

11.2.1

Lesson 10

Introduction

In this lesson, students read and analyze the remainder of paragraph 8 and the first half of paragraph 9 of “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” from *The Souls of Black Folk* (from “Slowly but steadily, in the following years” to “to the youth with dawning self-consciousness, self-realization, self-respect”). In this excerpt, Du Bois introduces the key metaphor of “the mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8) to explain African Americans’ progress through education. Students engage in an evidence-based discussion to consider how Du Bois uses and refines this metaphor. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Du Bois use and refine a key metaphor in this excerpt?

For homework, students add to their Rhetorical Impact Tracking Tools. Additionally, students continue to read their AIR texts and prepare for a brief discussion on how they applied the focus standard RI.11-12.5 to their texts.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines <i>faction</i> in <i>Federalist</i> No. 10).
L.11-12.5.a	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W.11-12.9.b	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. b. Apply <i>grades 11–12 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning [e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court Case majority opinions and dissents] and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy [e.g., <i>The Federalist</i> , presidential addresses]”).

Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does Du Bois use and refine a key metaphor in this excerpt?
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a metaphor central to this excerpt (e.g., Du Bois uses the metaphor of “the mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8)). Interpret the role of the metaphor (e.g., “[T]he mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8) refers to the Israelites’ long and difficult journey to the promised land. Du Bois uses this metaphor to represent the challenging and exhausting process that African Americans undertook to build their knowledge through books and study in order to achieve liberty.). Analyze how Du Bois refines the metaphor (e.g., Even after working hard to climb “[u]p the new path” (par. 9), or educate themselves, Du Bois writes that “Canaan was always dim and far away” (par. 9), indicating that despite their efforts, education alone did not bring African Americans the liberty they sought. Du Bois refines the meaning of the metaphor to convey that while education may not have been the direct path to the promised land of “Canaan” (par. 9) it was still an important and meaningful “journey” (par. 9) for African Americans. Through this metaphor, Du Bois expresses that building knowledge was a necessary step toward reaching “self-consciousness” (par. 9) even if it did not lead directly to the promised land.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compulsory (adj.) – required by a law or rule cabalistic (adj.) – having a secret or hidden meaning vistas (n.) – large and beautiful views of an area of land or water
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> toiled (v.) – engaged in hard and continuous work
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rugged (adj.) – having a rough, uneven surface advance guard (n.) – a body of troops going before the main force to clear the way, guard against

surprise, etc.

- disclosed (v.) – made (something) known to the public
- flattery (n.) – praise that is not sincere
- criticism (n.) – the act of expressing disapproval and of noting the problems or faults of a person or thing
- leisure (n.) – time when you are not working; time when you can do whatever you want to do

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RI.11-12.4, L.11-12.5.a, W.11-12.9.b Text: <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>, by W.E.B. Du Bois, Chapter 1: “Of Our Spiritual Strivings,” paragraphs 8–9 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Masterful Reading 4. Reading and Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 15% 3. 10% 4. 50% 5. 15% 6. 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Ideas Tracking Tool (refer 11.2.1 Lesson 2)—students may need additional blank copies
- Student copies of the Rhetorical Impact Tracking Tool (refer 11.2.1 Lesson 6)—students may need additional blank copies
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 11.2.1 Lesson 1)

Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
▶	Indicates student action(s).
💬	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and assessed standards for this lesson: RI.11-12.4 and L.11-12.5.a. In this lesson, students analyze how Du Bois uses and refines a key metaphor, and explore the metaphor's role in the text.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied the focus standard RI.11-12.5 to their AIR texts. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson's AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied the focus standard to their AIR texts.

- ▶ Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied the focus standard to their AIR texts from the previous lesson's homework.

Instruct students to take out their responses to Lesson 9's homework assignment. (Preview and annotate the remainder of paragraph 8 and paragraph 9 (from "Slowly but steadily, in the following years" to "to the youth with dawning self-consciousness, self-realization, self-respect".) Instruct student pairs to discuss their annotations.

