

Works of langston hughes

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Langston Hughes' two works are similar and different in certain ways. One similarity that stands out is that both writings had racial issues as its central theme. However, each work utilized a different manner by which to tackle the said subject matter.

Hughes' poem, Theme for English B, seemingly uses the author's own experience as the focal point upon which to discuss racial differences. In the poem, Hughes points out that race does not completely define the character of an individual. His writing exemplifies the fact that racial differences does not equate to a different likes and dislikes altogether. By saying,

I guess being colored doesn't make me not like

The same things other folks like who are other races,

The author shows that color does not completely divide society. Blacks and whites can share and appreciate the same things. They can read the same books, listen to the same music, and have the same hobbies. In his poem, Hughes personifies the American as either being black or white but have the same interests.

Using the character of the instructor as his personification of the white people, the author is able to show that indeed blacks and whites share something in particular, they are both Americans. Ultimately, what Hughes points out is that people of different races can co-exist and can benefit from each other. The line,

As I learn from you, I guess you learn from me

Is a clear depiction of Hughes belief that blacks and whites can live in the same society.

In his short story, *Who's Passing for Who*, Hughes uses another perspective to show the issue of race. The author's attitude towards race in this work is far different from that which he showed in the poem. In the story, Hughes shows how blacks and whites are divided. He shows how each race sticks together and how a white man or a black man seemingly cares for only those of the same race as he. In the lines:

“ Well,” answered the red-haired lowan, “ I didn't mean to be butting in of they were all the same race.”

“ Don't you think a woman needs defending from a brute, no matter what race she may be?” asked the painter.

“ Yes, but I think it's up to you to defend your own women.”

Hughes clearly shows the principle that a people of the same race should only look after the concerns of their race. They should not get involved in the matters of different races. This is a clear sign of division between races. In other words, Hughes shows the idea that no unity can exist between blacks and whites and that they are confined by their race. Although such attitude seemingly changes in the latter part of the story, the fact that they had to pretend that they were black so that they could enjoy the company of the Black writers once again shows the distaste that each race has for the other.

Personally, I like the attitude that Hughes shows in the poem. Although the story may depict the reality that existed at the height of racial tensions in the country, I appreciate the positive stand that the author took in his poem. Much has been written on how race has divided the American society. However, Hughes' poem is one of the few works that I have read that has shed hope on the possibility of blacks and whites living and co-existing in society. Finally, I like the poem for it is able to show that race does not define th