We Real Cool

Gwendolyn Brooks, 1917 – 2000

THE POOL PLAYERS.

SEVEN AT THE GOLDEN SHOVEL.

We real cool. We

Left school. We

Lurk late. We

Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We

Thin gin. We

Jazz June. We

Die soon.

1. What is the subject of this poem? What’s happening? Where? When?
2. Who is the speaker? How do you know?
3. What examples of literary devices do you see? Why do you think the poet used those devices?
4. Look at the line breaks. Why do you think the poet chose to end each line with “we”? Why did the poet choose to repeat the word “we”? Where does the repetition of “we” stop? What might this mean?
5. What is the tone of this poem? How do you know?
6. What is the poet’s theme or purpose? How did the genre, structure, literary devices and tone all serve the purpose and theme?
7. How could the purpose or theme be similar to the “Sneetches”? Are there any similarities?
8. What were the differences in structure and genre that you noticed in the poems? What was the difference in tone?
9. Why did the poets make such different choices about tone, literary devices, structure and genre?