

Source Analysis 5

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In both "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and in "At Blackwater Pond", the authors talk about the importance of the river/pond, respectively. In "The Negro Speaks of Rivers", Langston Hughes emphasizes how the river is known by him and, in a way, is a part of him. I really like this symbolism especially when he says, "I've known rivers: ancient, dusky rivers. My soul has grown deep like the rivers." This part stuck out to me because it's like saying that the rivers run deep and long into history and even though Hughes wasn't there with the rivers through most of their history, because the rivers are engrained into him, it's as if he was there with the rivers the whole time. When Hughes says that his "soul has grown deep like the rivers", he's showing that through living by and with the rivers, he has become a better and more down to earth person that can better appreciate the things around them and I really like that symbolism. Similarly, in "At Blackwater Pond", Mary Oliver goes more into detail about becoming one with the river, or pond in this case. When she says, "I hear them deep inside me, whispering on what a beautiful thing that just happened?", I took that as pieces of the pond attaching itself to her and to her soul, creating that beautiful thing and forging a connection between her and the natural world. This part can also be taken in context of an earlier part in the poem where she talks about her bones 'waking up' as she drinks the water from the pond. Water is often seen as a rejuvenating or healing substance which makes it seem as if Oliver was dead (metaphorically) until she drank the water and I like how that analogy

can be related back to ancient historical teachings and beliefs but is also applicable currently as water and the importance of it is often brought up in conversation.