For each poem by Langston Hughes, answer the following questions.

1. Who is the speaker? What is the tone of voice adopted?
2. What is the poem's literal meaning?
3. What is the poem's theme?
4. What is the poem's [structure](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Form)? How is the poem organized?
5. What is the poem's [rhyme scheme](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Rhyme)? Is there any evidence of [internal rhymes, slant rhymes](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Rhyme), etc?
6. How would you characterize the poem's language or [diction](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Diction) ? What effect does this choice of language have on your response to the poem and its speaker?
7. What [imagery](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Imagery) is developed in the poem? Does the poet use [metaphor](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Figurative), [simile](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Figurative), [personification](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Personification), etc? Does he/she use [symbolism](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Symbol)?
8. Is there any evidence of repetition, [alliteration](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Rhyme), [onomatopoeia](http://www.nku.edu/~rkdrury/poetryexplication.html#Figurative), or other sound effects in the poem?

**“I, Too, Sing America”**

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

**“I Too, Sing America”**

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I’ll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody’ll dare

Say to me,

“Eat in the kitchen,"

Then.

Besides,

They’ll see how beautiful I am

And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

**“Mother to Son”**

Well, son, I’ll tell you:

Life for me ain’t been no crystal stair.

It’s had tacks in it,

And splinters,

And boards torn up,

And places with no carpet on the floor—

Bare.

But all the time

I’se been a-climbin’ on,

And reachin’ landin’s,

And turnin’ corners,

And sometimes goin’ in the dark

Where there ain’t been no light.

So boy, don’t you turn back.

Don’t you set down on the steps

’Cause you finds it’s kinder hard.

Don’t you fall now—

For I’se still goin’, honey,

I’se still climbin’,

And life for me ain’t been no crystal stair.