

& PROJECT

Rare Air / Aire Raro

Session 4 of 5

“I AM FROM” POETRY

We have looked at the community we live in and the people around us, now it’s time to think about how all of these things tie into our memories, and use brief vivid details to create a poem out of them.

YOU WILL NEED

- Paper
- Pencils
- Copy of George Elle Lyon’s poem [“Where I’m From”](#) for each student

STEP 1 (15 MINUTES)

BEFORE YOU START

Attached is the teacher’s example of the first step of the I Am From poem. It is ideal for you to create your own example poems so that you can talk more about the experiences that inspired them.

How to Begin

Discuss: “Where are you from? What does that question mean? Are you from your home? From where you are born? Where you live? Does it have to be a place? Today, we are going to think about the objects, people, and memories that shape the answer to the question: where are you from?”

STEP 2 (15 MINUTES)

Exploring the Form

Read together *Where I’m From* by George Ella Lyon. Discuss: “Why does the poet say he is from items and memories? What is he telling us about himself? Is he from a specific place?”

STEP 3 (45 MINUTES)

Time to Write!

Now, students work on their own version of the *I Am From* poem. The idea is that students will start with *I am From*, then a specific thing (listed below) followed by 3-5 lines following it that vividly describe the thing you mentioned. There are 6 stanzas to it.

- I am from (a room in your house), then lines describing memories you have in that room
- I am from (a specific memory you have with someone you love), lines describing that memory
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I am from (a vacation/trip you took), lines of memories/descriptions from that trip

- I am from (a memorable food), memories/descriptions about that food
- I am from (a memorable object you own), memories/descriptions about that object

Example for the first stanza:

I am from a tan, warm living room at my grandparents house

Saturday nights spent flipping through hockey cards, watching Hockey Night in Canada,
tastes like the sausage and crackers my grandpa scarfed down

Sunday mornings imitating WWF wrestling moves on my hulking stuffed animals,
sounds of hair dryers frantically warming wet hair

Students can write this as a class, going through each stanzas as a class for several minutes, or if there is a large variety in ability levels, at their own pace with a handout for each student showing off the form.

STEP 4 (10 MINUTES)

Reflection

Give students a chance to share out one of their poems either as a class, or through a pair and share.