

Mr. Hughes:

Is that your final decision?

Langston (*Quietly*):

Yes, it is.

Mr. Hughes:

Then I won't argue with you anymore. (*Puts on hat*) I'm returning to Mexico City on the morning train. (*Turns to exit*)

Langston:

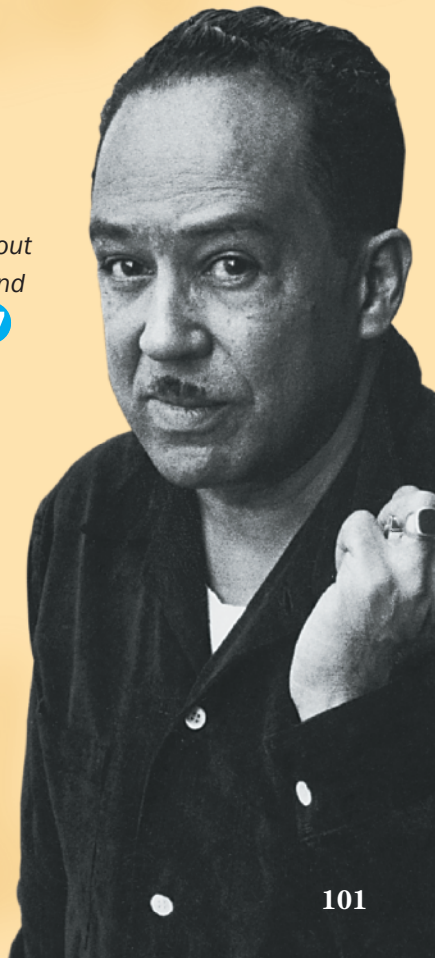
Is that all you're going to say?

Mr. Hughes (*Turning back; sadly*):

I wish you well, Langston, but I feel you're making a foolish mistake. I honestly have my doubts that you'll ever become a successful writer. (*Exits. Langston moves to closet, takes out suitcase, puts it on bed. He moves to bureau and starts packing. Lights slowly fade. Curtain.*) **17**

Langston Hughes played an important role in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and early 1930s. This movement, led by African American artists, musicians, and writers, aimed for racial equality and minority rights. Today, Hughes is recognized as one of America's finest poets.

Langston Hughes withdrew from Columbia University after his first year of classes. He later enrolled in Pennsylvania's Lincoln University, graduating in 1929.



101

2nd
READ

Reading with a Writer's Eye

Character and Conflict

- ◆ Explain that different stories have different kinds of conflict—human against human, human against nature, and human against himself or herself.
- ◆ *What conflict has Mary Satchell created between Langston and his father? **Possible Answers** human against human: Langston and his father; human against self: Langston*
- ◆ *Have students identify how the conflicts are used in the selection. **Possible Answer** Langston is struggling with pleasing his father and being true to himself.*

Checking Comprehension

Ask students the following questions to check their comprehension of the story.

- *What does Langston's father do when he finds Langston writing poetry at his home in Mexico? **He throws the poems in the trash.***
- *What subjects does Mr. Hughes want Langston to study at Columbia University? **math and science so that Langston can become an engineer***
- *Why does Langston want to go to Columbia University? **He wants to be near Harlem and write about black Americans.***
- *Does Langston succeed as a writer? **Yes; he is known today as one of America's finest poets.***



Vocabulary Tip

Point out the word *strive*. Ask students to use context clues to determine what the word means.



Teacher Tip

BUILDING FLUENCY By this time in fourth grade, good readers should be reading approximately 119 words per minute with fluency and expression. The only way to gain this fluency is through practice. Have students reread all or part of the selection to you and to each other during class or Workshop. As students read, notice who needs to build fluency. During Workshop, have these students choose a section of the text (a minimum of 160 words) to read several times.