

# Research paper on langston hughes

Profession, Writer



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Anybody can be philosopher, and come up with wonderful ideas and thoughts in their head. How many of those people can actually get those ideas and thoughts on to paper. For others to cherish or criticize, to love or hate. Only a select few can achieve such a task and it doesn't come easy; to be able to relate to a great amount of people and know that they have the same ideas. It is almost as if you are talking for a group of people when you write a poem cause those feelings you have when you are writing it transcends to those that are reading the poem.

Creating feelings with just a group of words and bringing back past emotions or new emotions to the reader. Langston Hughes is one of those incredible people. The way his poems bring a sensation to them that some other poets can't even process. " Hughes was a very complex person, split between a sophisticated consciousness and a fierce determination to create a popular and simplified poetic art" (Bloom 10). Langston Hughes had a way of reaching his people by speaking to the black people and putting down everyday life for them. He helped form a new kind of poetry with more rhythm style. Hughes was an established figure in the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural movement characterized by an explosion of black literature, theater, music, painting, and political and racial consciousness" (Meyers 908). Jazz was growing during the Harlem Renaissance and Langston captured that in jazz poetry. " Jazz poetry is a literary genre defined as poetry necessarily informed by jazz music... Jazz poetry, like the music itself, encompasses a variety of forms, rhythms, and sounds. " (A Brief Guide to Jazz Poetry). Jazz

poetry can be seen as a thread that runs through the Harlem Renaissance, the Beat movement, and the Black Arts Movement.

Jazz poems are supposed to bring a vivid imagery in your head. To which Langston could write poems that could almost make you feel like you were there dancing and galloping in joy. Langston Hughes was born in a regular blackfamily. The talent of Langston Hughes really emerged in high school where he participated on the yearbook staff, wrote for the school newspaper, and began his short stories. He found that he loved writing. He brought blackcultureinto books and poetry. “ Hughes’s poems, populist and expressionistic, rarely demand, or receive, ‘ close reading’ ” (Bloom 8). He died a great poet, activist, and novelist.

His “ impressive body of work makes him an important literary artist and a leading African American voice of the twentieth century. ” (Meyers 913). Poetry is such a strong and magical force that is too hard not to be ignored. Poems can come from great depths from death todreams. Theme in poems are endless, they can be anything. Many poets play off of one theme their whole careers, because they have so much meaning that they felt yet haven’t seen the light of many people. Langston Hughes has a broad amount of themes in his poems, such as uplifting the black people and to help them not be ashamed of whom they are.

He kept that one of his major themes for most of his poems. I believethat can also be a broad theme for all his poems. All of Hughes’ poems helped with getting the black culture up and rising and fighting cause things would get better. He gave blacks a sense of optimism. He brought many of his followers to a better place every time they read his poems. Langston Hughes

wrote many great poems, I have chosen a select few to write about and try to dig deep inside of them to know where he was coming from. Langston Hughes, a great poet has presented many themes in his works. A theme is the overall process of a poem and gives it life.

I will be discovering and understanding the themes Langston Hughes uses in four chosen poems. “ Mother to Son,” by Langston Hughes, is a poem about a mother telling her son about all the hardships that she had to go through in her life. Then she tells her son not to give up no matter how hard it is to keep going on. The stairs and everything on or not on it are a metaphor for her life. This poem is about never giving up. “ So boy, don’t you turn back. Don’t you set down on the steps. ” (Mother to Son lines 14-15) Sometimes everything just feels like nothing is going right and you feel like there is no point in even trying anymore.

Life “ ain’t been no crystal stair” (Mother to Son line 20) but its essential to press on. You can overcome anything. There are always ups, and downs in life and you have to endure whatever life throws at you and push through it. “ Park Bench,” Is a story of two different lives and how ambitions of one lead to the same status as his counterpart. Park Bench has an undertone of being an underdog and coming from nothing, a “ rags to riches” story. We all look at people within a higher class and desire to have that lifestyle. Everybody wants to be the wealthiest or part of the higher class, but how many of them actually go out and do that? That I might, just maybe, in a year or two, Move on over To Park Avenue? ” (Park Bench lines 9-12) is a good line to represent the ambitions people have; to move up in the world and to have the dream to be able to afford living in high status. Just having the strength to have the

ambition to set a goal with so much meaning and fulfilling it. It plays on the American Dream of coming from a next to nothing situation and having the will power to show the world that you aren't just "anybody" but a "somebody". Hughes has a way of making it seem as if anything is possible.

If he can do it, I can too. This poem really brings out something that lies deep inside of me and I want to make it. I could see this poem inspiring the black man wanting to strive for more. "I, Too," is an excellent poem. It is about the life of a black person who grows up mentally and believes that he can achieve a lot by just standing up for himself. It is almost as if he decided to go against the grain and start a revolution. "Besides, they'll see how beautiful I am and be ashamed." (I, Too Lines 15-17). By being a gentleman and being nice, the people had nothing to do, but like him.

This poem shows you don't have to have violence to be a bigger man. Also he is saying that everyone in this country is equal and we are all American, so why are we degraded people just because of the color of their skin. "I, Too Am American." (I, Too Lines 18). We are all created the same, so he was saying the world itself is fucked up enough, so why are we here disgracing others and believing some are better than others. This was a strong poem and painted a great picture of how life was back then. "Frederick Douglass," is a poem about a man who strived to be free.

The theme of this poem shows drive and perseverance to freedom. "On which he set his feet, to route each path toward freedom's goal" (Frederick Douglass lines 10-13). Douglass' strength of character is so great, Hughes says, that he cannot die. Though he has been formally dead since 1895, his spirit's vitality remains as strong as ever. His strength came not from sheer

will but from his will to liberate the enslaved. “ From the beginning of his career to the end of it, Hughes spoke out clearly and courageously for racial justice. ” (Taylor). Hughes poetry reveals his hearty appetite for all humanity, his insistence on justice for all, and his faith in the transcendent possibilities of joy and hope that make room for everyone at America's table. ” (Meyers 916). Langston Hughes brought a new view to many people and let many people in on the life of a regular black lifestyle. He was a true activist and brought hope and inspiration to many black people. “ Langston Hughes is one of the essential figures in American literature. His career is much larger than the body of his poetry alone.

By his work and his example, he has enriched our lives” (Taylor). What makes a poet great is that they can paint a picture in your head as well as give you a new view of things and make you feel what they are saying. You can basically see the poet writing down the words for the first time, as your mind starts painting the picture word by word stroke by stroke. As soon as a word comes out a new stroke emerges and brings you to new depths. You can feel the life and feel the pain and triumph in many of Hughes' poems. Langston Hughes, a great poet has presented many themes in his works and gives them life.

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