

Who Were the Unsung Heroes?

This activity accompanies “The Unsung Heroes,” from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, record number 5239.

Activity Title: Who Were the Unsung Heroes?

Description: The students will work in a small group to discuss the main idea of the poem. The students will also explore the significance of the poem through primary source photographs from the Civil War period.

Subject: Reading/Language Arts and Social Studies

Skill: Main Idea and American History

Behavioral Objective:

- The student will explain the main idea of the poem. The student will also explain the significance of the poem through primary source photographs from the Civil War period.

Materials:

- “The Unsung Heroes” poem, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Paper and pencil
- Internet access to photographs from the Civil War available at:
 - http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/081_cwaf2.html#top
 - [http://lweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/ils:@filreq\(@field\(NUMBER+@band\(cwpb+04294\)\)+@field\(COLLID+cwp\)\):displayType=1:m856sd=cwpb:m856sf](http://lweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/ils:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(cwpb+04294))+@field(COLLID+cwp)):displayType=1:m856sd=cwpb:m856sf)
 - [http://lweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/ils:@filreq\(@field\(NUMBER+@band\(cwpb+04279\)\)+@field\(COLLID+cwp\)\):displayType=1:m856sd=cwpb:m856sf](http://lweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/ils:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(cwpb+04279))+@field(COLLID+cwp)):displayType=1:m856sd=cwpb:m856sf)

Procedures:

Read the poem with the students, or have them read it on their own. Then, divide the students into small groups. Have the students work with their groups to discuss the main idea of the poem. After the students have had time to discuss, give each group a photograph from one of the websites listed above, of African American soldiers in the Civil War. Have the students analyze the photograph and discuss how it ties to the poem. When the students are finished discussing, have them present what they discussed to the class.

