

AML 3605 / AFA 3930  
Fall 2013 in Turlington 2336  
Office: 4352 Turlington  
M 3rd - 5\* periods

Professor: Dr. King  
Office Hours: 6-8\* period  
Dept. Phone: 392-6650  
Email: [dwking@ufl.edu](mailto:dwking@ufl.edu)

---

### AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE PART I

---

...we appropriated about die last one of die old “jes’ grew”  
songs. It was a song which had been sung for years all  
through die Soudi. The words were unprintable, but the  
tune was irresistibile, and belonged to nobody

-James Weldon Johnson, *The Book of Negro Poetry* (1921),  
as Quoted by Ishmael Reed in *Mumbo Jumbo* (1972)

**DESCRIPTION:** African American writers from 1746 to the present have written in all genres, leaving none unchanged by die appropriation. It is a literature diat not only intertextualizes elements of the vernacular tradition (spirituals, folktales and the blues) and its own immediate past, but is a regenerative force of conscious construction and literary beauty widiin die history of American literature. The goal of diis course is to investigate die transformational power of black imagination and artistic genius. Students will gain an understanding of and appreciation for die creative dexterity and conventions of diis literature. The period covered begins with Lucy Terry’s 1746 “Bars Fight” and ends with die Harlem Renaissance. Aldiough chronology is obscured by a focus on genre, readings are arranged so that students can trace die development of various genres and various styles, diemes, images, and structures across time and widiin individual audior’s works. In diis way, die course emphasizes die creative process, intertextuality, and literary history.

**FORMAT:** Class sessions include lectures but are discussion based primarily. The dree hour block of class time, Mondays, represents dree class sessions. Participation in discussion is an important part of your grade. You should listen carefully to others, ask questions of me and other students, and share your ideas. I expect all students to create an environment diat encourages die participation of everyone. If you feel uncomfortable with discussion-based classes or feel you cannot contribute successfully, you should drop diis course immediately.

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:**

- Norton Andiology of African American Literature
- Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- Pack of 3x5 index cards

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND GRADING METHOD**

All papers and short essay quizzes are evaluated on content, originality, creativity, connections to course objectives, and form (grammar, spelling, bibliography, etc.). Grades will be calculated in terms of possible score percentages widi no curve. You are guaranteed an A if you earn 450 points or more out of 500 possible points (90 %+). Your journal assignment is worth 250 points.

435 to 449 (87%+)	B+	385 to 399 (77 %+)	C+	335 to 363 (67 %+)	D+
415 to 434 (83% +)	B	365 to 384 (73 %+)	C	315 to 334 (63 %+)	D
400 to 414 (80 %+)	B-	350 to 364 (70 %+)	C	300 to 314 (60 %+)	D-

## GRADING CRITERIA

**Assignments will be graded on how proficiently they meet expectations in the key areas of content, organization, and grammar/mechanics.**

STRONG CONTENT INCLUDES:

- a clearly delineated and/ or interpreted topic
- a strong, clear, and logically developed thesis that is supported by fully developed ideas in the form of relevant textual evidence and research
- ideas that show evidence of independent thinking
- commentary that explains how the concrete details support the thesis. Commentary may include interpretation, analysis, argument, insight, and/or reflection.
- research supporting materials (note: Google searches are fine for starters, but please use academic journals and books for strong research effort)

STRONG ORGANIZATION INCLUDES:

- the effective arrangement of points that reveals itself in very good incorporation of evidence (use of summary, paraphrase) and the sparing and judicious use of quotations
- rounded and well-connected paragraphs
- the use of appropriate transitions

STRONG GRAMMAR, MECHANICS, AND PROSE STYLE IS CHARACTERIZED BY:

- mature sentence structure, syntax, and diction
- strong audience awareness as evidenced in the use of appropriate style, register, tone, and vocabulary
- little to no errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- the formatting of document in keeping with prescribed guidelines—including length of journal entries

## RUBRIC

The “A” submission has strong content, strong organization, AND strong grammar/mechanics. To receive an “A,” work needs to offer support in the form of textual evidence and secondary research materials (using direct quotes and paraphrase), present original insight in argumentation, and be organized clearly and logically with sources documented using MTA style guidelines.

A “B” submission is notably weak in ONE of the above key areas.

A “C” submission, albeit promising, is notably weak in TWO or more of the above key areas.

