**Notes on World Literature—Unit 7**

**What Men Live By**

* Tolstoy—his life and work
* What is the setting for this story?
* Notice the Scripture references that Tolstoy chose to put at the beginning of the story
* Recount story
* What kind of people were Simon and Matryona?
* What were the answers to the three questions that Michael learned as a man?
* Note Michael’s comments about the death vs. the life that he saw on the faces of Simon and Matryona (second column on p. 177)—what made the difference between death and life?
* What do we take away from this story? We think that we live by hanging onto life and protecting ourselves, but in reality we don’t live until we love others and live for them

**The Servant**

* Where does this story take place?
* Who are the characters in this story? Are they good people? How are these characters similar to Simon and Matryona?
* It’s pretty hard for us to understand what it would be like to look for a job for months and months and not be able to find work—this makes Gerasim’s decision much more noble.
* What did you say in response to the question about whether the old servant’s wife’s proposed actions would have been a sin?
* We see the blessing of doing the right thing at the end of the story.

**Sympathy**

* Why does Paul Laurence Dunbar know how the caged bird feels?
* What makes bondage so painful?
* There are some specific things mentioned in stanza two that relate to slavery—what are they? (blood—chains on ankles and wrists, whippings; scars—whippings and beatings)
* Stanza three talks about singing—how does that especially relate to slaves’ experience? What are some of the songs they sang? (Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; There is a Balm in Gilead; Didn’t My Lord Deliver Daniel; Go Down, Moses)

**The Frill**

* What is the setting for this story? Why do you think the Lowe’s and Newman’s are in China?
* Doesn’t this story just make you furious? (it should) What adjectives or names would you use to describe Mrs. Lowe? (without being indecent!) (despicable, deceitful, lazy, arrogant, harsh, uncaring, stingy) Mrs. Newman is almost as bad—whiny little arrogant weak-willed woman
* Why does Mrs. Lowe use a funny dialect with the Chinese people? What does this show about her attitude toward the Chinese people? We have a lot of interaction with other cultures through the mission field—do we have anything to learn from this story? I question the use of the term “native.” We have to be very careful not to look down our nose at other ways of doing things. Just because we have always done something a certain way doesn’t make it better. We face the same temptation of criticism and arrogance right at home.
* Is it OK for us to feel contempt for Mrs. Lowe?
* Did Mrs. Lowe really understand what the life of the tailor was like?

**The Greatest Thing in the World**

* The *summum bonum—*as an expression of gratitude for some heroic deed, a large-scale real estate agent offers you your choice of properties—some are obviously better than others; wouldn’t you want to choose the very best of the options; you have the option of different kinds of life ahead of you—don’t you want to find the very best way to live, the supreme good, the *summum bonum*?
* What is the greatest thing in the world? If you miss everything else, don’t miss this! Love God first and above all, and then love your neighbor as yourself.

**After the Battle**

* What do you know about the author of this story? Remember *Les Miserables*? Jean Valjean? The bishop’s candlesticks? This is the same man; what does this poem have in common with the story that we interpreted orally for the program?
* What is the rhyme scheme of this poem?
* Review plot of poem
* What is noble and heroic about the narrator’s father?