

## Identifying Theme

This activity accompanies “The Mystery,” from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, record number 4988.

**Activity Title:** Identifying Theme

**Description:** The students will work in small groups to identify the theme of the poem.

**Subject:** Reading/Language Arts

**Skill:** Literary Analysis

**Behavioral Objective:**

- The student will analyze the way the theme of the poem represents a view or comment on life, providing textual evidence for the identified theme.

**Materials:**

- “The Mystery” poem, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Paper and pencils

**Procedures:**

Read the poem with the class, or have the students read it on their own. Discuss with the students possible meanings and themes of the poem. Next, have the students work in pairs or small groups to analyze the theme of the poem and write a short response providing textual support for the theme. Finally, have the students come together as a class and share what they found.