A “D” submission is significantly weak in TWO or more of the above key areas.

Additional information concerning UF grading policies may be found on the undergraduate catalog web page <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

## COURSE POLICIES

- 1) CELL PHONES AND COMPUTERS: Cell phones must be muted or turned off during the class session. If an emergency occurs and you have to respond to calls or texts, please leave the classroom. Computers (iPads or other electronics) are allowed for note taking, access to eBooks and presentations only. Anyone using a computer for any other purpose will be asked to deliver the device to me for retrieval after class. You may record the class (presentations, for instance) with my permission only.
- 2) PAPERS / JOURNALS: All papers must be typed and double spaced using the 8 1/2 x 11 page layout with one inch margins all around. Use Courier or New York Times font at 12 point size. Documentation and form should follow the MTA style manual. Number all pages after the first within the upper right margin.

- 3) **GRADE DISPUTES:** Questions about assigned grades are acceptable during my office hours only. If my written responses do not address your concerns, I will explain why a grade was earned. With the exception of miscalculation, I will not consider grade changes. **Please do not ask.** You may consult Professor Stephanie Smith, Associate Chair, for grade appeals, however. Please note: appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
- 4) **MIDTERM ASSESSMENT REPORT:** Individual reports will be emailed to you sometime after October 18<sup>th</sup> indicating your current status in the class. These reports will offer information on all graded aspects of the course, including attendance, as recorded in my grade book. You should consider these performance tracking reports carefully and govern yourself accordingly.
- 5) **MISSED CLASS SESSIONS:** Make up work for approved absences must be addressed within one week of your return. See me for submission deadlines for missed work within this time frame.
- 6) **JOURNAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:** This assignment **must be submitted electronically.** Microsoft Word compatible documents only please. Unreadable documents will be returned ungraded. Submit your project via email [ldwking@ufl.edu](mailto:ldwking@ufl.edu) by 1:30 p.m. on the due date. Late submissions will suffer a half letter grade reduction. Include the course section number in the subject heading. For instance, if you are registered in AMT 3605 section 05DA your subject line for final journal submission should look like this: **Final Journal 05DA.** Other section numbers for this term are as follows:

AMT3605 section 05DA  
AFA 3930 section 0622

- 7) *“Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.”*

#### UNIVERSITY POLICIES

**DISABILITY SERVICES:** The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. It is your responsibility to contact the school administration regarding any disability you may have, and to inform me so we can make any necessary arrangements. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Honor Code. “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” This code represents UF’s commitment to academic honesty and integrity. “Cheating, plagiarism, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy and fabrication” are violations of the Honor Code. All students must abide by the student honor code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

**HARASSMENT:** UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eo/sexharassment.htm>

**COURSE EVALUATIONS:** “Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given

specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.”

---

**JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT —250 PTS— 50%**

---

You should keep a journal highlighting one or two authors whose work represents several genres. We will follow the work of three such writers during our in-class discussions (their names are highlighted in the course calendar). Listed below are others. You may select your author or authors from this list or choose your own. Please do not select more than two primary subjects for this assignment. **Since we are not reading all works by each author, unassigned reading and research is required.** Scan the biographical sections of the anthology and decide if your favorite author is an appropriate journal subject. For instance, Frances E. Harper is an essayist, a poet, a short story writer and a novelist. You might want to read *Loia Leroy*, her 1892 novel, and compare it with Harriet Wilson’s *Our Nig* (1859) or Pauline E. Hopkins’s *Contending Forces* (1900)—an excerpt of Hopkins’s novel is available in the anthology. Other possibilities for primary author selections include Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, Wallace Thurman, Arna Bontemps, and W. E. B. Du Bois. **Include a bibliography listing all published works written by your selected authors.** After selecting the authors (or author) you wish to highlight and becoming familiar with titles they published during or before 1940, you are ready to begin.

I expect evidence of growth in understanding as well as depth of insight and creativity in your entries. A potentially excellent journal that shows no growth in understanding or demonstrates minimal effort will not earn an “A.” Do your best work at all times and challenge yourself as you go along. Do not wait until the last minute to do this assignment. Begin now.

