

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

## 1950s Protest Poetry

---

### **"Literature in Africa cannot but be political." Femi Ojo-Ade, literary critic**

*Introduction:* In the 1950s black and coloured literature in South Africa grew enormously as the anti-apartheid movement developed breadth and strength. The following poems, written between 1949-1960, reflect a range of responses to the apartheid government and to the effects of apartheid on everyday life. As you examine your assigned selection, consider the questions below. Be prepared to share the conclusions of your group with your classmates.

1. What was happening politically and economically in South Africa at the time the poem was written?
2. What does the poem describe? What events or scenes does it portray?
3. Does the poem discuss violence at all? If so, how?
4. What is the mood of the poem? Is it resigned, angry, hopeful, etc? Remember that poems are meant to be read aloud. You may wish to read your poem aloud with your group.
5. How does the poem envision the future? What does your poem suggest will happen to race relations in South Africa?