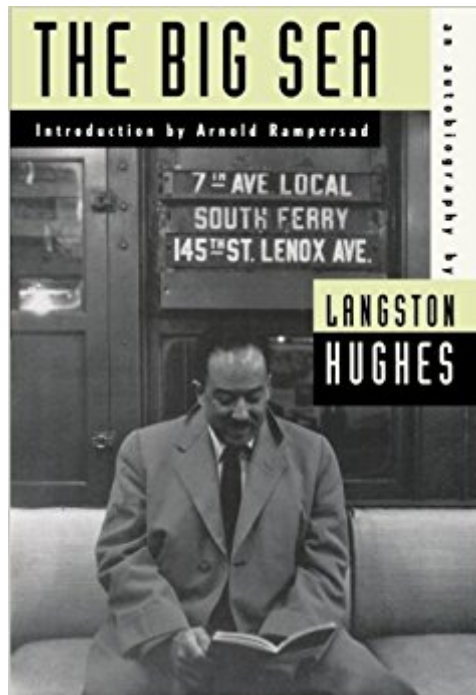




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# The Big Sea: An Autobiography (American Century Series)



## Synopsis

Introduction by Arnold Rampersad. Langston Hughes, born in 1902, came of age early in the 1920s. In *The Big Sea* he recounts those memorable years in the two great playgrounds of the decade--Harlem and Paris. In Paris he was a cook and waiter in nightclubs. He knew the musicians and dancers, the drunks and dope fiends. In Harlem he was a rising young poet--at the center of the "Harlem Renaissance." Arnold Rampersad writes in his incisive new introduction to *The Big Sea*, an American classic: "This is American writing at its best--simpler than Hemingway; as simple and direct as that of another Missouri-born writer...Mark Twain."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Langston Hughes is the Jazz Poet! The constant communicator of Blues. He is the singer, philosopher, the folk and urban lyricist. This book is the chronicle of a bright and lively artistic ear that brought the African-American people full into the twentieth century. It is a wonderful book!”  
—Amiri Baraka

Langston Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri, went to Cleveland, Ohio, lived for a number of years in Chicago, and long resided in New York City's Harlem. He graduated from Lincoln University in 1929 and was awarded an honorary Litt. D. in 1943. He was perhaps best known as a poet and the creator of *Simple*, but he also wrote novels, biography, history, plays (several of them Broadway

hits), and children's books, and he edited several anthologies. Mr. Hughes died in 1967. Arnold Rampersad, author of the widely acclaimed biography *The Life of Langston Hughes*, is Woodrow Wilson Professor of Literature and director of American Studies at Princeton University.

Langston Hughes was a wonderful poet and story teller so it is not surprising that his autobiography/memoir is a joy to read. He tells the story of his life by giving us delightful episodes that each read like short stories. Each chapter has the structure of a short story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Along the way, the reader has to be amazed at the texture and breadth of his life adventures. He lives for a short time in Mexico with his father, in several cities with his mother and other relatives, and then his wonderful sea going adventures in Europe, Africa, and also his stay in Paris. The reader also gets a first hand glimpse of what it was like to be "Negro" in America as well as in other places in the world. The writing is bright and energetic and the book is very difficult to put down. I highly recommend it to anyone who might be thinking about writing an autobiography or memoir.

This expansive, witty, completely surprising autobiography is one of the best books about a young writer in search of himself and his voice since Joyce's *"Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man."* Thinking of Langston Hughes primarily as a Harlem Renaissance writer is like thinking of Joyce an early 20th century European writer: factual but woefully limited.

A great read! A must read for anyone interested in the period

I love autobiographies and how they can take you into another world. This book did exactly that; it left me with a greater understanding of the times that Langston Hughes lived. He wrote in depth about how he wrote certain poems, what brought them to life in his mind. His writing is colorful and brings vivid imagery to your mind. I was really amazed by all he had done, places he traveled to & work he did. His comparison of the way he was treated as a black man in America, compared to Mexico, Europe, and Africa is eye opening. You really feel like you know Langston Hughes after reading this book.

An amazing autobiography of such a rich life of a young black man in virtually every scenario one could think of. I like his style of writing. There is connection with him and his characters, yet a very well laid sense of objectivity in a very tumultuous time. Great reading for history buffs interested in

the black experience during World War on and the contrasts of thoughts on African Americans from a European, African and American standpoint. Well Done

I was pleased with the quick turnaround in shipping. Of course I love the author and his composition.

Fantastic read! This book gives you a deep insight into the life of author Langston Hughes and the struggles of an African American man in American society. As current today as it was almost a century ago.

Very informational thanks for this

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