

Question Sheet: Class #10

Lois' questions for "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" by James Weldon Johnson (p.357)

1. This poem tells of freedom, suffering, joy, and faith. What are examples of each?
2. How does each of the three stanzas differ in content? Tone?
3. What poetic elements do you notice (e.g. rhyming patterns, imagery, symbolism)? Which are most effective?
4. Do you notice a difference in impact between the poem and the song? Which do you find more powerful?
5. Why is this poem/song, which was written in 1900, an excellent choice for an anthem?
6. (If time) What are some of your favorite lines/parts?

End of semester questions – please send your answers to lkshamoon@gmail.com by Monday afternoon.

1. Please read the poems in Chapter #15. Then, answer this question: Which poem would you pick as the most appropriate final poem of our two-semester study of African American poetry? Explain why in two sentences (max!)
2. Rampersad emphasizes that the poems in Chapter #15 are about the future and mostly optimistic. Which poem(s) do you find optimistic *and* compelling?
3. Which poet or poets have you discovered and loved this semester? How might you read more of this poet: online, a book, a poetry event, other?

Bonus questions:

1. Langston Hughes' 'dream' poems, on pgs. 354 – 356, have inspired innumerable poets and possibly Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Do you find Hughes three dream poems still relevant and compelling?
2. What about these poems, are they optimistic and compelling?
 - "I Have a Dream" Pat Parker, pg. 361
 - "Walking Down Park" Nikki Giovanni pg. 372
 - "Open Letter" Owen Dodson, pg. 350
 - "The Gods Wrote" Keorapetse Kgositsile, pg. 358-359