

Picturing American Perspectives Lesson
Black Culture and African American Perspectives
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After reading the novel *Black Boy* by Richard Wright, students will be able to depict elements of black culture from the 1912-1937 time period that would help them to understand the African American point of view. I want to further extend this to a visual piece (“The Dove, 1964” by Romare Bearden) and a primary document “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” by Langston Hughes (*The Nation*, 1926). All three of these pieces give solid examples of black culture that students can easily identify, therefore, making it a little easier to understand the African American point of view.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to depict black culture from the African American point of view in a piece of art, primary document by a poet, and a novel.

Materials:

1. a copy of the novel *Black Boy* by Richard Wright
2. poster of “The Dove, 1964” by Romare Bearden
3. a copy of Langston Hughes’s article “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” (*The Nation*, 1926) {accessible from http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/music_in_poetry/index.html}

Procedure of Lesson:

1. Teacher hands out copy of the “Perspectives” worksheet. Students can fill in descriptions of culture from novel *Black Boy* as a class onto the “Perspectives” worksheet. Then they will fill in what this tells them about the black culture from the African American point of view onto the “Perspectives” worksheet.
2. Post the picture of “The Dove, 1964” by Romare Bearden where all students can view it and have them describe on a sticky note what they see in this picture. Students will share with a partner what they wrote and then share with the whole class. Teacher will write the ideas on the board. Then students can fill in the descriptions column on their “Perspectives” worksheet. With a partner, they can fill in what this tells them about the black culture from the African American point of view onto their “Perspectives” worksheet, then share it as a whole class.
3. Hand out the article “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain” by Langston Hughes and have students read it individually and mark spots where they can find descriptions of culture. Add those descriptions to the “Perspectives” worksheet.
4. Have students individually fill in what this tells them about the black culture from the African American point of view onto their “Perspectives” worksheets.
5. Discuss the last two boxes as a whole class when all students are finished.

6. For a final assessment, students will pick two descriptions of culture that they were not familiar with prior to these pieces and explain what they learned about the African American culture and point of view from them. They will pick one description that they were already familiar with prior to these pieces and describe what they already knew about the African American culture and point of view from it. This will be turned in, along with the “Perspectives” worksheet to the teacher for a grade.

Perspectives
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Artifact	Description of Culture	What does this tell us about African American point of view?
<i>Black Boy</i> by Richard Wright		
"The Dove, 1964" by Romare Bearden		
"The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (1926), Langston Hughes		

Perspectives
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