



## Harlem Renaissance Summer Reading— Get Ready to BOOGIE!

*James Baldwin's  
If Beale Street Could Talk  
Vintage Books 2006  
ISBN# 978-0-307-27593-6*

The Harlem Renaissance (c. 1918-1937) was an explosion of African American culture, particularly in the creative arts, and is considered the most influential movement in African American literary history. Emboldened by Alain Locke and the New Negro Movement, participants sought to re-conceptualize “the Negro” apart from the white stereotypes that had influenced black peoples’ relationship to their heritage and to each other.

James Baldwin was born in Harlem in 1924. By the age of 13, he had discovered his passion for writing, and he published his first article, entitled “Harlem—Then and Now,” in his school’s magazine.

*If Beale Street Could Talk* (1974) is a tender love story between Tish and Fonny set in Harlem in the 1970s. Read it to enjoy it. And remember, active readers annotate and mark their texts in order to “engage with the text.” As you read closely, you might recognize some song titles tucked in each chapter. I **recommend** that you read actively so that you can participate actively in class when you return in August.

But, mostly, I want you to read to enjoy reading!

**Have a safe, relaxing, fun summer and READ, READ, READ!**  
**(That’s the practice of English).**

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