English 9
College and Career
Spring Student Enrichment Packet
Prince George’s County Public Schools

READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Prince George’s County Public Schools
Office of Academic Programs
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
COLLEGE AND CAREER SPRING ENRICHMENT PACKET
GRADE 9

In Preparation for College and Career Readiness

Note to Students: You’ve learned so much in school this year! It is important that you keep your brain active over the Spring Break. In this packet, you will find a calendar of activities to complete during the break.

Parents are encouraged to assist in the following ways:

- Make a plan to complete the activities throughout the Spring Break.
- Families should preview the calendar together.
- Schedule times that fit your family’s schedule to complete the assignments and write the proposed times on the calendar dates also. (Of course, these times may need adjustment, but having a plan is the first step to success.)
- Provide a quiet space and time for your child to complete the activities.
- Encourage the daily reading for a minimum of 30 minutes of a self-selected book. Students should read for a minimum of four of the five days of the Spring Break.

Thank you for helping your child succeed.
Read daily for at least 30 minutes. It is suggested that you use this extended block of time to read a novel or nonfiction book.

### Spring Break Reading Calendar

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College and Career Readiness Tasks
Directions: Carefully read the poem *Lift Every Voice and Sing* by James Weldon Johnson and answer the questions that follow.

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list’ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast’ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

About The Author: James Weldon Johnson was an early civil rights activist, a leader of the NAACP, and a leading figure in the creation and development of the Harlem Renaissance.
Directions: Use text evidence and make inferences to answer the following questions using complete sentences.

1. Lines 7-12 contain references to what specific aspects of history?

2. The poet is optimistic about the future. Why do you think he used a harsh image in line 18 as a remembrance of the past?

3. Which words in the poem indicate hope?

4. How do the words referred to in question 3 create tension in the poem?
5. What path is the speaker describing in the last stanza?

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6. What is the structure of the poem? (Think about stanzas and lines.)

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7. Why do you think that there are slight changes in the poem’s rhythm or meter and accented syllables?

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8. Who is the “every voice” in the title of the poem?

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9. What are some possible themes of the poem?

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Directions: Carefully read the poem “Yet Do I Marvel” by Countee Cullen and answer the questions that follow.

“Yet Do I Marvel”
by Countee Cullen

I doubt not God is good, well-meaning, kind,  
And did He stoop to quibble could tell why  
The little buried mole continues blind,  
Why flesh that mirrors Him must some day die.  
Make plain the reason tortured Tantalus  
Is baited by the fickle fruit, declare  
If merely brute caprice dooms Sisyphus  
To struggle up a never-ending stair.  
Inscrutable His ways are, and immune  
To catechism by a mind too strewn  
With petty cares to slightly understand  
What awful brain compels His awful hand.  
Yet do I marvel at this curious thing:  
To make a poet black, and bid him sing!
Directions: Use text evidence and draw inferences to answer the following questions using complete sentences.

10. Read Lines 1-4. What situation first described, seems to contradict itself?

11. What are some words or phrases the poet uses to create sympathetic images in lines 1-8?

12. How is God’s brain and hand described?

13. Reread the last two lines of the poem. What surprise does the speaker reveal?

14. What is the connotation of the word marvel in line 13?
Grammar Exercises

Directions: Using a computer or mobile device, visit the following website:


On the site, there are three grammar practice tests, Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. Complete two of the three activities.