

## LANGSTON HUGHES AND HIS POETRY

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**Abstract.** *This article describes Langston Hughes, a brilliant writer in American literature. And it includes facts about the poet's life path and role in literature. Langston Hughes (1901–1967) was a poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, columnist, and a significant figure of the Harlem Renaissance. Born in Joplin, Missouri, Hughes was the descendant of enslaved African American women and white slave owners in Kentucky.*

**Key words:** *black man, equality, poems, literature, life experiences, poetry*

### **Introduction**

Langston Hughes has written a myriad of essays, plays, and short stories, but he is most famous for [his poems](#). Many scholars and critics refer to him as a “poet laureate of American African experience”. His poems picture the daily life and struggles of the common Black people. Hughes is especially famous for the verses he composed during the [Harlem Renaissance](#) of the 20th century. He is one of the major leaders of the movement and his poems truly capture the spirit of the age. Langston Hughes’s poems use countless themes to depict the everyday life of African Americans.

### **Main body**

**Poetry.** Hughes uses poetry to convey the messages of equality, racial justice, and democracy. He celebrates the history, folkways, and real lives of his people. His poems are highly subjective, impassioned, and refreshingly powerful. They portray the dignity, resilience, struggle, and soulfulness of his people. They also depict their joys, laughter, and fondness for jazz and blues. Langston Hughes’ poetry did not

merely impact the African American community of his time, but it also became an inspiration for all coming generations.

The major themes in Langston Hughes's poems come out of his personal life, his experiences with his people, his travels, and his involvement in radical and protest movements. Some of the important themes noticed in the works of Langston Hughes are the Black pride, American Dream, racism, dreams of freedom and change, music etc. He has a strong sense of racial pride and is one of the most powerful spokesmen of his race. He always encourages his people to be proud of who they are. His poems such as "I Too", "Negro", "My People", "Color", and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" highlight, beside other themes, the theme of Black pride as well. Hughes's poetry gives expression to the glorious dreams of the Blacks and their nostalgic memories of their land. He uses the language, themes, and forms of expressions that are clear and familiar to his people.

Through his poems, Langston Hughes always urges his people to love themselves no matter how other people treat them or think of them. He writes poetry to uplift his race. He describes the heroic role of Blacks and their unending struggle against hate and oppression. His poetry instills in his people a growing sense of pride for Black race by claiming that Negroes have been instrumental in civilization all through history. Hughes famous poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" traces the ties of African Americans to the rich cultures and histories of Blacks. In the poem, he uses the river to build pride in the African American community. He has a strong sense of racial pride and is one of the most powerful spokesmen of his race. He always encourages his people to be proud of who they are. His poems such as "I Too", "Negro", "My People", "Color", and "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" highlight, beside other themes, the theme of Black pride as well. Hughes's poetry gives expression to the glorious dreams of the Blacks and their nostalgic memories of their land. He uses the language, themes, and forms of expressions that are clear and familiar to his people. Langston Hughes is mostly remembered selectively as a "folk" and jazz poet, or author of black vernacular blues and jazz poetry. While Hughes did dedicate himself to creating and reinterpreting these genres throughout

his life and career, the core of his work is actually in collecting and experimenting with folklore across spaces and media. In Harlem and abroad, Hughes operated as what scholar Daphne Lamothe calls a “native ethnographer,” adapting his work during and beyond the Harlem Renaissance across genres to the discourses of anthropology, folklore, and sociology in a mode reminiscent of that of sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois, anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston, civil rights activist, songwriter, and author of the local history book *Black Manhattan* James Weldon Johnson, choreographer Katharine Dunham, and many others. Specifically, Hughes was an ethnographer of black vernacular culture, transcribing different kinds of linguistic and musical performance and reinterpreting those transcriptions in and as his own texts. In fact, Hughes sourced the majority of his writing in the folklore he researched and collected. His commitment to these intertwining practices is difficult to overstate. But while he has been recognized as a poet of black “folk” vernacular, almost nothing has been said about the way he compiled and organized his sources for his writing. One reason for this oversight is that the field of folklore has at times been fetishistic, primitivistic, and very racist. It has justified the collection and preservation of black cultural production as if it were inherently anathema to modernity, a progenitor to modern advancements on the evolutionary chain—which have historically been coded as white. During Hughes’s lifetime, the field, like much of academia, was also largely closed to practitioners of color.

### **Conclusion**

Despite these hardships, African Americans made important cultural contributions, especially in the areas of music and literature. It is expressed by Langston Hughes in his poem “I made ragtime” origin music from Africa. Jazz has been dominated by the contributions of African Americans, but the list of white musicians who have played important roles in its development. Finally, the writer concludes this poem is for all those people with African origins who know prejudice is still part of our days. In his poem, Langston Hughes expresses experiencing race discrimination of Black American in their society especially in education, workplaces, public facilities and judicature. This poem reminds us that those black

people were also entitled to the same right. They feel depressed and uncomfortable life in their community.

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