

Culture Speaks

Examine how creative works reflected life in the 1920s and 1930s.

USII.5.e “examining the art, literature, and music of the 1920s and 1930s including, but not limited to the Roaring Twenties and the Harlem Renaissance;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that tells how art, literature, or music reflected people's lives or feelings. Number the three underlined sentences 1, 2, and 3 to compare the decades.

Arts in Changing Times

- ① During the 1920s, many Americans had more money to spend on movies, records, and magazines. This lively period became known as the Roaring Twenties. Jazz, with strong rhythms and room for improvisation, spread from Black communities to clubs and radio stations across the nation. Musicians such as Louis Armstrong helped make jazz popular. New dances and fashionable clothing appeared in cities. These arts showed excitement about modern life, but not all Americans shared the decade's wealth or freedom.
- ② In Harlem, a New York City neighborhood, Black writers, artists, and musicians created a cultural movement called the Harlem Renaissance. Langston Hughes wrote poems that used the sounds and rhythms of everyday speech and jazz. His work celebrated Black life while also facing unfair treatment. Artist Aaron Douglas used bold shapes and images from African history in murals and illustrations. Jazz performers, including Duke Ellington, played music that drew audiences to Harlem. Together, their work expressed pride, creativity, and a demand to be seen and heard.
- ③ After the stock market crash of 1929, the Great Depression brought job loss and hardship to many families. Artists and writers often showed these struggles. Photographer Dorothea Lange's images made viewers notice migrant families seeking work, while novelist John Steinbeck wrote about people harmed by poverty and displacement. The federal government supported some artists through New Deal programs, leading to public murals, posters, and plays. At the same time, swing bands gave people music for dancing and escape. Art in the 1930s could document problems, build community, or offer hope.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did jazz move from Black communities to people across the nation, and what feeling did it show about the 1920s?

2 How did Langston Hughes connect his poetry to Black life and culture?

3 What are two purposes art could serve during the Great Depression? Use information from the passage.

4 Compare the Harlem Renaissance with art of the 1930s. What did each help people express or understand?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Invent a title for an imagined artwork, poem, or song from either the 1920s or the 1930s. Write a four-sentence museum label that describes its details and explains what those details reveal about people's lives or feelings in that decade.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that tells how art, literature, or music reflected people's lives or feelings. Number the three underlined sentences 1, 2, and 3 to compare the decades. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did jazz move from Black communities to people across the nation, and what feeling did it show about the 1920s?	Jazz spread through clubs and radio stations. Its popularity showed excitement about modern life in the 1920s.
2	How did Langston Hughes connect his poetry to Black life and culture?	He used the sounds and rhythms of everyday speech and jazz. His poems celebrated Black life and also faced unfair treatment.
3	What are two purposes art could serve during the Great Depression? Use information from the passage.	Answers may include documenting problems, building community, or offering hope.
4	Compare the Harlem Renaissance with art of the 1930s. What did each help people express or understand?	The Harlem Renaissance expressed Black pride, creativity, and a demand to be seen and heard. Art in the 1930s helped people understand hardship and could also build community or offer hope.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Road of Hope My imagined 1930s painting shows a family carrying suitcases beside a crowded road. Gray skies and worn shoes show the hardship of job loss and travel. A small bright sunrise suggests that the family still has hope. The painting would help viewers notice the struggles of families during the Great Depression.

Accept answers that accurately connect a creative work to experiences, feelings, or social conditions described in the passage. For the open response, accept historically reasonable imagined details that clearly fit the chosen decade and include four sentences.