

“[Where I’m From](#)” by George Ella Lyon

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'm 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.

“[Where I’m From](#)” by Melanie Poonai

I am from a life filled with colour,
From the chocolate brown that is my skin.
I am from the sunshine yellow of my mother’s laugh,
From the red and white of my brother’s favourite football shirt.
I am from the crisp new white pages of a book,
From the miserable grey of the street I live on.
I am from green, pink and yellow;
My garden in summer filled with flowers,
From the terrifying black of the nightmares that haunt me.
I am from the ginger orange of my buried cat,
From the blue and gold of my ever-short school tie.
I am from the dark oak of my grandmother’s coffin,
From the golden “Aum” pendant around my neck.
I am from every pink scar etched into my body,
From the red, orange and brown of a hot curry.
I am from every identical colour of the twins I love,
From the blue and green of a hospital ward.
I am from all that has happened,
And all that will be.

Directions:

1. Complete the following brainstorming worksheet using words that describe YOU and where you are from.
2. After completing the worksheet, write a poem about yourself inspired by Lyon's "Where I'm From."
3. Include at least three examples of figurative language.
4. You may write the poem from a first- or third-person perspective.

Think about the things you have done, seen, tasted, touched, said, felt, and heard. Think about everything that is specific to your character, everything that makes you YOU. Give readers the most robust, complete understanding of who you are. Make them see you through the details and descriptions you offer.

SEE (list what you have seen):

SMELL (list what you have smelled/familiar scents):

HEAR (list what you have heard/words spoken to you often):

TOUCH/FEEL (list what you have touched/felt, include emotions):

TASTE (list what you have tasted--literally or metaphorically):

List names you go by (other than your biological name).

List any memories or flashbacks you have experienced.

List important family information or dynamics.

List hobbies/special interests.

List important details about your past.

What is something people often say about you?

What is something (good or bad) people often say TO you?

“Where I’m From”

by _____

I am from _____,

from _____.

I am from _____.

(_____

_____.)

I am from _____

_____.

I’m from _____,

from _____.

I’m from _____

_____,

from _____!

I’m from _____

_____.

I’m from _____,

_____.

From _____

_____,

_____.

I am from those moments--

Inspired by George Ella Lyon's "Where I'm From"