

<b>Date: 4/15/10</b>	<b>Teacher: Jean Levis</b>
<b>Grade: 11th</b>	<b>Subject: American Literature</b>
<b>Concept Objectives:</b>	<p>The primary objectives of this lesson are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to clarify and add depth/richness to the concept of a motif (in literature and art);</li> <li>• to evaluate the historical influence of the Harlem Renaissance on Bearden's and Hurston's work;</li> <li>• to examine relationships between the rural landscapes of Southern, rural, African American culture and the urban landscapes of Harlem culture.</li> </ul>
<b>Guiding Question:</b>	<p><b>How does Romare Bearden's collage, "The Dove" (17B), compare and contrast with Zora Neale Hurston's novel, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>?</b></p> <p>Include reflections on the biographical background of the artists and an emphasis on Hurston's use of the following motifs: the porch, the people, the tree, the road, the horizon, the darkness.</p>
<b>Length:</b>	Two 50-minute class periods
<b>Next Generation Florida Language Arts Standards:</b>	<p>LA.1112.2.1.6 - create a complex, multi-genre response to the reading of literary works using multiple critical perspectives, describing and analyzing an author's use of literary elements and figurative language;</p> <p>LA.1112.2.1.8 - explain how ideas, values, and themes of a literary work often reflect the historical period in which it was written.</p>
<b>Materials:</b>	Picturing America reproduction of Romare Bearden's "The Dove"; Zora Neale Hurston's novel, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> ; Pens/Pencils/Paper; Technology listed below.
<b>Available Technology:</b>	Computers for each student; digital projector; Internet.
<b>Key Vocabulary:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>motif</u> – a recurrent concept or element in a literary work or a repeated design, color or thematic element in a work of art.</li> <li>2. <u>collage</u> – an artistic composition made of various materials glued on a surface.</li> <li>3. <u>gouache</u> – a method of painting with opaque watercolors.</li> <li>4. <u>Harlem Renaissance</u> – a flowering of African American talent centered in Harlem in the 1920's through the mid-1930's that produced a strong cultural legacy in the arts.</li> </ol>
<b>Background for Teacher:</b>	<p>Students have already studied Hurston's <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>. They have completed a small group project, including a written, an oral and a visual product, on one of the following topics: the 1928 Okeechobee hurricane, Eatonville, the Florida Writer's Project of the '30's, Hurston's biography, or oral history and folklore. (See <a href="http://www.ikeepbookmarks.com/browse.asp?folder=2547596">http://www.ikeepbookmarks.com/browse.asp?folder=2547596</a> for links to resources.) They have discussed the placement of six primary motifs in the novel. Motif seems to be a difficult, abstract concept for students, not quite a theme, a symbol or an image. Examining motifs in a work of art concretizes them, adding immediacy and richness to the concept and the discussion. Bearden and Hurston were contemporaries, had a number of similar life experiences, and expressed a similar purpose for their art. "The Dove" creates a rich, urban landscape, while Hurston's novel brings to life a teeming, rural landscape. All of these factors make the pairing fertile ground for reflection and discussion.</p>

## Performance Tasks, Activities:

### Introduction:

1. To review, teacher calls on students to create a list of motifs studied in the novel, with a short description of each.
2. Continuing review, students create a second list of important facts about Zora Neale Hurston's life.
3. Teacher or student can act as scribe to record these lists on the computer connected to the digital projector.
4. Teacher explains that the class will keep in mind these motifs and biographical facts while exploring the life of Romare Bearden and his collage, "The Dove".

### Development:

1. Students watch several short videos and/or read background information on Romare Bearden. Teacher can choose from resources at: [http://www.sfmoma.org/multimedia/interactive\\_features/23](http://www.sfmoma.org/multimedia/interactive_features/23) or <http://www.beardenfoundation.org/index2.shtml> on the Picturing America wiki Useful Links or information in the *Picturing America Teacher's Resource Book*.
2. Students work in pairs or small groups (depending on class size), making a list of observations/reflections on Bearden's "The Dove", 17b, (either digitally projected on a screen from the Picturing America website or with the school's reproduction placed at the front of the room). This list of observations can include anything the students notice, but should emphasize those elements that invite comparison with or contrast to Hurston's life and work.

### Practice:

1. Students share their lists with the large group, inviting discussion and additional brainstorming.
2. These ideas are typed onto individual, interactive Venn diagrams on student computers, or the teacher or a student scribe can record them on a Venn diagram on the digital projector. (<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/venn/index.html> ) These Venn diagrams scaffold the Independent Practice Activity below.

### Independent Practice:

1. Students work individually in class or as homework on a formal compare and contrast essay, examining elements of the two works and the two artists' lives, with particular attention to Hurston's motifs. Students use Venn diagrams as scaffolding, but may choose among ideas from the Venn or add other ideas in creating essay drafts.
2. Students peer edit each other's essays in pairs.

### Closure:

1. Essay drafts are edited to produce a final product, which is also placed in student's digital Literary Analysis Portfolio.

## Assessment:

20% Participation in class list creation, discussion.  
20% Lists of observations on the collage produced by pairs or small groups.  
10% Collaboration in peer editing.  
50% Final draft of formal essay.  
Creation of a rubric would assess these activities most effectively.