Gwendolyn Brooks, “The Mother” (M 667-68)

● **Applicable poetry terms:** (look up in *Bedford* Glossary)
  - alllusion
  - alliteration
  - simile
  - allegory
  - rhyme
  - connotation/denotation
  - double meaning/double entendre
  - voice/persona
  - controlling image, etc. (“conceit”)
  - diction
  - sonnet
  - enjambment
  - end-stop
  - scansion
  - meter
  - feet
  - caesura
  - free verse
  - explication/exposition
  - assonance
  - consonance
  - *anaphora*
  - 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?)