Poetry Study

Day 20
October 15th

• Describe groups to which you belong or with which you identify.

• Agenda:
  – James Weldon Johnson
  – Writing an Anthem
Today’s Objectives:

• I will know information about James Weldon Johnson and his contributions to the Harlem Renaissance.

• I will be able to write an anthem of identity.
James Weldon Johnson
1871–1938
The Books of American Negro Spirituals

The Book of American Negro Poetry

The Book of American Negro Spirituals

Black Manhattan

James Weldon Johnson

Verses: Toe bone connected to the foot bone Foot bone connected to the leg bone Leg bone connected to the knee bone...
• A group of young men in Jacksonville, Florida, arranged to celebrate Lincoln’s birthday in 1900. My brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, and I decided to write a song to be sung at the exercises. I wrote the words and he wrote the music. Our New York publisher, Edward B. Marks, made mimeographed copies for us, and the song was taught to and sung by a chorus of five hundred colored school children.
Shortly afterwards my brother and I moved away from Jacksonville to New York, and the song passed out of our minds. But the school children of Jacksonville kept singing it; they went off to other schools and sang it; they became teachers and taught it to other children. Within twenty years it was being sung over the South and in some other parts of the country. Today the song, popularly known as the Negro National Hymn, is quite generally used.
“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uk3zXi8WVqk
Anthem

- a song, as of praise, devotion, or patriotism

- In what ways is “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing” an anthem?
Write your own anthem.