

# **Student Essay on Colonial School Girl**

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# Essay

The poem opens with the phrase, "Borrowed images/willed our skin pale", which is an allusion to many teenaged school girls bleaching their skins with different creams and soaps to become a lighter complexion. The poem as a whole focuses on the rejection of one's color to a more favoured one, emphasised to them by the outer one. Borrowed images from the first world countries, where white is emphasised as better or more beautiful. It also focused on the image of girls' 'dekinked' hair, yet another image of them rejecting their blackness for a more favourable image, that of white through chemicals to straighten their hair.

The poem is one from a formerly colonized country which focuses on the fact that for years, their teachers have only taught them American, British and other aspects of European countries and "nothing about us at all." They were taught Latin and Shakespeare, but nothing of their own language and were punished if they used it, but were to talk like little madrigals in a choir with the hills and valleys in their tonage, rejecting their baser language. They were taught of the landscapes of other countries, of kings and queens of England, wheatfields of Canada and Steppes of Russia, but nothing of their own heritage or landscape.

Mention of Marcus Garvey and 1838 and the fight for desegregation and the equal rights was mentioned as a beacon in black history, Little Rock, Congo, Lumumba, etc, all aspects of foreign history, but nothing of their own fight for black empowerment.

The writer alludes to a day being able to tell their own Anansi stories with pride, where "northern eyes in the brighter world before us" would seem pale.