

**Let's Talk About It: Picturing America**  
**The Work of Freedom: Individual and Communal**

**Poetry Selections**

**“America” by Langston Hughes**

Little dark baby,  
Little Jew baby,  
Little outcast,  
America is seeking the stars,  
America is seeking tomorrow.  
You are America.  
I am America  
America— the dream,  
America— the vision.  
America— the star-seeking I.  
Out of yesterday  
The chains of slavery;  
Out of yesterday,  
The ghettos of Europe;  
Out of yesterday,  
The poverty and pain of the old, old world,  
The building and struggle of this new one,  
We come  
You and I,  
Seeking the stars.  
You and I,  
You of the blue eyes  
And the blond hair,  
I of the dark eyes  
And the crinkly hair.  
You and I  
Offering hands  
Being brothers,  
Being one,  
Being America.  
You and I.  
And I?  
Who am I?  
You know me:  
I am Crispus Attucks at the Boston Tea Party;  
Jimmy Jones in the ranks of the last black troops marching  
for democracy.  
I am Sojourner Truth preaching and praying for the goodness  
of this wide, wide land;  
Today's black mother bearing tomorrow's America.  
Who am I?  
You know me,  
Dream of my dreams,  
I am America.  
I am America seeking the stars.  
America—

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Hoping, praying,  
Fighting, dreaming.  
Knowing  
There are stains  
On the beauty of my democracy,  
I want to be clean.  
I want to grovel  
No longer in the mire.  
I want to reach always  
After stars.  
Who am I?  
I am the ghetto child,  
I am the dark baby,  
I am you  
And the blond tomorrow  
And yet  
I am my one sole self,  
America seeking the stars.

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