**English 12**

**Harlem Renaissance Poetry VoiceThread Presentation**

William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878) defined poetry as “the art of exciting the imagination and touching the heart by selecting and arranging symbols and thoughts.” In order to understand those symbols and thoughts and develop a deeper, richer, understanding of poetry, you will interpret and visually present a poem written by a Harlem Renaissance poet for a classroom audience. The medium you will use to present this information will be digital, which will include: word processing, voice, music, art, and video. You will not only make literature come alive for your classmates through your presentation, you will also help your audience understand the literature selection by pointing out and explaining the various literary techniques used by the author. You will decipher any confusing language. Before you present your poem and discuss its literary value, you must first provide historical background for the Harlem Renaissance and a short biography of your chosen poet. Through the process of preparing your presentation, you will develop mastery of all things related to your piece, i.e. the historical context of the selection, biographical influences of the author, content, and poetic devices. (images, sound, transitions, music, special effects, titles, pacing, and design)

**THE PROCESS**

**Step One:** Become VERY familiar with the time period of the Harlem Renaissance. Be able to place your poem within the context of history. What aspects of history influence the poem’s theme and content? Understand what effect, if any, your poem had on history or at least, on the Canon of American Literature.

**Step Two**: Research your chosen poet. Understand the poet’s personal influences. Who or what affected the poet in such a way that the author decided to compose the poem? Why is this poet remarkable?

**Step Three**: Decipher, for yourself, any confusing language or difficult passages. Know exactly what message the speaker is intending to convey. Consider the characterization of the speaker: What is his/her conflict? What is his/her personality? Understand the poetic devices used in the piece. Find examples of some of the following poetic devices: irony, metaphor, simile, imagery, oxymoron, foreshadowing, rhyme, meter, allusion, etc.

**Step Four:** Consider the relationship of your poem to the topic of Leadership. Explain how it relates to one of the following essential questions:

•What rules or principles do I use for how I treat others?

•What responsibility do I have to society?

•How do I resolve my responsibilities to myself with those to my family members, school, community, and world?

•How can I effectively articulate my opinions and perspectives?

•Who is in a position to help me affect change?

•What can I do to avoid repeating mistakes made in history?

•What leadership skills have I developed?

•What leadership skills will I take with me from high school?

•What qualities define a good world citizen?

•How can I create the world I want to line in?

•How can I use my talents to create new opportunities for myself and others?

**Step Four:** Prepare your presentation. Your presentation should have a discernible beginning, middle, and end, as well as a cohesive tone. The subject of your poem should match the tone of your project – a poem with an inspiring message of hope should not be set to music that is dark and fore-boding. Likewise, a poem about hardship and toil should not have a backdrop of bright yellow and sky blue. An excellent digital project such as this will include the following: (images, sound, transitions, music, special effects, titles, pacing, and design) Use the checklist/rubric to complete your project

**English 12 VoiceThread Harlem Renaissance Rubric** Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1)

Introduction \_\_\_\_ (10)

\_\_\_ Introduction Present Time \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (5)

\_\_\_ Aroused Interest

\_\_\_ Established Purpose

\_\_\_ Established Tone

\_\_\_ Effectively Transitioned into Body

Body \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (26)

\_\_\_\_\_ Effectively, but briefly detailed the history of the Harlem Renaissance

\_\_\_\_\_ Effectively provided biographical information of chosen poet, including the poet’s inspirations and literary or historical significance

\_\_\_\_\_ Effectively recited poem (by first stating the title then author)

\_\_\_\_\_ Effectively discussed context and meaning of the poem

\_\_\_\_\_ Effectively discussed and accurately used literary terminology

\_\_\_\_\_ Identified and effectively discussed at least three poetic devices

\_\_\_\_\_ Effectively transitioned into the conclusion

Conclusion \_\_\_\_\_ (10)

\_\_\_\_\_ Conclusion present

\_\_\_\_\_ Reviewed main points of speech

\_\_\_\_\_ Connected poem to the theme of leadership or the essential questions

\_\_\_\_\_ Conveyed significance of selection

\_\_\_\_\_ Ended with a clincher (forceful statement, quote from a credible source, anecdote, other)

Presentation/performance

Voice \_\_\_\_ (9)

\_\_\_ Voice is significant, enriching and relevant (occurs in intro, body, and conclusion)

\_\_\_ Voice creates insightful, emotional, mood, tone, and impact

\_\_\_ Voice quality of volume, diction, fluency, and flow is high

Text\_\_\_\_\_ (9)

\_\_\_ Amount of text supports purpose of communication

\_\_\_ Word choice is powerful, specific, accurate, vivid, descriptive

\_\_\_ Minor or no mechanical errors – reflects grade level competence (spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence structure)

Design of Communication \_\_\_\_\_ (16)

\_\_ Creative, striking design theme maintained consistently – extending value and meaning to the message

\_\_\_ Transitions enhance/enrich meaning of message

\_\_\_ Special effects fluid and working, extends meaning of message (MUST include music)

\_\_\_ Overall design has aesthetic appeal/ease of use consistent with purpose /audience

Collaboration \_\_\_\_ (9)

\_\_\_ Relevant and purposeful comments made for 10 classmates’ presentations

\_\_\_ Comments enhance learning

\_\_\_ Comments are specific

Documentation (5)

\_\_\_ All sources documented correctly