



theory of African American literature with that espoused by Johnson and Hughes in a maximum of two pages. Post your essays to blackboard by noon tomorrow. Be prepared to discuss your position in class.

Thursday, May 31

***In Class Activities:*** Discuss the three theories of African American literature espoused by Johnson, Locke and Hughes. What are the similarities and differences in the theories?

***Assignment:*** Read Marcus Garvey's "The Future as I See It" (pp 1000-1003) and W.E.B. DuBois' "Criteria of Negro Art" (pp 777-784). Identify points at which the two leaders' political ideas intersect and points at which they diverge in a maximum of two pages. Post to blackboard by noon tomorrow. Be prepared to discuss these ideas in class tomorrow. Read Nella Larsen's "Quicksand" (pp 1085-1168) and Claude McKay's "Home to Harlem" (pp 1010-1016).

Friday, June 1

***In Class Activities:*** Discuss the political ideas of DuBois and Garvey. Discuss Larsen's and McKay's novels after reading DuBois' "Two Novels" in class (pp 784-786).

***Assignment:*** Read selected poems by: Grimke, Spencer, Johnson, McKay, Fisher, Brown, Bennett, Bontemps, Hughes and Cullen. Choose three poems which articulate the socio-political ideas of the Harlem Renaissance and write a 3-5 page position paper in which you discuss why these poems are most representative of this period. Post to Blackboard by noon on Sunday. Begin reading Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* – due next Friday.

**Week 2**

## **REALISM, NATURALISM AND MODERNISM**

Monday, June 4

***In Class Activities:*** Review the themes of the Harlem Renaissance and discuss select poems as representations of the ideology of Garvey, DuBois, Hughes, Locke and Johnson.

BREAK. Introduction to realism, naturalism and modernism.

***Assignment:*** Read Dorothy West's "The Living is Easy" (pp 1383-1399) and Ann Petry's "The Street" (pp 1504-1516). In a maximum of two pages, compare and contrast the representation of myths of black female sexuality in the two works. How does each author shape her protagonist's perspective? How does this perspective affect readers' comprehension of the respective danger each protagonist faces? Post your response to blackboard by noon tomorrow. Be prepared to discuss in class. Continue reading Ellison's *Invisible Man*.

Tuesday, June 5

***In Class Activities:*** Discuss West's and Petry's works in terms of naturalism. Read Richard Wright's "Blueprint for Negro Writing" (pp 1403-1411) – discuss Wright's location and celebration of the origins of African American cultures in black vernacular traditions.

***Assignment:*** Read Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun" (pp 1771-1831). Read the poem "Harlem" by Langston Hughes (pp 1308) from which Hansberry took the title of her play. In a maximum of two pages, discuss ways that Hansberry's play answers the questions Hughes's poem asks. Post to blackboard by noon tomorrow. Be prepared to discuss Hansberry's play in class. Continue reading Ellison's *Invisible Man*. Be prepared to discuss the first half of the novel in class tomorrow.

Wednesday, June 6

**In Class Activities:** Discuss *A Raisin in the Sun* in terms of dramatic realism. What specific elements of the Harlem Renaissance are evident in Hansberry's play? BREAK. Discuss *Invisible Man*.

**Assignment:** Read Melvin B. Tolson's "Libretto for the Republic" (pp 1375-1380) as well as poems by Gwendolyn Brooks (pp 1623-1649). Consider that both Tolson and Brooks have been regarded as the most Modernist of African American poets. In a maximum of two pages, examine their poems and enumerate the conventions they share. In what ways are their styles different? What difference does each poet's gender identity seem to make to his or her poetry? You might want to begin by comparing the two poets' divergent uses of the sonnet form. Continue reading *Invisible Man*.

Thursday, June 7

**In Class Activities:** Discuss Tolson and Brooks in terms of modernism. BREAK. Continue discussion of "Invisible Man." Introduction to Richard Wright – discussion of his influence on African American literature.

**Assignment:** Read Richard Wright's "The Man Who Lived Underground" (1436-1471) and James Baldwin's "Notes of a Native Son" (pp 1713-1728). In a maximum of two pages, trace Wright's influence on Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin as evidenced in the selections for tonight's reading. Post your response on blackboard by noon tomorrow. Complete the reading of *Invisible Man* – be prepared to discuss in class.

Friday, June 8

**In Class Activities:** Discuss Ellison's "Invisible Man." How might "Invisible Man" be read as an argument about American history and the American Dream, or Nightmare? Is "Invisible Man" a reconstruction of the Middle Passage? According to "Invisible Man," what role does history play in the formulation of identity? What views of black male identity are expressed in the novel?

**Assignment:** Complete the take home midterm exam. Post to blackboard by noon on Sunday. Begin reading *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* – due next Friday.

