

How do language and craft enhance a reader's experience? It is important to pay attention to the words an author uses and the ways those words are arranged. There are many strategies you can use to understand the words and the structure of what you read. Some of them are

- focusing on the author's word choice;
- looking at the way the author uses words;
- examining how the author puts words together to form meaningful phrases;
- understanding figurative language;
- comparing the author's style with other writers' styles.

Examine how one poet, Robert Hayden, uses the Icarus myth to tell the story of African American dreams of flight. In your **Response Notes**, comment specifically on language choice and other elements of craft that you notice.

O Daedalus, Fly Away Home by Robert Hayden

Drifting night in the Georgia pines,
coonskin drum and jubilee banjo.

Pretty Malinda, dance with me.

Night is juba, night is conjo.

Pretty Malinda, dance with me.

Night is an African juju man
weaving a wish and a weariness together
to make two wings.

O fly away home fly away

Do you remember Africa?

O cleave the air fly away home

My gran, he flew back to Africa,
just spread his arms and
flew away home.

Drifting night in the windy pines;
night is a laughing, night is a longing.

Pretty Malinda, come to me.

Response
Notes

Night is a mourning juju man
weaving a wish and a weariness together
to make two wings.

O fly away home fly away

- ✱ Rereading the poem and using your **Response Notes**, work with a partner to fill in the chart below. The chart will help you examine and understand words, phrases, or lines that recreate the experience of the poem.

LANGUAGE AND CRAFT CHART

Word, phrase, or line	Your interpretation/What you think it means	What it makes you think, see, or feel

Robert Hayden often wrote about the African American experience, using many different forms for his poems. The poem on page 130, about escaped slave and prominent abolitionist Frederick Douglass, is written in the form of a **sonnet**. This type of sonnet consists of fourteen lines. A sonnet usually begins with an idea, question, or challenge, which is resolved or brought to a conclusion at the end of the poem. Some believe that sonnets mirror the way we think about difficult ideas, with pauses or interruptions as we work our way to a conclusion. Sonnets often deal with love or other challenging philosophical issues.

- ✱ As you read Hayden’s sonnet about Frederick Douglass, consider the poem’s meaning, as well as the way it was written. Record your thoughts in your **Response Notes**.

