

Speech Themes

This activity accompanies chapter 14 from *Up From Slavery* by Booker T. Washington, record number 4891.

Activity Title: Speech Themes

Description: The students will work in small groups to analyze Washington's Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition Speech for central themes.

Subject: Reading/Language Arts

Skill: Literary Analysis

Behavioral Objective:

- The student will identify and analyze universal themes in the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition Speech, given by Booker T. Washington.

Materials:

- *Up From Slavery*, chapter 14, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Pencil and paper

Procedures:

Read the fourteenth chapter of the book with the students, or have them read it on their own. In the fourteenth chapter of the book, Washington includes a copy of his Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition Speech, given on September 18, 1885. Discuss with the students that speeches usually have a theme, or central message, that the speaker is trying to get across to his or her listeners. Give examples of themes from other speeches, or have the students brainstorm possible themes found in speeches they know.

Next, have the students work in small groups or pairs to analyze the speech for repeated themes. Have them share their themes in a whole group setting, or pair them up with another group to compare what they found.