Week 3

### THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT

Monday, June 11

**In Class Activities:** Introduction to the Black Arts Movement.

**Assignment:** Read Hoyt Fuller's "Towards a Black Aesthetic" (pp 1852-1859), Larry Neal's "The Black Arts Movement" (pp 2038-2051), Addison Gayle, Jr.'s "The Black Aesthetic" (pp 1911-1919), and Maulana Karenga's "Black Art: Mute Matter Given Force and Function" (pp 2086-2090). Select two of the essays from tonight's reading and write a maximum of two pages which explore the ways in which the two essays selected address W.E.B. DuBois's concept of "double consciousness." Post your response to blackboard by noon tomorrow.

Tuesday, June 12

**In Class Activities:** Discuss DuBois' concept of "double consciousness" as evidenced in the essays by Fuller and Gayle. In what ways does Neal's essay differ from the other essays on black aesthetics? To what extent do you agree with Neal's claim that the Harlem

Renaissance “was essentially a failure?” Do you agree that the Harlem Renaissance “failed to link itself concretely to the struggles of the black community?” To what extent do you think the ideas in Karenga’s essay may lead to greater distances among U.S. ethnic and racial groups? How might Americans benefit from applying Karenga’s theory?

**Assignment:** Read Ed Bullins “Goin’ a Buffalo: A Tragifantasy” (pp 1969-2006). In a maximum of two pages, compare and contrast Bullins’ play with Hansberry’s *A Raisin in the Sun* – consider specifically the structure, themes and characters of both plays. Post your response on blackboard by noon tomorrow. Continue reading *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* – be prepared to discuss the first half in class tomorrow.

Wednesday, June 13

**In Class Activities:** Discuss Bullins’ play – especially his vision of outlaws and outcasts among poor urban blacks. BREAK. Begin discussion of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Review Marcus Garvey’s ideas and discuss the ways in which they correspond to Malcolm X’s. Discuss any apparent influence Garvey has had on Malcolm X.

**Assignment:** Read select poems by Jayne Cortez, Michael S. Harper, Sherley Anne Williams and Nikki Giovanni. In a maximum of two pages, discuss the similarities and differences in their work in terms of their use of the vernacular – in terms of both African American conversation and musical allusions. Post your response to blackboard by noon tomorrow and come to class prepared to discuss. Continue reading *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

Thursday, June 14

**In Class Activities:** Discuss the poems from last night’s assignment. BREAK. Read the Coltrane poems by Cortez, Spellman and Harper and listen to the audio recording of Coltrane. Discuss the effects on us as listeners and as readers of African American literature of Coltrane’s music. Does the recording illuminate aspects of Spellman’s poem? What qualities indicate that these poems are from the same era? In what ways do they pay a different kind of tribute to Coltrane? Listen to the audio recordings of Cortez’s and Harper’s poems: what are the differences between these two jazz-inflected tributes to Coltrane?

**Assignment:** Finish reading *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

Friday, June 15

**In Class Activities:** Discuss *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* – BREAK – Discuss final paper – students are to notify me of which major work and period they will write about in their final paper.

**Assignment:** Read Yusef Komunyakaa’s *Neon Vernacular* – in a maximum of two pages, analyze Komunyakaa’s commingling of ordinary and holy gestures in his poetry.

Week 4

#### AFRICAN AMERICAN LIT SINCE 1975

Monday, June 18

**In Class Activities:** Discuss Komunyakaa’s poetry.

**Assignment:** Read Ernest J. Gaines’ “The Sky is Gray” and Charles Johnson’s “Education of Mingo” – in a maximum of two pages, compare and contrast Moses’s description of Mingo’s refusal to kill chicken hawks in Johnson’s “The Education of Mingo” to Gaines’s representation of the necessity of sacrifice, action, and social responsibility in a small town

in “The Sky is Gray.” Post your response to blackboard by noon tomorrow and come to class prepared to discuss.

Tuesday, June 19

***In Class Activities:*** Discuss Gaines and Johnson.

***Assignment:*** Read the excerpt of Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple* – in a maximum of two pages, debate the theological issues that both underpin and are explicit in the conversation between Celie and Shug. Comment on Shug’s comparison of the deity to an orgasm (and vice versa). Post your response to blackboard by noon tomorrow and come to class prepared to discuss.

Wednesday, June 20

***In Class Activities:*** Discuss Walker’s *The Color Purple*.

***Assignment:*** Read Adrienne Kennedy’s *A Movie Star Has to Star in Black and White* – in a maximum of two pages, compare and contrast Kenney’s play with Hansberry’s *A Raisin in the Sun*. How are these two versions of black life and values different? How are they the same? Post your response to blackboard by noon tomorrow and come to class prepared to discuss.

Thursday, June 21

***In Class Activities:*** Discuss Kennedy’s play.

***Assignment:*** complete your final paper – 12-15 pages – post on blackboard by midnight, Friday.

Friday, June 22

NO CLASS – FINISH FINAL PAPER