

# Active Viewing of "Cora Unashamed"

By Nathel Coca and Judy Iliff

## Overview

The following lesson plans for "Cora Unashamed" by Langston Hughes offer suggestions for pre-viewing, viewing, and post-viewing of the ExxonMobil Masterpiece Theatre movie **Cora Unashamed**. These plans are most appropriate for high school level students. They were written with Junior English/American literature classes in mind.

## Objectives

Students will:

- Comprehend and synthesize the themes of the movie
- Identify the roles of women and African-Americans during the 30s
- Interpret the movie's themes through a variety of post-viewing activities

## Skills Attained

- Critical/Active viewing skills
- Discussion
- Collaboration
- Writing
- Synthesis

## The Lesson

### Pre-viewing

Assign the following topics to groups to present before the viewing of the movie.

Research various aspects of the 1930s:

- Women's roles in the community and the family
- Roles of African-Americans
- "Mixed" marriages
- Iowa/small-town America
- The Underground Railroad-connections to the Midwest

### Viewing

Distribute copies of the "Reading a Movie" role sheets to students. These include film technique appreciator, movie historian, vocabulary enricher, symbolizer, discussion director, summarizer, and movie illustrator. These templates can be accessed at [http://158.91.55.1/~jeanar/Rock\\_files/viewing.htm](http://158.91.55.1/~jeanar/Rock_files/viewing.htm)

Students should complete their assigned role sheets during and directly after viewing the movie.

### Post-viewing

1. Using the "Reading a Movie" role templates, form groups with each role being represented at least once in each group and discuss the movie. Students should also include discussion of the topics presented before the viewing of the movie in this post-viewing discussion.
2. Students should convey the gist of the movie by summarizing the text in 20 words or less.
3. Discuss the title's significance.

### **Assessment**

1. Each student participates in the "Reading a Movie" discussion. This is a self-assessment. The rubric for scoring can be found at [http://www-cchs.ccsd.k12.wy.us/cchs\\_web/english/movie.html](http://www-cchs.ccsd.k12.wy.us/cchs_web/english/movie.html)
2. Writing- Write a piece (poem, essay, short story) about the story/movie **Cora Unashamed** or the theme breaking free or independence.
3. Comparison/Contrast-If students read the short story (which can be downloaded on the American Collection site) before or after viewing the movie, assign a comparison~contrast essay.
4. Go to [http://www-cchs.ccsd.k12.wy.us/cchs\\_web/english/ComparisonContrast.html](http://www-cchs.ccsd.k12.wy.us/cchs_web/english/ComparisonContrast.html) for a rubric to use for scoring this essay.

### **Connection to Other Literary Works**

The following stories deal with women's issues - freedom, independence, and choices. All take place roughly in the same time period:

"Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin  
"The Jilting of Granny Weatherall" by Katherine Anne Porter  
"A Worn Path" by Eudora Welty  
"A Wagner Matinee" by Willa Cather

### **Additional resources**

PBS' Teacher's Guide for [Cora Unashamed](#)

The templates were adapted from Harvey Daniels' Literature Circles by Jeana Rock, <http://158.91.55.1/faculty/rock.html> who teaches at Timpview High School in Provo, Utah.

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