

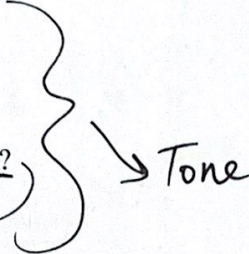
Group Question Sheet: Applying the 5-Step Analysis to Hughes's "Harlem"

Etienne Rutkowski

ENGL 100

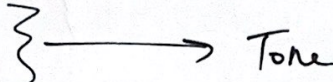
1 What happens to a dream deferred?

- 2 Does it dry up
- 3 like a raisin in the sun?
- 4 Or fester like a sore—
- 5 And then run?
- 6 Does it stink like rotten meat?
- 7 Or crust and sugar over—
- 8 like a syrupy sweet?



discrimination
 slavery
 racism
 riots

- 9 Maybe it just sags
- 10 like a heavy load.



- 11 Or does it explode?



Langston Hughes

Step 1: List and number exact repetitions (repeated words or images)

- "Does →?"
- "or →?"
- Repetition of questions
 - ↳ images as metaphors for slave stereotypes

Step 2: Locate repetitions of similar kinds of words or details (strands)

- "Maybe it just sags... load." (not question) → question as a statement
- Italicized question "... does it explode?"
 - ↳ not a simile

Step 3: Locate contrasting words or strands (binary oppositions)

- "Maybe it just sags... load."
 - ↳ no question (statement question-rhetorical)
 - ↳ "giving up" quality
- "or does it explode?"
 - ↳ more violent contrasting tone, connotation

Langston Hughes, "Harlem" (1951)

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like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?