

Correction of American Poetry 2021-2022

1)

Types of poetry

Invitation to Harlem

Example of poem : « Take The A Train »

Name of the poet : Billy Strayhorn

The poem's main idea : value African-American identity, racial pride, the cultural and social beauty reigning in Harlem.

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Types of poetry

Fighting Oppression

Example of poem : « If We Must Die »

Name of the poet : Claude McKay

The poem's main idea : Fight against racism and oppression.

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Types of poetry

Search for identity

Example of poem : « I, too, sing America »

Name of the poet : Langston Hughes

The poem's main idea : Self-affirmation and dignity of black people.

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Brief Explanations upon these Poems :

- « Take The A Train » is a jazz standard that celebrates the excitement and energy of traveling on the A train to Harlem, New York City, during the Harlem Renaissance.
- « If We Must Die » is a powerful poem by Claude McKay that encourages black people to fight back against racism and oppression, even if it means dying in the struggle. It is a call to arms for self-defense and resistance.

- « *I, too, sing America* » by **Langston Hughes** is a poem that celebrates **the resilience and dignity of black people in America**. It asserts that despite **being marginalized and excluded from mainstream society**, **black people are an integral part of America's past, present, and future**. It also expresses **hope for a time when racial equality will be achieved**.

- 2) Why is the modern poetry qualified as revolutionary poetry in the context of American poetry ?

Modern poetry in America is often considered **revolutionary** because it **broke away from traditional poetic forms and styles that had been dominant for centuries**. Modern poets sought to experiment with new forms and techniques that would better reflect the rapidly changing world around them.

One of the **key features of modern poetry** was its emphasis on free verse, which allowed poets to break away from the strict rules of meter and rhyme that had been dominant in poetry for centuries. **This new form allowed poets to explore new ideas and express their thoughts and feelings in a more natural and authentic way.**

Additionally, **modern poetry** often tackled controversial and taboo topics that had previously been avoided by poets. **Poets like T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Langston Hughes wrote about war, race, sexuality, and other issues that had been considered too sensitive for polite society**. This willingness to address these issues head-on was seen as a revolutionary act that challenged the status quo and paved the way for future generations of poets to explore similar themes.

In conclusion, **modern poetry** in America was **revolutionary** because it **challenged long-held traditions and broke down barriers that had previously limited the scope of poetry**. It opened up new possibilities for expression and allowed poets to explore a wider range of themes and ideas than ever before.

- 3) Sublimation was the main concern of poetry during American Revolution. True or false ? Justify with examples ?

False. **The concept of sublimation, which refers to the transformation of base impulses or instincts into higher, more refined forms, was not a primary concern of poetry during the American Revolution. Rather, the poetry of the time was focused on political and social issues related to the revolution.**

During the American Revolution, poets were using their writing to support the cause of independence and rally support for the revolution. They wrote poems that celebrated the **bravery of the colonists, criticized the actions of the British, and**

called for unity and patriotism. For example, the poem « The Liberty Song » by John Dickinson, which was first published in 1768 but became popular during the revolution, encouraged **Americans to stand up against British oppression and fight for their rights :**

« In freedom we're born and in freedom we'll live.
Our purses are ready. Steady, friends, steady !
Not as slaves but as freemen our money we'll give. »

Similarly, Phillis Wheatley, a Black poet who was enslaved in Boston but gained her freedom after writing and publishing poetry, wrote poems that celebrated the American Revolution and the ideals of freedom and liberty. Her poem « To His Excellency General Washington » praises **George Washington as a hero who will lead the colonists to victory :**

« Proceed, great chief, with virtue on thy side,
Thy every action let the goddess guide.
A crown, a mansion, and a throne that shine,
With gold unfading, Washington, be thine. »

In summary, while the concept of sublimation has been a concern of poetry in other times and places, it was not a primary concern of American poetry during the Revolution. Instead, poets were focused on using their writing to support the cause of independence and express their political and social views.