

## Racial Inequality Ten Bob in Winter (1964)

### Lesson 3

#### Learning Objectives

- To explore the theme of inequality through the medium of poetry

#### Resources

- 'Cross' by Langston Hughes, from *Poems from Different Cultures* Anthology (AQA) (included below)
- Pens
- Paper

#### Starter

Students look at their post-it notes from last lesson to remind them of the storyline of Ten Bob in Winter and the inequality within the storyline. Feedback to teacher.

#### Main 1

- What does the word 'cross' mean to you?

Ask students to come up with as many connotations as possible in two minutes. Feedback to teacher.

Prompt students to think about the words 'cross-breed', 'cross-cultural' etc. Also connotations with crosses and religion, crosses and marking incorrect work, being angry etc.

#### Main 2

Read the poem 'Cross' by Langston Hughes as a class. Explain that Langston Hughes was a famous 20<sup>th</sup> century black poet who endured a lot of suffering due to racism and inequality during his life.

Students annotate the poem with the number of syllables in each word. Note - no word has more than two syllables.

Draw students' attention to this:

- Why do they think the poet has done this?

Talk about the effect of the simple language and the impact of the strong, unapologetic approach to sensitive subject matter.

Continually relate to Langston Hughes' intention to communicate his opinion of inequality for mixed race individuals, but also to black people at this time

### Plenary

- How do they think this poem relates to the film Ten Bob in Winter?

Students can either write down their answers or simply feedback to the teacher. Discuss the relationship between the colour of skin, darkness of skin, and perceived place in society. In Ten Bob in Winter, the main character perceives himself as 'better' than the darker skinned musician, but 'below' the lighter skinned snob. Note that they all share a black heritage. Why might this be? Link answers back to the poem.

### Homework

Do you think the poet thinks being mixed race (a 'cross' of both black and white) is a good or bad thing? Why? Students need to write an explanatory answer, give a word count/line limit for students to fulfill.

Resource created by Emily O'Hara, Teach First



## **Cross (1926)**

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

My old man's a white old man  
And my old mother's black.  
If ever I cursed my white old man  
I take my curses back.  
If ever I cursed my black old mother  
And wished she were in hell,  
I'm sorry for that evil wish  
And now I wish her well  
My old man died in a fine big house.  
My ma died in a shack.  
I wonder where I'm going to die,  
Being neither white nor black.