

The importance of aspirations - a comparison of jacob lawrence and langston hughe...

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The Importance of Aspirations Aspirations. We all have them, yet they are different for every one of us. For some, their goals might include wealth and social status, while others may focus on goals based on family. Although most people share similar ideas of what they want their life to be, the specific details in our goals are what separate us from the rest of the world. No achievement is necessarily better than the other, and nobody can make a universal decision on which dream is more important than another. It is up to the individual to create their goals, just like it is up to that same individual to achieve them. Dreams are what we spend our entire lives striving to achieve, they are the driving force that keep us motivated, and without them there would be no sense of productivity, which leads to the demise of a person's character. Throughout our life, we work towards achieving specific ideologies that we believe will give us complete happiness. It could be anything from having a loving family, to achieving a career high. Jacob Lawrence shows his dreams throughout his artwork. In his painting called Aspirations, you can see that Lawrence aspires to share a simple life with a loving family who are surrounded in a safe environment. You can see these aspirations in small details throughout the entire painting, such as the couple. As they sit across from each other in their home, the man and his wife pause from their readings and smile over at each other. The woman sits on a bench and rests one hand on her round belly as the other hand holds up her book. In between them is a round table with a vase holding a single spiky branch that separates into two branches at the top as red flower buds begin to bloom on the branch, bringing a sense of unity into the picture. The room is very simple with only a few pieces of furniture and a mirror hanging on the wall.

The lack of decoration in the room creates the idea of finding happiness in the simple things, while the couple and the flower in between them brings a sense of unity and togetherness. From this painting, you can assume that this is a goal that Lawrence strives for, but does not have yet. Often thought of as greed, aspirations are a way to express what we want but don't necessarily have in our lives. Believed by many to be one of the more destructive traits in our character, this greed is the only thing that keeps us motivated to work. Most of what we want is explained through the goals we set for ourselves in life. The goals we create push us to reach something better than what we already have. Working to achieve these goals is the only things we have to live for. They are the sole purpose for living, and without them we would be living a life without purpose. In his poem " Dreams", Langston Hughes explains how a life without dreams has no purpose by saying, " Hold fast to dreams/For if dreams die/Life is a broken-winged bird/That cannot fly. " The one universal fact about birds is that their purpose in life is to fly. That is all they do and that is all they are known for. If a bird cannot fly, it has lost its purpose in life. Hughes uses this to show the reader how dreams for humans are like wings for birds. He urges the reader to realize that they must hold onto their dreams, because if they let them die, life will have no purpose. They are a necessity in human character, and without dreams, life is empty and without purpose. Hughes goes on by saying, " Hold fast to dreams/For when dreams go/Life is a barren field/Frozen with snow. " By stating this, Hughes is trying to explain how life without dreams is like an empty field. A life without dreams isn't a life at all. There is nothing there that gives a life any kind of purpose. There is nothing

to work for, nothing to strive for, life is just empty. From both Lawrence and Hughes, you can see why it is critical for a person to have dreams. Without dreams, it is impossible to live a life with purpose. There would be nothing to work for which would inevitably mean there would be nothing to live for. Without a sense of productivity and purpose, a person's character will slowly rot away until there is nothing left leaving an empty body without a soul.