

It's a Long Way from Home

High School: Grades 9–12

Reading-Comprehension Questions

1. Why has Louis left Mississippi for Chicago?

2. List four ways life in Chicago was different from life in Mississippi for Louis.

3. What is the Stroll?

4. Translate Robert's "fancy talk" into everyday language:

snap my cap_____

split_____

bring me down_____

blow it down_____

skin_____

laying down some hot licks_____

lid_____

giggle-water_____

black and tan club_____

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crush _____

Critical-Thinking Questions

1. What modern slang terms (with translation) do you hear or use today? How does slang function as an expression of popular culture or as the identity of a generation?

2. What role does music play in Robert's world? What role does music play in your life?

3. Chicago and the social scene on the Stroll are exciting to Louis. Should Louis be heeding the warnings of Aunt Celia: "You seem like a nice young man. You stand straight and you know your manners. Keep it that way! I don't want you getting into trouble. I'll be watching you." What kind of trouble is Aunt Celia alluding to? What kinds of tensions exist between people of different generations today?

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4. The story only covers Louis's first days in the city. What do you think his long-term plans should include?
