

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 wreath¹,
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 mumbles² in the dark?
And who are you that draws your veil³ 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 man⁴ driven from the land,
I am the immigrant clutching⁵ 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, bondsman⁶ 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 bartered⁷ 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 furrow⁸ 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 lea⁹,
And torn from Black Africa's strand¹⁰ I came
To build a „homeland of the free.“

40 The free?
Who said the free? Not me?
Surely not me? The millions on relief¹¹ 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 foundry¹², 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 graft¹³, 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

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