

Gwendolyn Brooks, "The Mother" (M 667-68)

• **Applicable poetry terms:** (look up in *Bedford* Glossary)

allusion	alliteration	simile	allegory	
rhyme	connotation/denotation	double meaning/ <i>double entendre</i>		voice/persona
controlling image, etc. ("conceit")	diction	sonnet		
enjambment	end-stop	scansion	meter	feet caesura
explication/exposition	assonance	consonance	*anaphora	free verse
hyperbole	imagery	motif/leitmotif	meiosis	

• **Voice/persona:**

How would you describe the *persona* of this poem—what's her mindset (besides over-simple notions such as "sad")?

What does either Brooks or the persona sound like she's trying to *do* in this poem?

• **Dialogue/diction:**

Does the voice-persona try to make a particular point or argument in this poem?

Does the voice/persona repeat words, phrases, or constructions to help make the argument or point in each poem?

How does pronoun use change during the poem? Is the "you" of lines 1-10 the same "you" as in lines 11-33? What's changed? What effect does this pronoun change have?

• **Figures of speech:**

Rather than using simile or metaphor, the persona here projects a time that never happens—what's the effect of this?

• **Meter/rhythm/sound:**

What happens to the *rhyme scheme* of the poem?

Where does Brooks use enjambment in this poem? To what effect?

Does Brooks use *sound* as a way to work through her logic here? (alliteration, assonance, consonance, sibilance, etc.)

• **Imagery/ Symbols/references/motifs/etc:**

How would you categorize the images the persona gives here?

Do any elements in the narrative work as controlling images? (*controlling image/conceit*)

• **Themes (what the poem is about):**

To say that this poem "is about abortion" is far too reductive—what other issues does the persona get at here *through* the issue of abortion? (What other things does the issue of abortion here open up?)