We Real Cool

Gwendolyn Brooks
Anticipatory Question

• Scenario:
  – Seven MHS students are skipping school.
  • How will they spend the day?
  • What will they be
    – doing?
    – thinking?
    – feeling?
  • What would an outside observer conclude about them?

• Briefly sketch the scene, answering the questions above.
Mini-lesson

• Colloquial language
  – Informal conversation but not accepted universally in formal speech or writing. It may differ from more formal language in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, syntax, imagery, or connotation.

• Write the following message in the colloquial language of the following speakers:
  – Message:
    • The person listed is telling another person that he does not understand what she is trying to tell him.
  – Speakers:
    • a physics professor
    • a parole officer
    • a kindergartener
    • a telemarketer
    • an elderly grandparent
    • a teenager
Approaches to Reading

• Describe the musicality of the poem.
• Explore how best to convey the “sound” of the poem.
• Listen to the Gwendolyn Brooks’s reading of the poem at http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15433
Responding

• Describe *enjambment*’s effect in the poem, and speculate about its purpose as a literary device.
Close Reading

• Find 5 adjectives to describe the tone of the poem.
  – For each adjective, cite at least two words or phrases in the poem which convey that tone.
Close Reading

• How expansive is the range of tone words?
• Is it justifiable?
  – Discuss the validity of the various tone words.
    • Is there a “correct” answer here?
    • Are there incorrect answers?
Discussion and Analysis

• Identify the colloquial language in this poem.
  – Rewrite “We Real Cool,” omitting the colloquial language.
  • What is lost in the rewrite?
  • Discuss the efficacy of Brooks’ diction in “We Real Cool.”