

Name:

Day One

Langston Hughes: American Poet

Part 1: Silent read

→ Have you ever read the poetry of Langston Hughes? Read silently.

Langston Hughes was an important American poet. You may have read his poem, “Mother to Son.” Or you may have read his stories set in Harlem. He is the best-loved African American writer.

Langston grew up in Kansas in the early 1900s. Most elementary schools were segregated. But his mother insisted that he attend a mixed school. As a child, Langston loved reading. Books were his best friends. He would often rather read than play with other children.

Langston’s parents separated when he was small. Until his teens, he lived with his grandmother. She told wonderful stories about his people. His grandfather, Sheridan, had worked to end slavery. He fought for Black people’s rights. Langston enjoyed hearing about family history. Stories sparked his interest in writing.

Langston wrote his first poem in eighth grade. His classmates called him their class poet. Langston had a poem published when he just finished high school. He decided to become a writer.

Beginning in college, Langston started to explore what it meant to be Black. He chose to study at Columbia University because he wanted to live in Harlem. He even traveled to West Africa to understand Black history. He was able to uncover many stories about courageous people. These stories shaped his writings.

Langston Hughes changed many people’s ideas about who could be a poet. His poems spoke to readers who had not felt a connection to poetry before.



Day One

// one minute

Langston Hughes: American Poet

Part 2: First timed read

WPM _____

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Langston grew up in Kansas in the early 1900s. Most elementary schools were segregated.	48
But his mother insisted that he attend a mixed school. As a child, Langston loved reading.	64
Books were his best friends. He would often rather read than play with other children.	79

Langston’s parents separated when he was small. Until his teens, he lived with his grandmother. She told wonderful stories about his people. His grandfather, Sheridan, had worked to end slavery. He fought for Black people’s rights. Langston enjoyed hearing about family history. Stories sparked his interest in writing.	93 105 118 127
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Langston wrote his first poem in eighth grade. His classmates called him their class poet.	142
Langston had a poem published when he just finished high school. He decided to become a writer.	157 159

Beginning in college, Langston started to explore what it meant to be Black. He chose to study at Columbia University because he wanted to live in Harlem. He even traveled to West Africa to understand Black history. He was able to uncover many stories about courageous people. These stories shaped his writings.	175 190 204 211
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Part 3: Comprehension and discussion

What is Langston Hughes known for?

What kinds of stories interested Langston when he was growing up?

Day One

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Part 4: Phrase-cued reading

- Read the passage **out loud** in phrases to your partner.
- Pause at each / mark for a phrase.
- Also pause at each // mark that shows the end of a sentence.

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Langston grew up in Kansas / in the early 1900s. // Most elementary schools were segregated. // But his mother insisted / that he attend a mixed school. // As a child, / Langston loved reading. // Books were his best friends. // He would often rather read / than play with other children. //

Langston’s parents separated / when he was small. // Until his teens, / he lived with his grandmother. // She told wonderful stories about his people. // His grandfather, / Sheridan, / had worked to end slavery. // He fought for Black people’s rights. // Langston enjoyed hearing about family history. // Stories sparked his interest in writing. //

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I read the passage in phrases out loud to my partner.