Here are some pointers and **expectations** to stimulate your thinking and direct your writing. Decide what qualities or features make a particular work the author’s signature piece. Discuss how the author departs from or conforms to Anglo-American, European, Asian, Native American or other approaches to various genres. Explore how his or her work departs from that of others we are reading. Identify similarities among writers or among selected works written by your primary author. Compare, for example, Dunbar’s dialect poetry (folk poetry) with his lyric poetry and sonnets with Hughes’ urban folk poetry. Discuss how the author draws upon the vernacular or the commonplace and traditional elements of African American Culture. Read the “Folktales” section of the anthology. Seek and discuss intertextual elements of the author’s works, identifying folkloric elements, including calls and responses across space, class, gender, and era. Bring to your discussion and comparison authors, works, and genres studied in other classes. Research your author and compare the commentary of critics and scholars with your own insights. **Be creative in at least one of the journal entries. This is a requirement.** Write a poem or short story in response to an author’s work or write a letter to the author, publisher, critics or public.

You are expected to produce at least **fourteen** (14) journal entries of **no less than 250 words each** (one, double-spaced typed page). This assignment must not exceed twenty pages, excluding the list of authors’ works and any bibliographical material you need to include **at the end of the journal**. Completed journals due Wednesday, **December 4<sup>th</sup>**.

**PLEASE NOTE:** I will accept journals on **October 14<sup>th</sup>** from students desiring a “TRACKING” grade. This submission is optional; however, the grade allows you to understand how well you are doing on the assignment. It allows you to *track* your journal performance. If your performance remains unchanged the tracking grade will be your final grade. Improved or diminished performance will affect your final grade also. You may come to my office to discuss your progress at any time prior to the project’s due date. To ensure your place, please set an appointment. I will honor appointments before drop-ins. During this meeting, we will review only one entry and no tracking grade will be assigned.

*Journal Requirements: Summary*

- 1) Highlight one or two authors whose work represents several genres.

- 2) Unassigned reading and research is required.
- 3) Include a bibliography listing all published works by your selected authors.
- 4) Read and become familiar with titles your author(s) published during or before 1940.
- 5) Provide evidence of growth in understanding as well as depth of insight.
- 6) Decide what qualities or features make a particular work the author's signature piece.
- 7) Be creative in at least one of the journal entries.
- 8) Produce at least **fourteen** (14) entries of **no less than** 250 words each.
- 9) Do not exceed 20 pages, excluding the list of authors' works and bibliographical materials
- 10) Submit completed journals, via email, Wednesday, **December 4<sup>th</sup>** by 1:30 p.m.

---

**OTHER EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS—50%**

---

**Attendance:** Discussions cannot be replicated so if you miss a day of class, you will have missed the lesson for that day. Therefore, I take attendance very seriously and expect you to come to class every day on time. You are allowed **up to two** unexcused absences, your grade will automatically drop a half letter grade after the third unexcused absence. **If you reach nine absences (three full class sessions) you will automatically fail the course and should withdraw from the class or you will receive an "E" for the semester.** Remember that this class meets once a week, representing three class sessions. That is three absences—if the entire class is missed. No INCOMPLETES are given for this course.

*Caveat: Excused absences are permitted if you provide a typewritten letter documenting an illness, a family crisis, or participation in a university sponsored event. All students should consult with me to make up material missed during an absence. Unfortunately, given the nature of the course, if you miss more than three weeks of class (equaling nine sessions) you will automatically fail and receive an E. For additional information, please see our University guidelines as indicated in the "Course Policies" section of this syllabus.*

**Entrance Passes:** Purchase a pack of 3x5 index cards. These cards are your entrance passes and will be used to inform me of your attendance and reading progress. Bring one with you every class session. Without an entrance pass you will be considered absent so be sure to put your name on them. Tardy attendees' cards will be collected at the end of class. Tardiness will be recorded and considered during grading. Consistent tardiness will result in a final letter grade reduction.

**Preparation (40 pts):** All readings, entrance passes and take-home assignments must be prepared and ready for each class session. Write a comment or a question on your entrance pass cards demonstrating your preparation for the day's session. Poorly constructed, irrelevant or perfunctory comments will result in point reductions in this area of grading. I do not want you to tell me you liked a particular reading, for instance. Your response to assigned readings must be brief, intelligent, thoughtful and scholarly. Identify why the material is valuable to our class discussion (or objectives) or how the material engages the genre being studied. Ask an engaging discussion question prefaced by brief contextualizing commentary. **Occasionally, these cards will be graded and returned** so do your best work at all times. I will present cards for class / group discussions randomly. Your contribution during these discussions will be evaluated. **Take home projects for entrance passes may be graded.** Even if I do not ask you to turn in these assignments, your in-class responses to them are required. Be prepared at all times.

