Trevor Coleman

Gorilla, My Love Reading Response

Gorilla, My Love written by, Toni cade Bambara, starts off with the main character, Hazel riding in a car with her grandfather, uncle and brother. While there riding in the car her uncle tells them about his new girlfriend and shows them some pictures. Hazel wasn’t very interested in this but one picture of her uncle’s girlfriend triggers a flash back to a time when Hazel went to go see a movie and was very displeased with it. When Hazel goes to try to get her money back the store manager refuses so Hazel lights a fire under a candy machine. It ends with Hazel getting mad that her uncle is going to marry his girlfriend. To give this story a tone of a young girl talking, Bambara, use’s bad grammar and miss spelled words through out the story.

Through out the story Bambara purposely miss spells many common words to kind of give the felling of a child speaking, For example When Hazel is talking about how smart she is Bambara writes, “ When in reality I am the smartest kid P.S. 186 ever had in its whole lifetime and you can ax anybody” (17). She easily could have just wrote ask but she makes a conscious decision to use ax instead through out the story as a constant reminder that the story is told in the point of view of a young girl. She accompanies this with some bad grammar to really drive the point home. For example, when Hazel is going complaining with the store manager about the movie she didn’t like Bambara writes, “Just like them teachers do fore they realize Mama like a stone on that spot and ain’t backing down”(17). Here Bambara purposely miss spells the word for. She easily could have just removed the Letter E from fore and it would be correct. Also in this quote we see her use bad grammar to drive home the point that this is a younger less educated person talking.

While with this style of writing it can easily confuse people and make a story really unreadable sometimes, Bambara does a really good job with this by just making small changes so the writing is still comprehendible. But big enough that you cannot go more then a paragraph without being reminded at least once that this is being told through a young child.