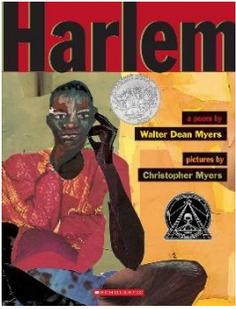


## Expanding Prior Knowledge with a Poem



Reading the classic novel *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison can be more interesting when students understand some of the historical and geographical references. An assignment that works well is to plan a one-period small group research project based on the poem "[Harlem](#)" by Walter Dean Myers.

During class small groups, assigned to research words, phrases, and places in their assigned section of the poem, create hyperlinks that other classmates view during the next class meeting and can return to as they read the novel.

Begin the period reading the poem together three times and invite students to highlight, underline or circle places, words or concepts that are new, puzzling, or interesting. You read aloud the first time, slowly enough to allot time to mark, but not to lose the rhythm or flow.

Then invite students to jump in to read, without raising their hands, according to the punctuation. If multiple students begin reading and the same time, let them. Encourage them to read as one voice. For the final reading, have the whole class read the poem aloud together. Encourage them to continue marking as they listen and read.

Ahead of time, have poem divided into equal sections based on the number of groups you set up that period. Each group then can do the following assignment using their computers.

- Meet with your partner or group, to make up a job list to complete the following tasks.
- Divide the tasks among you.
- Using the Internet, create logical hyperlinks to the highlighted words so that others can find information more quickly and discover what you've learned.
- **Getting started:** Locate websites that will help your classmates understand the significance of these words to Harlem and the IM. [Goree Island](#).
- Go to [Drop Me Off in Harlem](#). Explore the site looking for information about the highlighted words in the poem.
- **Explore all three subsites:**
  - [A Place Called Harlem](#)
  - [Faces of the Renaissance](#) (Visit at least three of the six professions listed)
  - [Themes and Variations](#)
- After you've located a logical website, create the **Hyperlink**,
  - highlight the address of the web page, right click and select "COPY"
  - toggle back to your Word document with the "Harlem" poem.
  - highlight the word you are linking
  - right click and select "Hyperlink"
  - click in the space "Type the file or web page name"
  - paste in the copied web page address (Ctrl "V")
  - click OK. The pull-down menu will close, and you'll see the highlighted word underlined in blue.
  - verify that you've hyperlinked the right page by double clicking on that blue word.
  - Save your page as you finish each hyperlink.

*You'll need to do additional web searches to locate other information to complete your section of the poem.*

- At the end of the period, **save your hyperlinked version of the poem** on class folder in the file specified.

Adapted by Anna J. Small Roseboro, <http://teachingenglishlanguagearts.com/> Image from [Scholastic](#)