



***Creativity Sparks!***  
*with Barbara Hengstenberg*

## Sketch to Stretch

*Excursion, by Barbara Hengstenberg*

I picked up a leaf along the way  
to your house at the end of the road  
    running my finger along its veins  
    I followed them back to the stem  
    pinching the stem between my thumb  
    and first finger, I twirled the leaf  
    into space

I picked up a slice of shale along the way  
    good skipping stone  
    and there's a pond near-by  
    I can't pass up this opportunity

I picked up a stick along the way  
through the stand of pines to the pond  
    a four-foot club  
    not quite straight  
    with a dip-in above a knot  
    the perfect spot for my grip

I came upon the pond  
    gripping my walking stick, my leaf and the small slice of shale

I sat near the pond and gazed upon its surface of glass  
After what seemed to be a minute  
    but most likely was ten

I stood, squatted to a serious skipping stance  
and skipped the shale atop the looking-glass  
one, two, three, four, five skips!

I gathered my leaf and my walking stick and  
I picked up a pinecone along the way  
back to the road that led to your house  
its tips pricked my fingers  
its sap smelled of Christmas  
comfort smells

I continued along down the dirt road  
twirling my leaf  
keeping pace with my stick  
and rolling the pinecone in my hand

I picked up a pebble along the way  
to your house, just a few footsteps away  
a pure white lucky stone  
so smooth that I'm sure many before me have rubbed it  
embedding it with wishes  
I rubbed its smoothness on my cheek  
its coolness refreshed my sun-parched face

I picked up the pace as I drew nearer your home  
I've so many treasures to give you  
treasures from nature  
gifts from the heart  
a pinecone, a leaf, a stick and a pebble  
and a tale of the magical shale  
that must have skipped at least ten, maybe twenty, times  
on the glassy pond  
before it came to its final resting place  
oh, at least fifty feet from shore  
my gift to the pond.