💬 Student annotations may include:

- Boxes around unfamiliar words and phrases including: *compulsory*, *cabalistic*, *Canaan*, *advance guard*, *doggedly*, and *vistas*.
- Stars next to "It was the ideal of 'book-learning'" (par. 8), which is important, because this is a new ideal. "Here at last seemed to have been discovered the mountain path to Canaan"

- (par. 8), which is important, because Du Bois seems to be emphasizing this with “at last” (par. 8).
- A question mark next to “the mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8). What or where is Canaan?
 - Exclamation points next to “the Canaan was always dim and far away” (par. 9), which connects to Du Bois’s mention of “the mountain path to Canaan” in paragraph 8. This is surprising, because it seems like African Americans have not yet reached Canaan in this excerpt and “self-consciousness” (par. 9), because this is a central idea that Du Bois mentions earlier in the text.

① This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W.11-12.9.b, which addresses the use of textual evidence in writing.

Lead a brief full-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading

10%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of the remaining section of paragraph 8 and the beginning of paragraph 9 (from “Slowly but steadily, in the following years” to “to the youth with dawning self-consciousness, self-realization, self-respect”) of “Of Our Spiritual Strivings.” Instruct students to follow along.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

What details does Du Bois use to develop the key metaphor in this excerpt?

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

50%

Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

Instruct student groups to read from “Slowly but steadily, in the following years” to “of the white man, the longing to know” (par. 8) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definitions: *compulsory* means “required by a law or rule” and *cabalistic* means “having a secret or hidden meaning.”

- ▶ Students write the definitions of *compulsory* and *cabalistic* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What is the “new vision” and why does it replace the “dream of political power” (par. 8)?

- The “ideal of ‘book-learning’” became the “new vision” (par. 8). Since education took the place of “the dream of political power,” Du Bois indicates that “political power” (par. 8) through the right to vote had not given African Americans the freedom and liberty they hoped for.

How does the imagery of a “pillar of fire” refine the idea of “the ideal of ‘book-learning’” (par. 8)?

- The image of a “pillar of fire” (par. 8), which creates light, emphasizes that education became the new dream to lead African Americans to liberty. As a guiding light, “‘book-learning’” (par. 8) provided African Americans with new inspiration, since gaining the right to vote had not helped African Americans to achieve the liberty they sought.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider asking the following optional extension question to deepen students’ understanding.

How does this imagery connect to imagery Du Bois uses in previous paragraphs?

- The image of the “pillar of fire” (par. 8) connects to the images of “sun[,],” “blue sky” and “shadows” that Du Bois uses to develop the idea of the “veil” in paragraph 2. Du Bois describes the peaceful time in his life when he was unburdened by his exclusion from the white world as a time in which he lived in the “blue sky” (par. 2), and describes the struggle of the “other black boys” (par. 2) who are denied the opportunities of the white world as “not ... sunny” (par. 2), they can only “watch the streak of blue above” as they “plod darkly on” (par. 2). In describing “the ideal of ‘book-learning’” as a “pillar of fire” (par. 8), Du Bois creates a connection between the guiding light of education and the sunny brightness of a life untroubled by exclusion from the white world.

What words and phrases explain why African Americans considered education an “ideal to guide the unguided” (par. 8)?

- Student responses may include:
 - The definition of *compulsory* as “required by a law or rule” suggests that African Americans were forced by law to remain uneducated, which explains why African Americans might have been inspired by “the ideal of ‘book-learning’” (par. 8).
 - Du Bois’s use of the word *cabalistic* suggests that the “letters of the white man” (par. 8) were a mysterious secret known only to some (white people), and not to all (African Americans), which explains why African Americans were interested in pursuing education.

How does the “the ideal of ‘book-learning’” refine the idea of “gaining and perfecting ... liberty” (par. 8)?

- Since “the ideal of ‘book-learning’” takes the place of “the dream of political power” (par. 8), Du Bois suggests that African Americans believed that education was the main way to achieve the

liberty that they sought. This refines the idea of freedom because it demonstrates that “perfecting ... liberty” (par. 8) is a continuing process, and requires both “political power” (par. 8) and education.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Instruct students to take out their Ideas Tracking Tools and record ideas, notes, and connections explored in this excerpt.

Instruct student groups to read from “Here at last seemed to have been discovered” to “a foot had slipped or some one had fallen” (pars. 8–9) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Provide students with the following definitions: *rugged* means “having a rough, uneven surface” and *advance guard* means “a body of troops going before the main force to clear the way, guard against surprise, etc.”
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *rugged* and *advance guard* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- ① Consider reminding students of the work they did with the vocabulary word *dogged* in 11.2.1 Lesson 4.

