

The Old Cabin

Paul Laurence Dunbar

How does Dunbar hold painful history and cherished memory in the same place?

TOTAL TIME	TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION
30 minutes	Poem - complete poem

TEACHER SETUP

Open the work in the Enhanced Reader and cue the span using the START and END anchors below.

START	In de dead of night I sometimes,
END	Roun' dat po' ol' cabin do'.
PASSAGE ID	sec-dunbar-oldcabin-01

THE MOVE

Analyze how a repeated image can carry conflicting emotions at once.

WHY THIS PASSAGE

The cabin belongs to a world of slavery, violence, family, music, and community. Dunbar repeatedly returns to its doorway so the image gathers joy and pain instead of resolving into a simple symbol.

MARK

Underline memories of violence or fear. Circle memories of family, music, or laughter. Box each return to the cabin door.

NOTICE

- Why does the speaker remember joy inside a brutal system?
- How does repetition change the cabin from setting into symbol?
- What is lost when the people around the cabin are gone?

THINK

Answer provisionally: How does Dunbar hold painful history and cherished memory in the same place? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response. Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.

STRONG ANSWER

Dunbar makes the cabin emotionally double: it is part of an enslaved past, but it also holds memories of kinship and communal joy. Repetition keeps both truths present, refusing a simple nostalgic or purely tragic reading.

EVIDENCE

Use one painful memory and one joyful memory connected to the cabin.

WATCH FOR

Do not mistake affection for the cabin as approval of slavery. Explain the tension the poem preserves.

SOLO

Read independently.

SUPPORTED

Narration + highlighting.

LISTENING

Listen; same evidence task.

STUDENT PAGE · GRADE 11 · LESSON 333

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WORK	The Old Cabin
TUMBLETA PASSAGE LOCATION	Poem - complete poem

PASSAGE ID	sec-dunbar-oldcabin-01
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Your teacher will open or cue the work in the Enhanced Reader. Use the location and verbatim anchors below to confirm the assigned span.

START

In de dead of night I sometimes,

END

Roun' dat po' ol' cabin do'.

READ / LISTEN TO THE ASSIGNED PASSAGE SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration and highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the assigned passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. **MARK** Underline memories of violence or fear. Circle memories of family, music, or laughter. Box each return to the cabin door.
2. **NOTICE** Why does the speaker remember joy inside a brutal system? How does repetition change the cabin from setting into symbol? What is lost when the people around the cabin are gone?
3. **THINK** Answer provisionally: How does Dunbar hold painful history and cherished memory in the same place?
4. **WRITE** Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.
5. **CLOSE** Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and say why.