

# THEN AND NOW: A Do-It-Yourself Poetry Worksheet

Inspired by Langston Hughes's "Let America Be America Again"

Let America Be America Again Poem

Langston Hughes - Biography

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Prompt:** Write about a person, place, thing, community, or idea that has changed - or has not changed enough.

## 1. Start with a line

Fill in one or more. There is no wrong answer.

Let \_\_\_\_\_ be \_\_\_\_\_ again.

Let \_\_\_\_\_ never be \_\_\_\_\_ again.

Let it become \_\_\_\_\_.

## 2. Choose your subject

List 3-4 possible people, places, things, communities, or ideas that have changed - or have not changed enough. Examples: a neighborhood, friendship, family tradition, school, country, dream, body, park, music, or belief.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Look back and look now

Circle one subject. Add clear, specific details. Use your senses when possible.

### THEN / BEFORE

### NOW / TODAY

What did it look or sound like?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who was there?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How did it make you feel?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was possible - or missing?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What did it look or sound like?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who was there?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How did it make you feel?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was possible - or missing?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Go deeper

**A memory I can see clearly:**

*Where were you? Who was there? What happened?*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A question I still have:**

*What do you wish you understood?*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Two feelings:**

*Example: proud, angry, safe, lonely, hopeful*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A wish or demand:**

*What should return, change, stop, or begin?*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

