

## HARLEM / THE NEGRO SPEAKS OF RIVERS / I, TOO / THE WEARY BLUES

**Selection Test A****Comprehension**

Read each of the following questions. Then choose the letter of the best answer. (6 points each)

- The speaker in "Harlem" is someone who worries about the idea of people
  - giving up on their dreams
  - having unrealistic dreams
  - dreaming instead of acting
  - feeling pressure to achieve dreams
- The speaker in "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" suggests that the rivers he or she has known are
  - famous as scenes of slavery
  - older than the first people
  - red like human blood
  - deeper than any other rivers
- What does the speaker compare his or her soul to in "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"?
  - the ages of the world's rivers
  - the deepness of rivers
  - the darkness of rivers
  - a river's course
- In "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," which river did the speaker hear singing?
  - the Euphrates
  - the Congo
  - the Nile
  - the Mississippi
- The words of the song in the poem "The Weary Blues" express
  - a foolish desire to be alone
  - conflict with another person
  - dissatisfaction with life
  - anger about a loved one's death
- Who is the speaker referring to with the words "they" and "they'll" in "I, Too"?
  - whites in the United States
  - the speaker's brothers
  - visitors to the house
  - people who are ashamed
- According to the speaker in "I, Too," what does the darker brother do when sent to the kitchen?
  - waits for tomorrow
  - feels beautiful
  - finds company
  - grows strong
- The speaker in "I, Too" predicts that the darker brother will
  - rebel against authority
  - achieve equality
  - feel ashamed
  - lose the desire to laugh
- In lines 10 and 11 of "The Weary Blues," there is a shift in
  - repetition
  - refrain
  - speaker
  - rhythm
- The four poems are alike because they all
  - discuss events that take place in Harlem
  - focus on the experiences of African Americans
  - describe ways to sing or hear the blues
  - reveal autobiographical details

1. You can best describe the speaker in "Harlem" as someone who
  - A. abandons dreams quickly
  - B. dreams about living in Harlem
  - C. wonders about unrealized dreams
  - D. helps people realize their dreams
2. The speaker in "Harlem" suggests that the results of deferring a dream
  - A. can be violent
  - B. are often predictable
  - C. can seem unimportant
  - D. are negative and positive
3. How does the speaker compare himself or herself to rivers in "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"?
  - A. The speaker is the same age as the rivers of the world.
  - B. The speaker's song sounds like the flowing waters of rivers.
  - C. Both the speaker and rivers are dark and mysterious.
  - D. The speaker's soul is deep like the waters of rivers.
4. What aspect of the African-American identity does the speaker emphasize in "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"?
  - A. the struggle from slavery to freedom
  - B. a deep connection with the land
  - C. the long history of the black race
  - D. a strong desire for equality
9. Which statement most accurately describes the musician in "The Weary Blues"?
  - A. He lives on Lenox Avenue.
  - B. He is skilled at singing the blues.
  - C. He wants to bond with the speaker of the poem.
  - D. He feels alone and dissatisfied.
5. According to the speaker in "I, Too," why will no one dare to say "Eat in the kitchen"?
  - A. People will understand their darker brother.
  - B. The darker brother will be strong.
  - C. People will stop being ashamed.
  - D. The beauty of all people will be apparent.
6. What is the speaker suggesting in lines 1 and 18 of "I, Too"?
  - A. African Americans have made important musical contributions to the culture of the United States.
  - B. African Americans are of equal importance to whites in the United States.
  - C. African Americans contribute to the beauty of the United States.
  - D. African-American culture is synonymous with the culture of the United States.
7. Analyze the rhythm and repetition in lines 1–10 of "The Weary Blues." These lines reflect the influence of jazz on Hughes's poetry because they
  - A. use a fixed pattern of stressed syllables
  - B. focus on repeated words and phrases
  - C. include changes in rhythm
  - D. end with a refrain
8. The speaker in "The Weary Blues" tells about a time when he or she
  - A. heard a song about the moon and stars
  - B. listened to someone play the piano and sing
  - C. sang about being tired, sad, and lonely
  - D. met a famous blues musician
10. What quality do the four poems have in common?
  - A. All four poems present a single event in the lives of African Americans.
  - B. Each poem presents jazz as a unifying and liberating idea.
  - C. All four poems describe ways of singing, playing, or listening to the blues.
  - D. Each poem portrays the feelings and experiences of African Americans.