

Creative Writing----Journal # 22-Mirror Poem

What the Mirror Said

listen,
you a wonder.
you a city
of a woman.
you got a geography 5
of your own.
listen,
somebody need a map
to understand you.
somebody need directions 10
to move around you.
listen,
woman,
you not a noplac
anonymous 15
girl;
mister with his hands on you
he got his hands on
some
damn 20
body!
- Lucille Clifton

Discussion Questions...

1. Who is the narrator of this poem? What is his or her tone?
2. To whom is the narrator speaking?
3. What words are repeated throughout the poem? What is the effect of this repetition?
4. What extended metaphor is used between lines 3-13?
5. Where do you see parallelism? Why is effective?
6. Why is it appropriate for this poem to have short lines? How do the short line lengths of this poem affect the way it is read and understood?
7. Does Clifton use end-stopped or enjambment? Why is this usage appropriate? What effect does this usage have on the way the poem is read and understood?
8. Remember that poetry, unlike prose, can break rules. What traditional rule of writing is broken in this poem? How is it significant?
9. What is the purpose of this poem? In other words, what is the mirror trying to get the person in the poem to realize?

In your journals brainstorm your own mirror poem...

1. If you'd look into the mirror what would the mirror say back to you? (Don't just focus on your appearance. Consider focusing on your internal self.)
2. What is your mirror trying to teach you or what does your mirror want you to see that you are not seeing?
3. What kind of tone (attitude) does your mirror have?
4. What kind of language does your mirror use? (slang, formal, etc...) Describe.
5. In Clifton's poem, the mirror addresses the person as "woman." This is called an apostrophe. How does the mirror repeatedly address you?
6. In Clifton's poem, the mirror uses the word "listen" to get the person's attention. What word does your mirror use to get your attention?
7. What extended metaphor will the mirror use to describe you?

In at least 20 lines, write a mirror poem where the narrator is a mirror speaking to the reflection. Include an extended metaphor (throughout), repetition, apostrophe, parallelism, enjambment, short line lengths, and a lesson.