**Participation (110 pts):** Students should complete all readings prior to the class meeting and participate fully in class discussion. Assessment is made in the areas of attendance, entrance passes, interlocutory engagement, leadership, teamwork, and originality.

STRONG PARTICIPATION INCLUDES:

1. only excused absences with no recorded tardiness
2. adherence to course policies and guidelines
3. entrance pass evidence that readings are completed and ready for class discussions
4. outside research done and shared with class on multiple occasions
5. clear and respectful exchanges with other students and the professor
6. volunteering to enter or begin discussions (brief presentations included)
7. leadership within small group activities noted by reporting out for the group or taking a guiding role
8. an understanding of teamwork and one's responsibility to advancing positive class or group dynamics
9. originality in thought, discussion and entrance card information and sharing
10. encouraging others' ability to enter or sustain participation in discussions
11. engaging questions from the professor or other students without hesitation or persuasion

RUBRIC

- ✚ "A" level participation is strong in all key areas and earns 110-99 points.
- ✚ "B" level participation, albeit promising, is notably weak in TWO key areas and earns from 98-77 points.

- ✚ "C" level participation is notably weak in THREE key areas and earns from 76-45 points.
- ✚ "D" level participation is significantly weak in THREE or more of the key areas and earns from 44-1 points

**Exams, Quizzes and Other assignments (100 pts):** There will be a mid-term exam and several pop quizzes—no makeup quizzes. Your performance during class, progress evaluations (tests and quizzes) and in-class discussions will determine whether a final exam is necessary. I will inform you of my decision.

**Extra Credit (5 bonus points):** *This is an optional assignment.* You may give a fifteen minute oral report to the class on an issue or author under discussion. These reports must be approved prior to presentation. Submit a short proposal describing what you plan to do. The assignment will earn scores ranging from 1/2 to 5 points (added to your overall course score).

COURSE CALENDAR

WK 1: 8/26 INTRODUCTION

WK 2: 9/2 NO CHARS

WK 3: 9/9 NONFICTION

Preface: "Talking Books" pages xxvii-xli

Alain Locke, "The New Negro," (1925) pages 961-970

**Zora Neale Hurston**, "How It Feels to be Colored Me," (1928) 1008-1011

**James Weldon Johnson**, "The Book of American Negro Poetry—Preface," (1921) pages 861-884

George Samuel Schuyler, "The Negro-Art Hokum," (1926) pages 1171-74

**Langston Hughes**, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," (1926) pages 1267-71

W.E.B. Du Bois, "Criteria of Negro Art," (1928) pages 752-759

**Zora Neale Hurston**, "Characteristics of Negro Expression," (1934) pages 1019-32

---

**POETRY**

---

WK 4: 9/16 BALLAD

- Lucy Terry, "Bars Fight," page 137-138
- Langston Hughes**, "Ballad of die Landlord," page 1265

LYRIC

- Phyllis Wheadey, "On Being Brought from Africa to America," page 171
- James Weldon Johnson**, "O Black and Unknown Bards," page 769
- Paul Laurence Dunbar, "We Wear the Mask," page 896

SONNET:

- Countee Cullen, "Wet Do I Marvel," page 1305

FOLK POETRY (JAZZ POETRY)

- Paul Laurence Dunbar, "When Malindy Sings," "Philosophy" pages 894-5, 903-4
- Langston Hughes**, "Gypsy Man," "Lament over Love," & "Hard Daddy" pages 1257, 1259-62, 1263-64

FREE VERSE:

- Langston Hughes**, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "Modier to Son," page 1254-5
- James Weldon Johnson**, "The Creation," page 775

---

**AUTOBIOGRAPY**

---

WK 5: 9/23 ANTEBELLUM SLAVE NARRATIVE

Olaudah Equiano, *The Ufe of Olandab Eqniano* (1789) pages 140-64

WK 6: 9/30 -

Fredrick Douglass, *Narrative of the Ufe of Fre driek Douglass* (1845) excerpts pages 302-369

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Ufe of a Slave Girl* (1861) excerpts pages 209-44

WK 7: 10/7 POSTBELLUM SLAVE NARRATIVE

Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (1901) excerpt pages 488-521

