

GOLDEN SHOVEL POETRY

Presented by Stacey Joy

GWENDOLYN BROOKS

We Real Cool

The Pool Players.
Seven at the Golden Shovel.

We real cool. We
Left school. We

Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We

Jazz June. We
Die soon.

The Crazy Woman

I shall not sing a May song.
A May song should be gay.
I'll wait until November
And sing a song of gray.

I'll wait until November
That is the time for me.
I'll go out in the frosty dark
And sing most terribly.

And all the little people
Will stare at me and say,
"That is the Crazy Woman
Who would not sing in May."

NIKKI GRIMES

Poems

I am hardly ever able
to sort through my memories
and come away whole
or untroubled.
It is difficult
to sift through the stones,
the weighty moments and know
which is rare gem,
which raw coal,
which worthless shale or slate.
So, one by one,
I drag them across the page
and when one cuts into the white,
leaves a trail of blood,
no matter how narrow the stream,
then I know
I've found the real thing,
the diamond,
one of the priceless gems
my pain produced.
"There! There," I say,
"is a memory worth keeping."

The Last Word

I am a door of metaphor
waiting to be opened.
You'll find no lock, no key.
All are free to enter, at will.
Simply step over the threshold.
Remember to dress for travel, though.
Visitors have been known
to get carried away.



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It's Your Turn!

Process: Choose a line from one of our mentor poems
Write the words of the line going down the right margin.
Then stretch your mind and write a Golden Shovel Poem!

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NIKKI GRIMES



Scan to try with your students

