

# HENRY AND ME

The Story of Wallace Henry Thurman



HENRY AND ME

BLUFORD & JONES

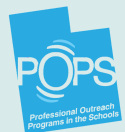
WRITTEN BY  
CARLETON BLUFORD

ILLUSTRATED BY  
ALISHA JONES



## K-3 Study Guide

by Sarah Meservy



## Discussion Questions

- What makes Henry different from his classmates?
- Why does Henry like going to the library?
- What do you think it means to 'other' people?
- Have you ever felt othered?
- How could we make sure that everyone in our class feels like they belong?
- Wallace Henry Thurman was born in Salt Lake City in 1902. How do you think Utah has changed since then?
- Why did Wallace Henry Thurman want to be a writer?
- Henry was inspired by the life of Wallace Henry Thurman. Who inspires you?

## The Harlem Renaissance and Black Culture



Exploring the background of the Harlem Renaissance in a grade-appropriate way will help your students better understand the significance of Thurman's work.

During the 1920s, a rebirth or *renaissance* of African-American culture was blossoming all over the country but was especially notable in Harlem, a neighborhood in New York City where many Black writers, artists, and musicians gathered.

### Wallace Henry Thurman

For more than two hundred years, people had been kidnapped and taken from Africa to North America where they were enslaved.

They were given new names, punished for speaking their native languages, forbidden to learn to read and write, and forced to adopt the religion of their captors. Slavery stripped them of their identity, their roots, their families, and their culture.

Thurman was part of the first generation of Black Americans allowed to travel freely, attend university, find work, and establish new communities for themselves. He and his friends worked to create a new culture and identity to rebuild what had been taken from them.

Resources for learning more:

- [Kids Konnect](#)
- [Britannica Kids](#)
- [Books About the Harlem Renaissance](#)

## Write a Letter

Have students use the worksheet on page 3 to write a letter to the author and illustrator. Mail the letters to the address below. Be sure to include a return address so they can write back!



**Plan-B Theatre**  
**138 W 300 S**  
**Salt Lake City, UT 84101**

**Author**  
**Carleton**  
**Blurford**

**Illustrator**  
**Alisha Jones**

## Map it Out

Make copies of the worksheet on page 4. After reading *Henry and Me*, have students match the landmarks from the book with the correct state. Then help them find and color in Utah, California, and New York on the map of the U.S. Re-read the story, stopping to identify the direction of each of Thurman's train journeys. Use whichever cardinal directions are most appropriate for your students' grade level, e.g. California to New York may be *east* or *northeast*.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Carleton and Alisha,

In my opinion, your book Henry and Me is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My favorite part is \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I learned \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I want to ask you: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

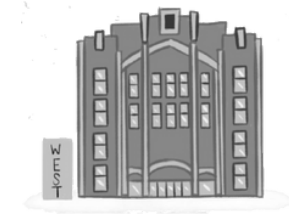
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Map it Out

In *Henry and Me*, Wallace Henry Thurman takes Henry to three different states. Draw a line from each landmark to its state.



Grand Central Station



West High School



Hollywood Sign



Utah



California



New York

Find these three states on the map below and color them in. Then write which direction the characters traveled for each journey.

### Which direction?

From Utah  
to California

From California  
to New York

From New York  
to Utah



# **Core Standards**

## **Social Studies**

### **The most important goal: a well-lived life**

Excitement, wonder, inquiry, delight, and puzzlement are central to meaningful learning in social studies. Social studies should be fun and intriguing for all students, and provide opportunities to make important life-long connections between the past, present, and future. Students who appreciate the sacrifices that have been made in the past and understand the challenges that lie ahead can make better decisions in the present.

Kindergarten (1.1, 3.2, 4.2), Grade 1 (1.1, 1.2.c, 3.1.c, 3.2.c), Grade 2 (1.2, 3.2), Grade 3 (2.1), Grade 4 (2.1, 2.2), Grade 5 (1.3, 5.1, 5.2), Grade 6 (4.1)

## **Health Education**

Grade 3 (HF.3), Grade 4 (MEH.3), Grade 5 (HF.4)

## **Language Arts**

K-6 Writing Standard 1