WK 8: 10/14 AUTOBIOGRAPHY

**Zora Neale Hurston**, *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942) excerpt pages 1050-65

Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea* (1940) excerpts pages 1282-96

**TRACKING JOURNALS DUE WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16TH**

---

WK 9: 10/21 MIDTERM DEBATE PREP - GROUP WORK & GENERAL DISCUSSIONS

WK 10: 10/28 ***MTI*** ***TERM EXAM***

---

FICTION

---

WK 11: 11/4 FICTIONALIZED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Harriet E. Wilson, *Onr Nig* (1859)  
Excerpts pages 441-458

WK 12: 11/11 NO CLASS \ VETERANS DAY

WK 19: 11/18 NOVEL --

**James Weldon Johnson**, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, (1912) pages 777-861

WK 14: 11/25 --

**Zora Neale Hurston**, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

WK 15: 12/2 (JOURNALS DUE WEDNESDAY 12/4 BEFORE 1:30)

SHORTSTORY / COURSE SUMMARY

**Zora Neale Hurston**, "Sweat" (1926) pages 999-1008

**Langston Hughes**, "The Blues I'm Playing" (1934) pages 1271-82

---

## GENERAL STUDY GUIDE

---

Interpretive Community — a term used by Stanley Fish to distinguish readers sharing the same fundamental strategy of reading and interpreting texts

### BUILDING OUR INTERPRETATIVE COMMUNITY

#### Critical Categories

**Theme:** a central idea—which is being spoken of, whether the specific subject matter, the emotional response to it, or its intellectual formulation. We will explore how particular structures, images, or metaphors alter or inform our interpretations of particular themes.

**Structure:** the planned framework of a piece of literature (including plot, sequence, theme) as well as aspects of the work such as diction, rhythm, and figurative language. We will look at structure as strategic, meaning authors employ conscious modification through which traditional generic formulations are expanded, contracted, embellished, recreated or tested, teased, and taunted into conveying African American ideas and attitudes, realities, prayers, myths and prophecies. We will discuss, but not read, the

adventure tale, the sentimental novel, the seduction tale, the American Dream saga, the quest narrative, and others as we contemplate structure.

**Politics and Social Commentary:** literature as a corrective force that can induce social economic and political change. We will focus, therefore, on the techniques used in Black literature (as well as the revision of traditional themes, structures, and myths) to achieve sociopolitical ends.

**Literary and Communal Value:** evaluating, exploring, and discussing manifestations of imagination or linguistic insight, conscious construction that distinguishes work from work, insight from imagination.

#### THEMES UNDER CONSIDERATION

Bondage and Freedom  
Family  
Identity  
Religion

#### BASIC SOURCES OF STRUCTURE

Black Speech and Other Vernacular Forms  
Black music  
Black Church  
Universal Concepts of Written Artistic Expression

#### HELPFUL TERMS

**Double Consciousness** — tensions and divisions in an African American identity, referring to at least three different matters: problems of self-definition, a way of life that is “American” and “not American” simultaneously; and internal conflicts in the individual between what is “African” and what is “American.”

**Masking** — a deceptive role-playing (“tombing,” “laughing to keep from crying,” “jumping Jim Crow”) and a shrewd survival strategy used by blacks in the presence of whites to maintain some semblance of empowerment in a racially prejudiced society. It hides true feelings, frustrations, cleverness, and sophisticated ambiguities of identity held by the mask wearers when they are in racial conflict or competition.

**Ballad** — a form of verse to be sung or recited and characterized by its presentation of a dramatic or exciting episode in simple narrative form (Lucy Terry, “Bars Fight”).

**Lyric** — a brief subjective poem strongly marked by imagination, melody, and emotion, and creating a single, unified impression (ex. Paul Laurence Dunbar, “We Wear the Mask.”)

**Metaphor** — an analogy identifying one object with another and ascribing to the first object one or more of the qualities of the second (objects are dissimilar). Ex: “That’s a lyncher” when talking about an unfortunate set of circumstances.

**Simile** — a figure in which a similarity between two objects is directly expressed as in “I’ll beat you till you rope like okra.”

