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**Grade level:** 5

**Primary Source Citation:** "The Colored Band," *When Malindy Sings*, Paul Laurence Dunbar, 1896, Illustrated with photographs by the Hampton Institute Camera Club, New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1903.  
<http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/dunbar/explore.php?book=10&id=177>

Allow students, in groups or individually, to examine the attached poem while answering the questions below in order. The questions are designed to guide students into a deeper analysis of the source and sharpen associated cognitive skills.

**Level I: Description**

1. What details do you see in the photograph opposite the poem, "The Colored Band"?
2. What do you notice about the poem?

**Level II: Interpretation**

1. What does the title of the poem tell you about this period in history?
2. What is the poem about?

**Level III: Analysis**

1. Why would Paul Laurence Dunbar use this type of dialect in his poetry?
2. Does this photograph help you understand the poem better?



### The Colored Band

W'en de colo'ed ban' comes ma'chin' down de street,  
Don't you people stan' daih starin'; lif' yo' feet!  
Ain't dey playin'? Hip, hooray!  
Stir yo' stumps an' cleah de way,  
Fu' de music dat dey mekin' can't be beat.

Oh, de major man's a-swingin' of his stick,  
An' de pickaninnies crowdin' roun' him thick;  
In his go'geous uniform,  
He's de lightnin' of de sto'm,  
An' de little clouds erroun' look mighty slick.

You kin hyeah a fine perfo'mance w'en de white ban's serenade,  
An' dey play dey high-toned music mighty sweet,  
But hit's Sousa played in rag-time, an' hit's Rastus on Parade,  
W'en de colo'ed ban' comes ma'chin' down de street.

W'en de colo'ed ban' comes ma'chin' down de street  
You kin hyeah de ladies all erroun' repeat:  
"Ain't dey handsome? Ain't dey gran'?  
Ain't dey splendid? Goodness, lan'!  
W'y dey's pu'fect f'om dey fo'heads to dey feet!

An' sich steppin' to de music down de line,  
'T ain't de music by itself dat meks it fine,  
Hit's de walkin', step by step,  
An' de keepin' time wid "Hep,"  
Dat it mek a common ditty soun' divine.

Oh, de white ban' play hits music, an' hit's mighty good to hyeah,  
An' it sometimes leaves a ticklin' in yo' feet;  
But de hea't goes into bus'ness fu' to he'p erlong de eah,  
W'en de colo'ed ban' goes marchin' down de street.