

Example of essay on focus on one or two specific elements (sound, figurative lang...

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



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Analysis - " The Mother" by Gwendolyn Brooks

In Gwendolyn Brooks' " The Mother," the regret and guilt that a woman experiences upon reflecting on the various abortions she has had throughout her life is presented in an intriguing and haunting way. The woman is beset with remorse and sadness at what she perceives as the lives she has taken away before they started, and yet she never truly and fully regrets the choices that she made. The suffering that the mother expresses in this poem is done through Brooks' expert use of figurative language and repetition, as the potential these children had before her abortions, as she sees them, is made clear.

The first line, " Abortions will not let you forget," attributes actions and personality to the concept of an abortion, humanizing it to an extent. This very first line suggests that the mother would ideally like to forget what happened, but she is being prevented. By not having been " let" to forget, the mother has a situation forced upon her that immediately indicates her suffering. Brooks then goes on to describe their lives (or lack thereof) with a series of repetitive moments, calling her fetuses " damp small pulps" then comparing them to " singers and workers" (lines 3-4). By creating this juxtaposition, she notes how she saw them when she agreed to the abortion with what she now realizes they could have been. Brooks talks about how you will never " return for a snack of them, with gobbling mother-eye," using the word 'snack' to elegantly describe the little moments in which you recognize that you cannot get enough of your child. It is these moments that

the narrator misses, and Brooks demonstrates that sense of loss through the things the mother gains through having a child.

Brooks' use of repeated words hammers home the oppressive guilt that the narrator feels, and also hints at the constant and perpetual nature of that sadness. Many lines start with the phrase " You will never," a harsh declaration that precedes something wondrous that the narrator misses. Many of these repetitions are pleas or declarations - the most haunting of them come in the last couplet, where she repeats both the phrases " Believe me" and " I loved you all." Here, she is talking to her dead children as if to get some measure of forgiveness from them for what she has done. By saying " believe me," the narrator is begging for the ear and the attention of her dead children, and her acknowledgement of love for them all is a reminder that she will never forget every single child that she aborted.