

Cornell Notes 	Topic/Objective: Identify significant literary devices that define a writer's style and use to interpret work	Name: Class/Period: Lang. Arts Date: Oct. 12, 2009
Essential Question: How does Langston Hughes' poem, "Mother to Son", advice the reader to overcome difficulty and keep from giving up in life?		
Questions:	Notes:	
① What is the significance of the speaker in the poem?	① <u>Speaker</u> - *voice that communicates a poem's ideas, actions, descriptions, & feelings - similar to narrator - can be <u>unknown</u> or <u>specific</u> (like character)	
② How does a poet's choice of speaker affect the mood/meaning of a poem?	② <u>Impt.</u> - Poet's <u>choice of speaker</u> - contributes to the poem's mood/meaning - who speaks is as impt. as what is said - different <u>points of view</u> regarding same event (ie. parent, child, elderly person) - *the person telling the story gives point of view and affects the message told ← P.O.V.* writer's/poet's style	
③ How does Hughes use vocabulary to contribute to and convey his message?	③ <u>Vocab</u> - helps to understand meaning "crystal stair" = luxuries (<u>metaphor</u>) compares 2 things ie. "Life for me ain't been no crystal stair" "reachin'" - replace letter at end of word (<u>dialect</u>) " 'cause" = because → Slang var. lang used by group speech patt.	
Summary: The speaker/voice in the poem is important because it communicates the ideas/feelings of the poem. Who the poet chooses as the speaker identifies the point of view and affects the message/meaning. Hughes uses vocabulary and style to convey the message that life is hard when Mother says "Life for me aint been no crystal staircase."		

Questions:	Notes:
④ How are literary elements used in "Mother to Son" to convey the author's message?	④ Literary Elements: ① Speaker: - voice of poem - creates tone (attitude) - attitude based on P.O.V. ② Character: - person ③ Mood: - emotional quality - atmosphere (feeling get from poem) ⑤ Meaning: message in poem lesson (use on essay test as ex.)
⑤ How does the poet's choice of speaker contribute to the mood / meaning of the poem?	① Mother (Hughes - author) ② mother - hardworking, determ. son - wants to give up because life is diff. ③ Mother - uses her <u>victory</u> & <u>survival</u> of diff. exp. to motivate son ④ Hard life - filled with many difficulties * - "tacks, splinters, torn-up boards" - "climbin', reachin', turnin' = Struggle" - "goin' in the dark" w/o light to guide the way not giving up is like climbing stairs... if she could do it so can he (Mother's message)
Summary: The mother's words in Hughes' poem "Mother to Son" shows life as a climb up a staircase full of tacks, splinters, torn up boards and sometimes without light; but even though it is a hard climb, she says don't sit down on the steps and give up, keep climbing until you achieve.	