

AFRICAN AMERICAN READ-IN

Suggested Activities

ART

Read a brief biography of an African American artist, accompanied by viewing and discussing his/her work. Read the writing of an artist and compare it with his/her art work, e.g., Margaret Burroughs' "For My People," or Jacob Lawrence's "The Great Migration." Compare the artwork of two African American artists who have illustrated the same narrative (e.g., "Lift Every Voice and Sing" illustration by Elizabeth Catlett compared with the illustration by Jan Gilchrist).

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL DAYCARE

Listen to stories written by African American writers. Sing songs written by African American composers. Sing traditional or contemporary songs, such as "This Little Light of Mine" and "We Shall Overcome."

HEALTH

Read and discuss biographies or writings by African Americans who have contributed to the health sciences and /or health education (e.g., Charles Drew, Percy Julian, Susie Taylor, and Joycelyn Elders).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND ESL

Read and discuss a story, poem, play, and/or essay that is included in a literature reading series, literature anthology, or student magazines. Read the works and biographical sketch of an African American poet or essayist. Read an excerpt from a novel or play written/performed by an African American (e.g., Carl T. Rowan, August Wilson).

MUSIC

Read a brief (auto)biography of an African American musician (composer/lyricist, director, arranger, or performer). Then listen to and discuss their music. Sing songs written by African American composers. Read about and sing spirituals. Perform works by African American composers. Read about African American performance groups and listen to their music (e.g. Sounds of Blackness, Jubilee Singers, Harlem Boys Choir).

PERFORMING ARTS

Read/listen to and discuss a speech written/performed by an African American (e.g., Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King, Jr., Barbara Jordan, Sojourner Truth, Jesse Jackson). Read a play written by or a (auto)biography of an African American playwright. Discuss famous African American actors/actresses, e.g., Paul Robeson, Ossie Davis, and Ruby Dee. Students could perform a dramatic presentation of a play excerpt or poem written by an African American.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Read and discuss (auto)biographies of Black athletes, coaches, and managers. Discuss contributions of African Americans to sports and fitness.

SCIENCE

Read and discuss a biography of an African American astronaut. Read and discuss inventions/patents of African Americans. Read biographies of African American inventors (e.g., Elijah McCoy). Read about and discuss contributions of African Americans to space science, life science, physical science, earth science, environmental science, medicine, agriculture, etc.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Read biographies of African Americans who have made contributions to education, law, politics, sociology, psychology, etc. Read and discuss slave narratives.