

History in Poetry

This activity accompanies “The Colored Soldiers,” from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, record number 5023.

Activity Title: History in Poetry

Description: The students will work with a partner to explain the historical significance of the poem.

Subject: Reading/Language Arts and Social Studies

Skill: Literary Analysis and American History

Behavioral Objective:

- The student will work with a partner to analyze and research the history and significance of the poem.

Materials:

- “The Colored Soldiers” poem, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Paper and pencils
- Internet access and/or history books
 - <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/blacks-civil-war/>

Procedures:

Read the poem with the students, or have them read it on their own. Discuss with the students the time period in which this poem was written. Have the students work with a partner to research the history of black soldiers in the Civil War (see link above). Then, have the partners write an explanation for why this poem was significant in its time period.

