Riddle by Jericho Brown

We do not recognize the body
Of Emmett Till. We do not know
The boy's name nor the sound
Of his mother wailing. We have
Never heard a mother wailing.
We do not know the history
Of this nation in ourselves. We
Do not know the history of our-
Selves on this planet because
We do not have to know what
We believe we own. We believe
We own your bodies but have no
Use for your tears. We destroy
The body that refuses use. We use
Maps we did not draw. We see
A sea so cross it. We see a moon
So land there. We love land so
Long as we can take it. Shhh. We
Can't take that sound. What is
A mother wailing? We do not
Recognize music until we can
Sell it. We sell what cannot be
Bought. We buy silence. Let us
Help you. How much does it cost
To hold your breath underwater?
Wait. Wait. What are we? What?
What on Earth are we? What?

1. Who is the speaker in this poem? What kind of person is he or she?

2. To whom is the speaker speaking, or in other words, who is the audience?

3. What are the situation and setting in time (era) and place?

4. What is the purpose of the poem?

5. State the poem's central idea or theme in a singular sentence.

6. Describe the structure of the poem. How does this relate to content?

7. What is the tone of the poem? How is it achieved?

8. Notice the poem's diction. Discuss any words which seem especially well-chosen.

9. Explain the use of any sound devices and whether or not they aid in conveying tone or theme.

10. Are there predominant usages of figurative language? What is the effect?
    a. Metaphors
    b. Similes
    c. Imagery
    d. Allusions
    e. Personification
    f. Symbols

My Cats by Charles Bukowski

I know. I know.
they are limited, have different
needs and
concerns.

but I watch and learn from them.
I like the little they know,
which is so
much.

they complain but never
worry,
they walk with a surprising dignity.
they sleep with a direct simplicity that
humans just can't
understand.

their eyes are more
beautiful than our eyes.
and they can sleep 20 hours
a day
without
hesitation or
remorse.

when I am feeling
low
all I have to do is
watch my cats
and my
courage
returns.

I study these
creatures.

they are my
teachers.

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