
Dramatic Effect in We Real Cool by Gwendolyn Brooks

Introduction

In the poem "We Real Cool", Gwendolyn Brooks uses specific literary devices, such as assonance, alliteration, enjambment, and rhythm to create a dramatic effect. The poem is told from an adolescent point of view which suggests the meaning that even in your adolescence, your actions justify your fate.

The Title and the Main Idea

The title of the poem "We Real Cool" definitely works well with the meaning of the work as a whole. The author is trying to tell the reader that although in your adolescence your decisions to obey the rules may be deemed peripheral, they will affect your life. The idea that these teenagers believe that they're "cool" just proves that they don't realize the trouble that their decisions will cause. The title emphasizes the ignorance that is prevalent amongst teenagers. They may believe their rebellious actions are "cool" but, they're also what makes them suffer most. The last phrase of the poem, "We Die soon", reveals the fate of these teenagers.

Rhythm, Rhyme, Enjambment and a Teenager's Point of View

When I first read "We Real Cool", I was very fond of the rhythm of the work. I enjoyed how every word only has one syllable. I found it interesting that the rhymes were in the middle of the sentence rather than at the end. Through the use of enjambment, I realized that it made the poem more fluid and rapid. The poem is quick, not only because of its size, but because of the dramatic effect of enjambment. The last phrase, "We Die soon", gave me an intense feeling. It reassured the importance of wise decision making, rather than recklessness. I enjoyed how the poem escalated quickly and how it didn't need to be lengthy in order to direct the true importance of right decision making. This poem was told from a teenager's point of view, which is something I appreciated because I could connect to it on a personal level. I definitely find this poem beneficial, especially for teenagers. It can speak to them directly, rather than it feeling superficial. I find this most important because the poem obviously is targeting teenagers.

Diction and Structure

Brooks' use of figurative language and poetic devices suggest that your actions justify your fate. The diction used in the poem make is seem as though these teenagers are enjoying their lives. The diction used also makes these teenagers sound realistic. It's not superficial or pretentious, it is relevant to this age group. In the case of the second couplet, the term "lurk" has a sneaky connotation. This generally has a negative effect, and it would be a price to pay. The author has an ability to truly express what it means to be a teenager, one who rebels. Through the use of imagery, the reader is able to understand that these teenagers are troubled. The image of the way they "Thin gin", even though they're aren't old enough to be consuming alcohol, provides the reader with the knowledge that these teenagers are not obeying the law. Another vital point was the way the poem is structured. This poem in not lengthy, and it moves quickly. This could

be an outline of these teenagers lives, short and quick. They may be enjoying the action and thrill of rebelling, but their lives will not last long. The author wants us to question our own decisions and realize that everything we do comes at a cost. Brooks' stresses the importance of how significant it is to be content with our decisions because we may never know where these decisions will take us.

Prosody

The cleverness of the prosody in "We Real Cool" gives the reader a much more intense feeling. Since there are three syllables in each sentence, every last word of that sentence is left unstressed. This gives a more dramatic effect because the sentences end with less power than the other two words. Which ultimately, their lack of power, or coolness, leads to their death. The poem's use of regular meter creates a connection to music. Similarly, there are pauses in between phrases in this poem. The way the author wrote every line ending with "We" except for the last, reveals the unpredictability of these teenagers. This underlines the theme of this poem, that your actions justify your fate.

Conclusion

In Gwendolyn Brooks' poem, "We Real Cool", the clever literary devices and poetic techniques give a intense feeling that reassures the reader that your actions come at a cost. The rhythm of the poem makes it feel fluid, but the ending line gives wisdom to the reader of the risks of being rebellious. Personally, readers will benefit from this poem because of the author's ability to create a dramatic effect on the reader.