

“The Sum” Reaction

This activity accompanies “The Sum,” from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, record number 5127.

Activity Title: “The Sum” Reaction

Description: The students will answer Dunbar’s question at the end of his poem, using evidence from the poem to support their answer.

Subject: Reading/Language Arts

Skill: Reading Comprehension

Behavioral Objective:

- The student will use evidence from the poem to support their answer to a question Dunbar poses at the end of his poem.

Materials:

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

Procedures:

Read the poem with the students, or have them read it on their own. Discuss with the students the main idea of the poem. Also, discuss with the students the question Dunbar asks at the end of the poem. Next, have the students work individually to answer Dunbar’s question, using textual support in their answer.

When the students are finished, divide them into two groups, one group for the students who answered ‘yes’ to his question, and another for the students who answered ‘no.’ Have the students discuss their answers with their group, and what textual support they used to support or refute his question.

