

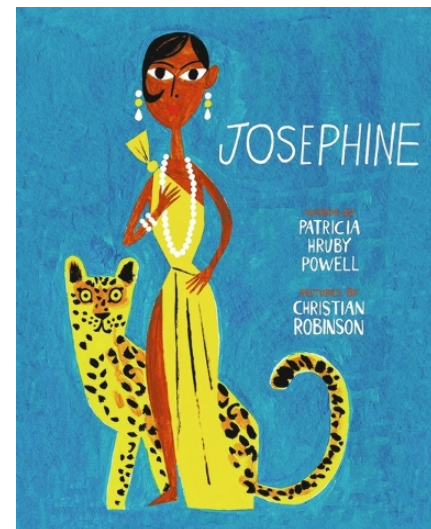
Title: *Josephine: The Dazzling Life of Josephine Baker*

Author: Patricia Hruby Powell (From Arlington Heights, Illinois)

Publisher: Chronicle Books

Publishing Date: 2014

Summary: This biography invites readers to step inside the vibrant and spirited world of performer and civil rights advocate, Josephine Baker. Robinson's paintings are as colorful and rich as Josephine Baker's story, offering page after page of captivating and animated illustrations and rhythmic text, which is written in blank verse. In a few short and well-organized parts, readers learn the story of one of the world's most well-known female performers who danced and sang her way from the poor and segregated streets of St. Louis to the dazzling stages of Paris all the way to Carnegie Hall. Text and illustrations work in tandem to accurately document Josephine's extraordinary life and the era in which she lived. Clear and lively descriptions of Josephine's story play out creatively in the text, introducing readers to basic principles of poetic structure in storytelling and offering an accurate portrait of a woman who fought for racial equality and civil rights through her life's passion: performance. Reluctant readers of nonfiction and poetry lovers alike will be drawn to this book's musical, theatrical nature, making for a fun, enriching, and holistic reading experience. (www.slj.com).



Common Core State Standards: Literature and Informational

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6

Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

Lesson/Activity: Since this book has roots in historical content, there can easily be a text comparison between true informational texts. After using this book as a read aloud, the teacher could provide excerpts for the students to examine. One element to examine is the importance of the location where Josephine originates from. Many students have the misconception that discrimination and racism only occurred in the Deep South. One way to correct this misconception is to reread the experiences Josephine had in St. Louis. This could be done by typing up excerpts or giving each student their own book. Once students gain the understanding that the more northern states also harbored racism and discrimination, the teacher could provide them with historical documents to reinforce that idea. A great, free resource would be the Library of Congress website (<https://www.loc.gov>). Students could then explore the living, working, and social conditions of the North through primary documents. This could also set up a compare/contrast with what the book portrays and what history reports as truth.