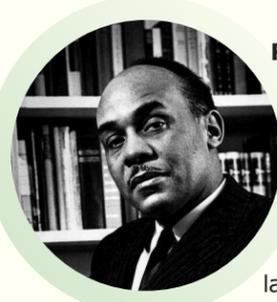


*Literature is integrated. And I'm not just talking about color, race. I'm talking about the power of literature to make us recognize again and again the wholeness of the human experience.*

—RALPH ELLISON

Ralph  
Ellison



**Ralph Ellison** (1913-1994) is best known for his groundbreaking novel, *Invisible Man*, which won the 1953 National Book Award for Fiction. He also wrote essays and literary criticism. A second novel, *Juneteenth*, was published posthumously. *Invisible Man* explores the search for racial identity in the years between WWI and II. Ellison attended Tuskegee University, where he discovered a love for both jazz and literature; he claimed that T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* exemplified jazz music in poetry. After Tuskegee, Ellison moved to New York and became friends with Richard Wright, author of *Native Son*. He and Ellison became advocates of Communism, but abandoned their beliefs after WWII. Ellison later taught at Rutgers and Yale. Ellison died of pancreatic cancer in 1994.



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