

Common Read Poetry Activity "Where I Am From"

Step 1 Read the poem

Where I'm From

by George Ella Lyon (1993)

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening,
it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush
the Dutch elm
whose long-gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.



I am from fudge and eyeglasses,
from Imogene and Alafair.
I'm from the know-it-alls
and the pass-it-ons,
from Perk up! and Pipe down!
I'm from He restoreth my soul
with a cottonball lamb
and ten verses I can say myself.



I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,
fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost
to the auger,
the eye my father shut to keep his sight.
Under my bed was a dress box
spilling old pictures,
a sift of lost faces
to drift beneath my dreams.
I am from those moments--
snapped before I budded --
leaf-fall from the family tree.



2. Use the worksheet below create your own Where I Am From poem.

Worksheet

Use this template to draft your poem, and then write a final draft to share:

I am from _____ (ordinary object that reminds you of home)

From _____ and _____ (name of product associated with familiar smell or taste)

I am from the _____ (home landscape description)

_____, _____, _____ (adjective) (adjective) (sensory detail)

I am from _____, (plant, flower, natural item)

(more detail or additional descriptive item)

I'm from _____ and _____ (family tradition)
(family trait)

From _____ and _____ (name of family member)
(another family name)

I'm from the _____ and _____ (description of familiar saying, proverb, "wisdom" shared in your family)

From _____ and _____ (something you were told as a child) (another)

_____, _____ (a food item that represents your family) (another one)

From the _____ (specific family story, crisis, happy moment about a specific person and detail)

(line explaining the importance of family items or why your origin does not define who you are)