

MISS BROOKS: GWENDOLYN BROOKS, HER POETRY AND HER LIFE

Gwendolyn Brooks life spans World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, the Great Migration, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Hip-Hop Movement. She was born in 1917 and died in 2000. Add to your library of knowledge: Gwendolyn Elizabeth Brooks was the first Black to win the Pulitzer Prize and the first Black woman to serve as the poetry consultant to the Library of Congress. Learn through readings, discussions, and multimedia about the literary arc of her poetry. Find out how she used traditional styles of European poetry in her life's work: writing. Learn how she mastered the craft of poetry and would not sacrifice her craft for the message. "She used a range of modern literary aesthetics to provide a window into the life of Blacks in 20th century urban America".

Read and discuss poems that created controversy then and now. Hear her, as she herself reads her poems, "The Mother" and "The Bean Eaters", among others. Several books(some available through the Mercer County Library System) from which we will read her poems and learn about her life include: *Seasons, A Gwendolyn Brooks Experience*, edited by Nora Brooks, her daughter, *Blacks* by Gwendolyn Brooks, *The Essential Gwendolyn Brooks*, edited by poet and author Elizabeth Alexander, (formerly of Princeton University, currently with the Ford Foundation), and *The Golden Shovel Anthology: New Poems Honoring Gwendolyn Brooks*, edited by Peter Kahn, Ravi Shankar, and Patricia Smith.

Leader: Gail Anne Johnson Mitchell is a quiltmaker and a poet. She received her MFA in poetry from Drew University in May 2017.

Wednesdays: 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon, 6 weeks: February 28 through April 5

Location: Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville