

① **1st reading: Summarise** the speaker's key message in one or two sentences.

② **Work stations:**

- **Station A:** Themes and Perspectives
- **Station B:** Language and Stylistic Devices
- **Station C:** Structure and Composition
- **Station D:** Historical Context and Relevance Today

**„Let America be America again“ by Langston Hughes (1935).**

Let America be America again.  
Let it be the dream it used to be.  
Let it be the pioneer on the plain  
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

5 (America never was America to me.) [...]

O, let my land be a land where Liberty  
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath<sup>1</sup>,  
But opportunity is real, and life is free,  
Equality is in the air we breathe.

10 (There's never been equality for me,  
Nor freedom in this „homeland of the free.“)

*Say, who are you that mumbles<sup>2</sup> in the dark?  
And who are you that draws your veil<sup>3</sup> across the stars?*

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,  
15 I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.  
I am the red man<sup>4</sup> driven from the land,  
I am the immigrant clutching<sup>5</sup> the hope I seek—  
And finding only the same old stupid plan  
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak. [...]

20 I am the farmer, bondsman<sup>6</sup> to the soil.  
I am the worker sold to the machine.  
I am the Negro, servant to you all.  
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—  
Hungry yet today despite the dream.  
25 Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!  
I am the man who never got ahead,  
The poorest worker bartered<sup>7</sup> through the years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream  
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,  
30 Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,  
That even yet its mighty daring sings  
In every brick and stone, in every furrow<sup>8</sup> turned  
That's made America the land it has become.  
O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas  
35 In search of what I meant to be my home—  
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,  
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea<sup>9</sup>,  
And torn from Black Africa's strand<sup>10</sup> I came  
To build a „homeland of the free.“

40 The free?  
Who said the free? Not me?  
Surely not me? The millions on relief<sup>11</sup> today?  
The millions shot down when we strike?  
The millions who have nothing for our pay?  
45 For all the dreams we've dreamed  
And all the songs we've sung  
And all the hopes we've held  
And all the flags we've hung,  
The millions who have nothing for our pay—  
50 Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again—  
The land that never has been yet—  
And yet must be—the land where *every* man is free.  
The land that's mine—the poor man's, Indian's, Negro's, ME—  
55 Who made America,  
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,  
Whose hand at the foundry<sup>12</sup>, whose plow in the rain,  
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—  
60 The steel of freedom does not stain.  
From those who live like leeches on the people's lives,  
We must take back our land again,  
America!

O, yes,  
65 I say it plain,  
America never was America to me,  
And yet I swear this oath—  
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,  
70 The rape and rot of graft<sup>13</sup>, and stealth, and lies,  
We, the people, must redeem  
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.  
The mountains and the endless plain—  
All, all the stretch of these great green states—  
75 And make America again!

word count: 552

<sup>1</sup>**wreath** *Kranz* - <sup>2</sup>**to mumble** talking in an unclear manner - <sup>3</sup>**veil** *Schleier* - <sup>4</sup>**red man** an old-fashioned and now offensive term for a person of Native American origin - <sup>5</sup>**to clutch** to take hold of sth. tightly - <sup>6</sup>**bondsman** slave - <sup>7</sup>**to barter** here: selling something for cheap - <sup>8</sup>**furrow** *Ackerfurche* - <sup>9</sup>**lea** *Aue* - <sup>10</sup>**strand** here: shore - <sup>11</sup>**on relief** receiving unemployment benefit - <sup>12</sup>**foundry** *Metallgießerei* - <sup>13</sup>**graft** - *Bestechung*