Explain to students that “Canaan” (par. 8) refers to the same concept as the “promised land” that Du Bois introduces in paragraph 6.

- ① Students considered the idea of the “promised land” in 11.2.1 Lesson 8.

What is the impact of the figurative language that Du Bois uses to describe the “ideal of ‘book-learning’” (par. 8)?

- 💬 Du Bois uses the metaphor of “the mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8) to describe African Americans’ engagement with education and study. By describing education as the path to the promised land, Du Bois emphasizes the strength of African Americans’ belief in both the necessity and power of education to bring them their freedom.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle with this analysis, consider posing the following scaffolding question:

How does Du Bois use figurative language to describe the “ideal of ‘book-learning’” (par. 8)?

- 💬 Du Bois uses the metaphor of “the mountain path to Canaan” to describe the “ideal of ‘book-learning’” (par. 8).

How does the word *seemed* impact the meaning of the phrase “seemed to have been discovered” (par. 8)?

- The word *seemed* demonstrates the uncertainty and caution African Americans felt in their new belief that education would lead them to the promised land of liberty, since Emancipation and the right to vote alone did not give them true freedom.

How does the image of “the highway of Emancipation” (par. 8) develop the metaphor of “the mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8)?

- Student responses may include:
 - Du Bois contrasts the image of “the highway of Emancipation and law” (par. 8) with the image of the “mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8). Through this comparison, Du Bois emphasizes that unlike the quick and direct “highway of Emancipation” (par. 8) and the right to vote, education is a slower, lengthier, more challenging way to achieve liberty.
 - The contrasting image of “the highway of Emancipation and law” (par. 8), develops the metaphor of the “mountain path” because it suggests that while the path to education is challenging, it eventually elevates African Americans, or leads them to a higher place—“heights high enough to overlook life” (par. 8)—than Emancipation or the right to vote.

How does Du Bois’s description of “the advance guard” (par. 9) clarify the meaning of the word *toiled*? What does this description suggest about the experience of “book-learning” (par. 8)?

- Student responses should include:
 - Du Bois describes the “advance guard” as having “toiled, slowly, heavily, doggedly” (par. 9), which suggests that *toiled* means continuously doing hard work.
 - This description reveals that the process of learning was difficult, exhausting, slow, and required great perseverance.

What other details in the text develop the metaphor and the experience of “book-learning” (par. 8)?

- Student responses may include:
 - Du Bois describes those who are learning as having “faltering feet” (par. 9), which develops the metaphor of education because it indicates the difficulty of this process.
 - Du Bois uses the words *faithfully* and *piteously* (par. 9) to emphasize that African Americans were dedicated to education and study even though it was challenging.
 - Du Bois describes the process of “book-learning” (par. 8) as “weary work” (par. 9), which emphasizes the difficulty of the process.
 - Du Bois emphasizes how challenging and slow the experience was by writing that they made only “inches of progress” (par. 9), which is a very small unit of measurement.

- Du Bois develops the experience of “book-learning” (par. 8) by describing setbacks as when a “foot had slipped or some one had fallen” (par. 9).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Instruct students to use their Ideas Tracking Tools to record ideas, notes, and connections explored in this excerpt.

Instruct student groups to read from “To the tired climbers, the horizon was ever dark” to “to the youth with dawning self-consciousness, self-realization, self-respect” (par. 9) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definition: *vistas* means “large and beautiful views of an area of land or water.”

- ▶ Students write the definition of *vistas* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Provide students with the following definitions: *disclosed* means “made (something) known to the public,” *flattery* means “praise that is not sincere,” *criticism* means “the act of expressing disapproval and of noting the problems or faults of a person or thing,” and *leisure* means “time when you are not working; time when you can do whatever you want to do.”

- ▶ Students write the definitions of *disclosed*, *flattery*, *criticism*, and *leisure* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What does Du Bois’s description of Canaan in paragraph 9 suggest about “the mountain path” (par. 8)?

