*Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Harlem Renaissance*

Intro Notes

Basic Definition:

Causes:

Why does it Matter:

Intellectuals

Notes:

**Excerpt from “The Souls of Black Folk” c. chapter 2 – Of the Dawn of Freedom. 1903**

**By W.E.B du Bois**

THE PROBLEM of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line,—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea. It was a phase of this problem that caused the Civil War; and however much they who marched South and North in 1861 may have fixed on the technical points of union and local autonomy as a shibboleth, all nevertheless knew, as we know, that the question of Negro slavery was the real cause of the conflict. Curious it was, too, how this deeper question ever forced itself to the surface despite effort and disclaimer. No sooner had Northern armies touched Southern soil than this old question, newly guised, sprang from the earth,—What shall be done with Negroes? Peremptory military commands, this way and that, could not answer the query; the Emancipation Proclamation seemed but to broaden and intensify the difficulties; and the War Amendments made the Negro problems of to-day.

**“If You Believe the Negro Has a Soul”: “Back to Africa” with Marcus Garvey**

*In Garvey’s 1921 speech, “If You Believe the Negro Has a Soul,” he emphasized the inevitability of racial antagonism and the hopelessness of interracial coexistence.*

 “To link up the fifty million Negroes in the United States of America, with the twenty million Negroes of the West Indies, the forty million Negroes of South and Central America, with the two hundred and eighty million Negroes of Africa, for the purpose of bettering our industrial, commercial, educational, social, and political conditions. As you are aware, the world in which we live today is divided into separate race groups and distinct nationalities. Each race and each nationality is endeavoring to work out its own destiny, to the exclusion of other races and other nationalities. We hear the cry of “England for the Englishman,” of “France for the Frenchman,” of “Germany for the German,” of “Ireland for the Irish,” of “Palestine for the Jew,” of “Japan for the Japanese,” of “China for the Chinese.” We of the Universal Negro Improvement Association are raising the cry of “Africa for the Africans,” those at home and those abroad.”

Race Issues

|  |
| --- |
| Stereotypes |
| Economic Disparity |

**PRIMARY SOURCE *from* “When the Negro Was in Vogue”  
 *by Langston Hughes* Critical Reading**

**T**he 1920s were the years of Manhattan’s black

Renaissance. . . .

White people began to come to Harlem in

droves. For several years they packed the expensive

Cotton Club on Lenox Avenue. But I was never

there, because the Cotton Club was a Jim Crow

club for gangsters and monied whites. They were

not cordial to Negro patronage, unless you were a

celebrity like Bojangles. So Harlem Negroes did

not like the Cotton Club and never appreciated its

Jim Crow policy in the very heart of their dark

community. Nor did ordinary Negroes like the

growing influx of whites toward Harlem after sundown,

flooding the little cabarets and bars where

formerly only colored people laughed and sang,

and where now the strangers were given the best

ringside tables to sit and stare at the Negro customers—

like amusing animals in a zoo.

The Negroes said: “We can’t go downtown and

sit and stare at you in your clubs. You won’t even

let us in your clubs.” But they didn’t say it out

loud—for Negroes are practically never rude to

white people. So thousands of whites came to

Harlem night after night, thinking the Negroes

loved to have them there, and firmly believing that

all Harlemites left their houses at sundown to sing

and dance in cabarets, because most of the whites

saw nothing but the cabarets, not the houses. . . .

It was a period when, at almost every Harlem

upper-crust dance or party, one would be introduced

to various distinguished white celebrities

there as guests. It was a period when almost any

Harlem Negro of any social importance at all would

be likely to say casually: “As I was remarking the

other day to Heywood—,” meaning Heywood

Broun. Or: “As I said to George—,” referring to

George Gershwin. It was a period when local and

visiting royalty were not at all uncommon in

Harlem. And when the parties of A’Lelia Walker,

the Negro heiress, were filled with guests whose

names would turn any Nordic social climber green

with envy. It was a period when Harold Jackman, a

handsome young Harlem schoolteacher of modest

means, calmly announced one day that he was sailing

for the Riviera for a fortnight, to attend

Princess Murat’s yachting party. It was a period

when Charleston preachers opened up shouting

churches as sideshows for white tourists. It was a

period when at least one charming colored chorus

girl, amber enough to pass for a Latin American,

was living in a penthouse, with all her bills paid by

a gentleman whose name was banker’s magic on

Wall Street. It was a period when every season

there was at least one hit play on Broadway acted

by a Negro cast. And when books by Negro authors

were being published with much greater frequency

and much more publicity than ever before or since

in history. It was a period when white writers wrote

about Negroes more successfully (commercially

speaking) than Negroes did about themselves. It

was the period (God help us!) when Ethel

Barrymore appeared in blackface in *Scarlet Sister*

*Mary!* It was the period when the Negro was in

vogue.

*from* Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea: An Autobiography*

(New York: Hill & Wang, 1940).

**Discussion Questions**

1. How would you describe Harlem of the 1920s based on your reading of this excerpt?  
2. Why do you think white America suddenly became fascinated by Harlem?  
3. What is ironic about the situations described in this excerpt?

Visual Arts

Notes:

**Connections/Impressions/Reflections on the paintings:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Aaron Douglas*** | ***Jacob Lawrence*** |
| ***A*** | ***A*** |
| ***B*** | ***B*** |

Jazz and Blues

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Clubs | Artists + Notes + Impressions |

*Crash Course:* Harlem Renaissance & Langston Hughes

What time period?  
  
What does John Green say about the word “negro”?

Some writers used \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ while other writers such as L. Hughes used \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
Modernism = a mix of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Langston Hughes -**General notes:

“My best poems were written when I felt \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
  
Hughes wanted to write in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ classical forms didn’t support the work he wanted to do

**Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Poem Analysis**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Negro Speaks of Rivers** | **Harlem** |
| What do you notice?*Word choice, sentence structure, repetition, rhythm, rhyme, imagery – anything else?* | What do you notice? *Word choice, sentence structure, repetition, rhythm, rhyme, imagery – anything else?* |
| What do you think the “message” is? | What do you think the “message” is? |
| New ideas I learned from the class or crash course? | New ideas I learned from the class or crash course? |

Partner Analysis – “The Weary Blues”

|  |
| --- |
| 10 “I notice…” statements:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6.  7.  8.  9.  10. |
| **5** Strong connections to content: |
| Thesis Statement: |
| What’s the message? **Analyze** |

Individual Assessment: Author Focus

1. Select one of the authors (James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, Countee Cullen, Jean Toomer, Arna Bontemps)
2. Read his or her poem (located in the textbook)
3. Summarize their background info
4. Write down *at least* 5 “I notice...” statements.
5. Make 3 strong connections to what we have learned about the Harlem Renaissance.
6. Create a thesis statement containing the “message” of the poem.
7. Write a few sentences explaining the “message”

|  |
| --- |
| 5 “I notice…” statements:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5. |
| **3** Strong connections to content: |
| Thesis Statement: |
| What’s the message? **Analyze** |