

# Freedom is only a word . . .

Free men and indentured servants,  
Slave men and slave masters, all new—  
To a new world, America!

With billowing sails the galleons came  
Bringing men and dreams, women and dreams.  
In little bands together,  
Heart reaching out to heart,  
Hand reaching out to hand,  
They began to build our land.  
Some were free hands  
Seeking a greater freedom,  
Some were indentured hands  
Hoping to find their freedom,  
Some were slave hands  
Guarding in their hearts the seed of freedom.  
But the word was there always:

**FREEDOM.**

*Langston Hughes*



## Share-Croppers

Share-Croppers  
Just a herd of Negroes  
Driven to the field,  
Plowing, planting, hoeing,  
To make the cotton yield.

When the cotton's picked  
And the work is done  
Boss man takes the money  
And we get none,

Leaves us hungry, ragged  
As we were before.  
Year by year goes by  
And we are nothing more

Then a herd of Negroes  
Driven to the field—  
Plowing life away  
To make the cotton yield.

*Langston Hughes*



**Keep your hand on the plow.  
Hold on.**

## William Christopher Handy (1873-1958)

"FATHER OF THE BLUES." A minister's son from Florence, Alabama, at 18 he went to St. Louis and Chicago playing the cornet and trumpet with small bands and minstrel groups. He summed up his wanderings through towns where a Black person wasn't welcome after dark, in the line, "I hate to see the evening sun go down." He composed over 150 sacred and secular popular musical compositions, including "Memphis Blues," "Beale Street Blues" and "St. Louis Blues." He was the director of music at Alabama A&M College, and founded the Handy Foundation for the Blind. In 1931 the City of Memphis named a park after him and opened the W.C. Handy Theatre in 1947. The W.C. Handy School stands in Florence, Alabama.

