

Name: _____ Hour: _____

Crash Course Black American History #26: Arts and Letters of the Harlem Renaissance

Background to the Harlem Renaissance

- What was the “Great Migration”? _____

- What was the “Red Summer” (1919)? _____

- One of the results of these and other big changes across the U.S. in the early 20th century was that Black Americans were becoming more and more _____.
- Many were tired of being treated like _____ and begin pushing for more _____ and _____.
- Harlem (describe): _____

- The Harlem Renaissance started in Harlem, but it spread to cities like _____, _____, and _____.

The Visual Arts

- ★ Richmond Barthe did sculptures which emphasized the beauty of _____.
- ★ James Van Der Zee was a _____ who documented African American life.
- ★ Aaron Douglass used _____ and _____ methods in his murals (large paintings usually done on walls or other large surfaces) to address segregation and race.
- ★ Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller was a painter and sculptor who expressed the Black Experience using African themes. She was the first Black woman to be commissioned (hired) by the federal government to create specific works of art.

The Literary Arts

- ★ _____ was probably the most famous poet of his day.
- ★ His poetry was unique because it reflected both his personal experience as a _____ and the experiences of _____ across the country.
- ★ Hughes tried to capture the authentic Black experience and refused to make Black life look happier or less _____ than it actually was for so many.

- ★ James Weldon Johnson co-wrote “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” which is now known as the _____. (He was also active in the NAACP.)
- ★ Arthur “Arturo” Schomburg wrote about the Black Diasporic experience (the migrations of Black people in various parts of the world).
- ★ Walter White investigated _____.
- ★ Countee Cullen wrote poems which embraced “color-blindness” in styles which appealed to white readers (that’s what ‘Eurocentric literary sensibilities basically means).
- ★ Claude McKay wrote poetry in a _____ as well as “straight English.”
{You’ll probably see his poem “If We Must Die” again soon.}
- ★ Zora Neale Hurston wrote about Black Southern life, particularly the experiences of Black _____. Her most famous book was *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

The Musical Arts

- ★ Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith sang _____. Many of their songs expressed the challenges of being a _____ in the United States.
- ★ Duke Ellington became one of the most famous and important _____ of all time. He helped make “big band” jazz popular (that’s the kind you can dance to).
- ★ Billie Holiday became one of the most famous singers of the era. Her song “_____” offered a powerful commentary on the lynchings of Black Americans happening at the time. It’s also considered the first “protest songs” of the Civil Rights era.
*“Southern trees bear a strange fruit - blood on the leaves and blood at the root -
Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze - strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees...”*
- ★ Obviously, rock’n’roll evolved directly from blues, gospel, and jazz - that’s why so many white parents were horrified when their kids started listening to it.
- ★ Just like a generation or two later, entertainment during the Harlem Renaissance offered some Black Americans a chance at visibility and acceptance - even if that acceptance was still very limited to one small part of American culture.