**Sonnet** — a poem almost invariably of fourteen lines and following one of several set rhyme schemes. The two basic sonnet types are the Petrarchan (Italian) and Shakespearean (English). Its division into the octave and the sestet distinguishes the Italian form: the octave rhyming *abbaabba* and the sestet *cdecde, cd cd cd, or cdedce*. Traditionally the octave presents a narrative, states a proposition, or raises a question; the sestet drives home the narrative by making an abstract comment, applies the proposition, or solves the problem. In the Shakespearean sonnet, four divisions are used: three quatrains (each with a rhyme scheme of its own, usually rhyming alternate lines) and a rhymed concluding couplet (that is, two consecutive lines of verse with end rhymes). The typical rhyme scheme

is *abab cdcd efefgg*. Example: Countee Cullen, “Vet Do I Marvel.”

**Free Verse** — a poem “free” of regulations and structures that predetermine rhyme scheme, meter, or rhythm (Example: **Langston Hughes**, “Mother to Son.”)

**Folk Poetry** — a poem celebrating and using the dramatic activities, languages, rhythms, and codes of the folk (Paul Laurence Dunbar’s “Philosophy,” for instance).

**Heroic Couplet** — iambic pentameter lines rhymed in pairs—a long dominant mode for the poetic drama

**Iambic Pentameter** — a line of verse with five units of rhythm (five feet) with unaccented syllable and accented syllable (rētúrñ)

**Verbal Irony** — a figure of speech in which the actual intent is expressed in words that carry the opposite meaning presented with a sort of grim humor and unemotional detachment, coolness in expression at a time when one’s emotions appear to be really heated. Characteristically it speaks words of praise to imply blame and words of blame to imply praise.

**Signifyin(g)** — a form of verbal play—centering primarily on the insult—common in African American communities that offers speakers the opportunity to demonstrate their improvisational mastery of rhyme and rhythm, as well as their capacity to improvise on the verbal play of others. It implies the art of expressing ideas, opinions, feelings, and so forth, by indirection and is, therefore, a culturally specific form of irony.

**Signifying** — a form of intertextual revision, by which texts establish their relation to other texts, and authors to other authors. The repetition implicit in this form of signifying criticizes or extends the previous and frequently (though not exclusively) white literary or cultural source by setting it within the context of African American expressive culture.

**Synecdoche** — a trope in which a part signifies the whole or the whole signifies the part such as saying threads for clothes

**Apostrophe** — a figure of speech in which someone (usually but not always absent), some abstract quality, or a nonexistent personage is directly addressed as though present

**Chiasmas** — a pattern in which the second part is balanced against the first but with the parts reversed

**Toasts** — a long narrative poem of rhyming couplets that feature alternation of action and dialogue and also

\*The definitions are from Holman and Harmon, *A Handbook to Literature* (1992), The Signifying Monkey (1988) by Henry Louis Gates, and *The Oxford Companion to African American Literature* (1997), edited by Andrews, Foster, and Harris.

featuring characters of strength and will in the animal and human worlds

**Trope** — a figure of speech (or theme) involving a “turn” or change of sense — the use of a word in a sense other than the literal (as with metaphor and simile) as well as ironical expressions

**Tropological Revision** — the manner in which a specific trope is repeated, with differences, between two or more texts

**Metonymy** — the substitution of the name of an object closely associated with a word for the word itself: “sweat” for hard labor

**Parody** — a composition imitating another, usually serious, piece but is designed to ridicule the original, its style, or its author

**Pastiche** — literary imitation that gives homage to the original

**Prose Rhythm** — the recurrence of stress and emphasis at irregular intervals, affording a pleasurable rise and fall. It is distinguished from the rhythm of verse in that it never for long falls into a recognizable pattern, for if it does it becomes verse rather than prose.

**Figurative Language** — intentional departure from the normal order, construction, or meaning of words

**High Comedy** — pure or serious comedy that appeals to the intellect and arouses thoughtful laughter by exhibiting the inconsistencies and incongruities of human nature and by displaying the follies of social manners

**Low Comedy** — lacks seriousness of purpose or subtly of manner and has little intellectual appeal (horseplay and buffoonery)

**Satire** — a work or manner that blends a censorious attitude with humor and wit for improving human institutions or humanity

**Talking Texts** — a term originated by Henry Louis Gates in which he identifies Black texts that “talk” to Black other texts

**Speakerly Texts** — representations of the speaking black voice in writing (the talking book)

**Intertextuality** — a term created by Julia Kristeva, who said, “Every text builds itself as a mosaic of quotations, every text is adsorption and transformation of another text.”