- 💬 Du Bois writes that despite African Americans’ hard work and perseverance in study, “Canaan was always dim and far away” (par. 9). This description suggests that the path of building knowledge through books and study had not yet led African Americans directly to the promised land of liberty. However, “the journey” (par. 9) up the “mountain path” (par. 8) created the time and space for African Americans to achieve “self-consciousness, self-realization, [and] self-respect” through “reflection and self-examination” (par. 9).

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking the following scaffolding question:

What did “the journey at least g[i]ve” (par. 9) African Americans?

- 💬 “[T]he journey” (par. 9) gave African Americans time for “reflection and self-examination” (par. 9), or time to think about what they were experiencing and how this influenced them.

What is the impact of the phrase “at least” (par. 9)?

- ☞ The phrase “at least” (par. 9) indicates that African Americans did not yet reach “Canaan” (pars. 8–9) as they hoped, but “the journey” (par. 9) was still useful, because it gave them time to think about their experiences and develop themselves.

How does Du Bois use figurative language to describe the result of this “journey” (par. 9)?

- ☞ Du Bois uses the metaphor of a “child” growing into a “youth” (par. 9) to explain how education helped African Americans move towards “self-consciousness, self-realization, self-respect” (par. 9).

What does the result of “the journey” (par. 9) imply about “book-learning” (par. 8)? How does this result connect to a central idea?

- ☞ “[T]he journey” of education resulted in African Americans’ “dawning self-consciousness, self-realization, self-respect” (par. 9), implying that the process of education was a necessary step toward achieving Du Bois’s central idea of self-consciousness. Though education itself may not have led directly to liberty, it was essential to understanding one’s self on one’s own terms.

① Students further explore the significance of “dawning self-consciousness” (par. 9) in Lesson 11.

What can you infer about “the journey” from Du Bois’s choice of the word *youth* (par. 9)?

- ☞ By using the word *youth* (par. 9), Du Bois suggests that the development process is not yet over and African Americans have not yet reached the promised land of true liberty. Despite the challenging and exhausting process of education and study, African Americans have only begun to approach “self-consciousness” (par. 9).

How does Du Bois refine the metaphor of “the mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8) in this section of text?

- ☞ At first, “the mountain path to Canaan” (par. 8) represented education as the way that would lead African Americans to the promised land of liberty. However, after struggling and climbing up the path, or studying and educating themselves, African Americans had not yet found true liberty. Du Bois refines the meaning of the metaphor to convey that while education may not have been the direct path to the promised land, it was still an important and meaningful “journey” (par. 9) for African Americans, because it led to “dawning self-consciousness, self-realization, self-respect” (par. 9).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Instruct students to use their Ideas Tracking Tools to record ideas, notes, and connections explored in this excerpt.

Activity 5: Quick Write

15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How does Du Bois use and refine a key metaphor in this excerpt?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson's vocabulary whenever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- 🗣 See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to add to their Rhetorical Impact Tracking Tools, recording the figurative language analyzed in the close-reading passage for this lesson.

Also for homework, students should continue to read their AIR texts through the lens of the focus standard RI.11-12.5 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their texts based on that standard.

① Students who are reading literature should read through the lens of a focus standard of their choice.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Add to your Rhetorical Impact Tracking Tool, recording the figurative language analyzed in the close-reading passage for this lesson.

Also, continue reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of the focus standard RI.11-12.5 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.

Model Ideas Tracking Tool

Name:		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: Identify the ideas that you encounter throughout the text. Trace the development of those ideas by noting how the author introduces, develops, or refines these ideas in the text. Cite textual evidence to support your work.

Text:	"Of Our Spiritual Strivings" from <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> by W.E.B. Du Bois
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Paragraph #	Ideas	Notes and Connections
8	"the ideal of 'book-learning'"	The "ideal of 'book-learning'" (par. 8), or education, has replaced Emancipation and the right to vote as the way for African Americans to achieve true liberty.
8	"the ideal of liberty"	Du Bois's assertion that the dream of education took the place of "the dream of political power" (par. 8) refines the idea that "liberty" is not just freedom through "political power" (par. 8) but also through education.
9	"self-consciousness"	The process of education was a necessary step toward achieving Du Bois's idea of self-consciousness. Though education itself may not have led directly to liberty, it was essential to understanding one's self on one's own terms.