

## POETRY AND ART—CREATING WITH RHYTHM AND MOOD

### One-Way Ticket by Langston Hughes, 1949

I pick up my life  
And take it with me  
And I put it down in  
Chicago, Detroit,  
Buffalo, Scranton,  
Any place that is  
North and East—  
And not Dixie.

I pick up my life  
And take it on the train  
To Los Angeles, Bakersfield,  
Seattle, Oakland, Salt Lake,  
Any place that is  
North and West—  
And not South.

I am fed up  
With Jim Crow laws,  
People who are cruel  
And afraid,  
Who lynch and run,  
Who are scared of me  
And me of them.

I pick up my life  
And take it away  
On a one-way ticket—  
Gone up North,  
Gone out West,  
Gone!

Langston Hughes was a famous African American poet. Jacob Lawrence knew him and even illustrated some of Hughes's poems, including "One-Way Ticket." Read "One-Way Ticket," which, like *The Migration Series*, is about moving.

### Rhythm in Poetry

**Poems**, like songs, have **rhythm** and a **beat**. Poets sometimes **repeat** words or lines to help make a **pattern** so you can hear this rhythm.

What line or words does Hughes repeat in the poem to create a pattern and rhythm?

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Why do you think that he repeats this line?

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### Mood in Poetry

**Poets** can also create a mood in their poems, to make you feel a certain way when you read them.

A poem can have a happy, upbeat mood, or it can have a sad, slow mood, depending on the words and sounds the poet chooses.

**Mood:** What kind of mood does the poem have? What feeling do you get when you read it?

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Why?

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### Rhythm in Art

**Art** can also have **rhythm**! Jacob Lawrence painted with a lot of repeated patterns, to make figures appear to be **moving**.

Look closely at the panels from *The Migration Series*. What does Lawrence repeat in his panels to make a pattern or a rhythm? The same shape? Color? Person?

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### Mood in Art

**Art** can have a **mood** too! Artists can use color or shapes to create a mood. Blue might mean sad. Jagged lines might mean excitement.

What mood do you feel when you look at *The Migration Series*? Is there one overall mood, or are there different moods from panel to panel?

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Can you find one example of:

An “excited” panel? \_\_\_\_\_

A “sad” panel? \_\_\_\_\_

A “hopeful” panel? \_\_\_\_\_

How does Lawrence create these moods? Through color? Line? Explain:

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Jacob Lawrence, *The Migration Series*, Panels No. 1, 3, 13, and 23, 1940–41