

COMPARING TEXTS

SYMPATHY AND CAGED BIRD



UNIT 3 What We Keep Poetry Connection

A STEM school

FROEBEL
BILINGUAL SCHOOL

Home of the Space Generation

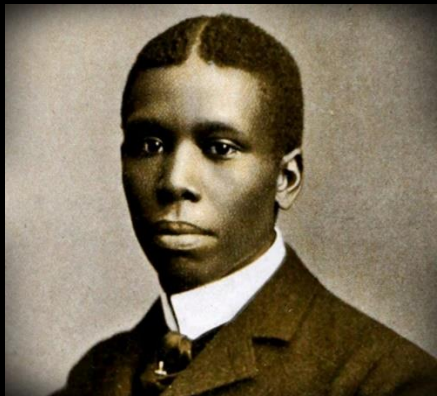


SPEAK YOUR MIND

Animals + cages. They seem to go together, don't they? We see them in zoos. We see them in farms. Many have caged birds at home. How would you feel if the caged one were you? What situations in life would make a person like if they were caged?

Take a minute to react and explain your response in the notebook.

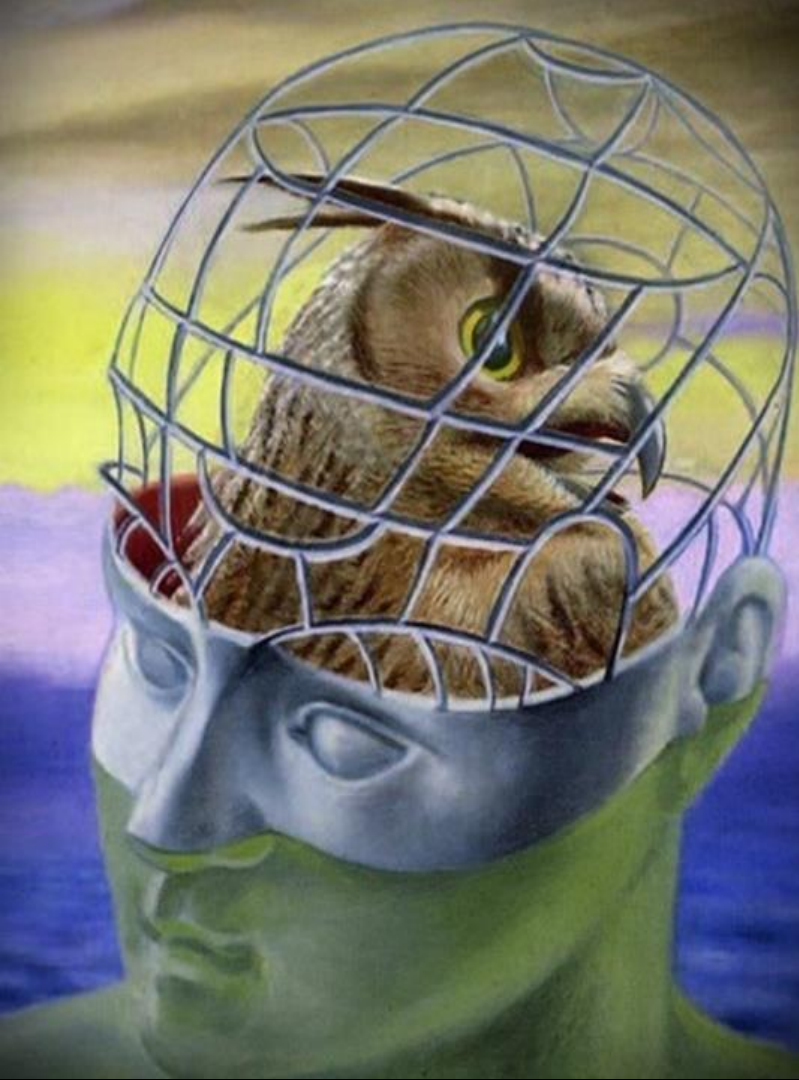




Paul Laurence Dunbar the son of former slaves, was born in Dayton, Ohio. Encouraged by his mother's love of poetry, Dunbar was writing and reciting poems by the age of six and published his first collection of poetry when he was twenty-one. Before his death at the age of thirty-four, he published twelve books of poetry, four books of short stories, a play, and five novels.

Maya Angelou spent much of her childhood in the segregated South. Abused and lonely as a child, Angelou turned her painful experiences into a series of memoirs including the widely read "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings". Also well known for her poetry, she stresses, "*We need language to tell us who we are, how we feel, what we're capable of—to explain the pains and glory of our existence.*"





SYMPATHY

Dunbar's poem "Sympathy", featured in the book *Lyrics of the Hearthside*, portrays a time in America when a good-paying job and a college education were unavailable to most African Americans, it echoes the frustration of a talented young black poet. Credited for capturing the true voice of the African American in his poetry, Dunbar set the stage for the emergence of black artists and writers living in Harlem in the 1920s and 1930s, an era known as the **Harlem Renaissance**.

CAGED BIRD

Maya Angelou's poem "Caged Bird" was published eighty-four years after "Sympathy" in a collection titled *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?* Angelou, who is also African American, was influenced by Dunbar and a number of other writers, including William Shakespeare. Angelou chose the title "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" for the first book in her five-book collection of autobiographical works.



I KNOW WHY
THE CAGED BIRD
SINGS
BY MAYA
ANGELOU

Minorities have historically been marginalized and have experienced challenges to their freedom in the United States, especially African Americans. Both poems explore the topic of freedom. Has there ever been a time when you did not feel free to be yourself? How did you feel? What did you do?



LITERARY SKILL

Rhetorical Devices

These poems contain rhetorical devices—techniques writers use to achieve a particular effect on the reader. Rhetorical devices may include the repetition of words, phrases, and passages and the use of figurative language—wording meant to be understood imaginatively (example: “but a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams”). As you read the poems, notice the repetition used. Look for repeated words, imagery and phrases. Consider the similarities between the poems and their use of figurative language.



READING STRATEGY

Stanza	Main Idea	Details
Sympathy, stanza 2	Struggle for freedom	“blood is red on the cruel bars”

Use Text Organization

Traditional poems are often arranged into stanzas, or groups of lines. In these poems, the stanza sometimes functions as a paragraph does in prose: It may explore a single idea related to the subject of the poem. Details in the stanza help to bring out the main idea. Make two charts, one for each poem, and then use them to keep notes about each stanza in the two poems.

ASSESSMENT

After reading pages 244 - 247 in your book, complete these activities:

1. REFER TO TEXT &
2. REASON WITH TEXT
3. & ANALYZE LITERATURE
 - **Rhetorical Devices** - Rhetorical devices used in both poems are figurative language and repetition. Consider how each poem uses figurative language and why the authors may have chosen to use figurative language in that way. Why might repetition be used in these poems? Do you think the caged bird in Angelou's poem represents the same thing that it does in Dunbar's poem?



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