place and tone by writing about, reading, speaking, and listening to poetry from the era of The Harlem Renaissance

## Connection to Philadelphia World Heritage Tool Kit’s Goal

This lesson will allow students to research a World Heritage site, appreciate their culture and their country’s history, become more aware and interested in other cultures, have respect for cultural diversity, cultivate respect for all peoples and their cultures, show artistic talent with poetry, and potentially visit a UNESCO site—the Statue of Liberty

## Core Curriculum Standards

- Students will be able to understand the meanings of words, phrases, figurative language and connotative meanings, also use context clues
- Students will be able to identify rhymes and other repetitions of sounds in a poem, story, or drama in order to analyze its impact on a specific verse/stanza or section of a story or drama
- Students will analyze how particular elements of a poem and how setting shapes the characters or plot.

## Objectives

The students read and listen to poetry, focus on comprehension, and make connections among the ideas and between texts. Students will also cite evidence when analyzing meaning of poems. The students will also analyze the setting of text, discussing and writing about similarities and differences between poems, in addition to analyzing students will analyze cultural impact of poems of Harlem Renaissance writers.

## Essential Question

How does Claude McKay’s life and writings help us to see the complexities of the Harlem Renaissance and our world heritage in the US?

## Materials Needed

Access to the internet

## Procedure

**Step One:** Read about Claude McKay online

- <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/claude-mckay>

**Step Two:** Listen to poem by Langston Hughes

The teacher can read the poem “Madam and the Rent Man” aloud, or the class can listed from on online source. After reading the poem, the class should discuss the tone of poem and what vocabulary within poem is evidence for the tone suggested. The teacher will model writing of focus points.

**Step Three:** Introduce brief history of Harlem Renaissance. Include the where, the when, and the who of the Harlem Renaissance.

Students will work in cooperative groups in order to research and report on further information on Harlem Renaissance. Further information can include writers, like Claude McKay, or musicians.

**Step Four:** Listen to poem by Claude McKay.

The teacher can read the poem “Home Thoughts” aloud, or the class can listen from an online source. After reading the poem, the class should have a discussion on on setting, tone of poem, citing what evidenc for tone suggested. An example of evidence is the vocabulary within the poem. The teacher will then model writing a graphic organizer focusing on major points of discussion. The teacher will also work with students to compose a written response to to poem analysis.

A second poem by Claude McKay, “The Tropics in New York,” is read aloud or heard from an internet source. Students will complete a writing prompt.

- Writing Prompt: students will analyze the setting and tone of this poem, using vocabulary to cite evidence
- Writing Prompt: teacher leads students in comparing setting/tone of both poems, citing evidence as basis of comparison

Students will listen to or read “Dawn in New York” by Claude McKay.

**Follow-Up:** A visit to UNESCO site, The Statue of Liberty

### **Outcome/Assessment**

Students will respond to this writing prompt: compare/contrast 2 poems by Claude McKay (The Tropics in New York; Dawn in New York). Students can also discuss McKay’s global impact on his poetry (his birthplace of Jamaica; parents from Africa; reflections of life in America)

### **Special Education and English Language Learners Accommodations**

Students may interview family members who were born in other countries, asking about memories of that given country. Students may compare/contrast how their own feelings about being in America. In consultation with ELL teacher, other activities may be planned.

### **Additional Resources**

Web:

[http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/m\\_r/mckay/life.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/m_r/mckay/life.htm)

<http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poet/claude-mckay>

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/claude-mckay>

<http://afroamhistory.about.com/od/biographies/p/Claude-Mckay-Proletariat-Poet.htm>