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Winter

Patricia Bender

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WINTER

By Patricia Bender

Portulaca seeds keep in baby food jars
on shelves high overhead in the cellar.
Other seeds, purple, drying
in waxed paper packages
will need to be soaked
and soaked in rain water.

Even after the soaking you'll need to
take each tiny ball
between your fingers
moving it round
for several seconds
before dropping it into the ground.

Even after the soaking
and the squeezing
the seed will be hard.
And ready.

Currently serving as a Grant Specialist, **Patricia Bender**, founded and directed the Rutgers University -Newark Writing Center (1998-2008). A National Writing Project consultant, she has taught writing, and offered community writing workshops both nationally and internationally for more than 25 years. Her publications include the co-authored book chapter "Observe, Reflect, Act," in *Using Qualitative Methods in Action Research*, published by the American Library Association. Her poetry and short fiction have appeared in a variety of publications including *Good Foot*, *LIPS*, the *Paterson Literary Review*, *Peregrine*, and *THE GREAT FALLS ANTHOLOGY*. She remains grateful for a writing practice founded in a Paterson childhood spent listening to many languages spoken, broken, shared and strengthened.