

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Analyzing Poetry

Chapters Eight and Nine

One of the most prolific and famous writers during the Harlem Renaissance was Langston Hughes. He was a poet, playwright, and novelist who is well-known for his realistic portrayal of the average African-American man. Below is Hughes's poem "I, Too", which was written in 1925.

I, Too

I, too, sing America

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed ~
I, too, am America.

Directions:

Cut this paper in half and glue the poem in your composition book. Then read, annotate, and complete some sketchnotes on the poem. Re-Read the poem "I, Too" and apply it to the novel TEWWG. Answer these questions on the following page of your composition book.

1. How is the speaker's description of being the "darker brother" ironic?
2. Identify the tone and central theme of this poem. Pay close attention to the shift in the poem.
3. How does diction affect the tone of the poem?
4. Find 2 separate quotes from TEWWG that relate to a the theme of this poem and copy them.
5. Use the two quotes to answer the following question: In what ways does Janie compare to the speaker of the poem?