

## **An African American Poet**

Gwendolyn Elizabeth Brooks was an American poet. Her grandfather had been a slave. He was a brave man. He escaped from slavery. Then he fought in the Civil War.

His son married a teacher. They lived in Kansas. When Gwendolyn Brooks was a baby, her family moved to Chicago. Gwendolyn went to Chicago public schools. She grew up in Chicago. She stayed here for the rest of her life. She visited many places. But she always came back to Chicago.

Gwendolyn Brooks enjoyed reading and writing. She wrote about her life. She wrote about Chicago. When she was just thirteen, she wrote a poem for a magazine. Later, she wrote more poems. They were printed in other people's books. When she was older, she wrote books of her own poems. She became a poet. She was well known in the United States. She was also well known in other countries. She won awards for her poetry.

It was not easy to get a job in writing. Gwendolyn worked for a while typing. She typed other people's words. But she wrote her own words, too. She wrote important poems. They were read by many people all over the world. Her poems made them think.

Gwendolyn Brooks was also a teacher. So she helped students think more. She taught college students in the Chicago area. What did she teach them? She taught them how important ideas are in poems. Many people learned from her in those classes.

Gwendolyn Brooks won prizes for her poetry. Every year, more people read them. They loved her poems. She is well known as a great poet. She is an important African American woman.

When she was 83, she became sick with cancer. In just a short time, she died. She died in 2000. She had done so much in her life. Her life is an important part of America's history. She left a great legacy.

### **CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE**

CCSSR2—clarify the main/central idea of a passage.

**What do you think is the most important point about this person's life?**

**Use information from this page to answer.**