

“I AM” POEM

MATERIALS |

paper and writing utensils

OBJECTIVES | The goal of this activity is for participants to reflect deeply about their own lives and to share with others in ways that build relationships and encourage deep listening. Participants can also learn about the function and structure of poetry.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS |

Introduce the concept of poetry

- Poetry is one way we can express ourselves through words. There are many kinds of poetry. Poetry can be written, it can be spoken, it can be put to music. It can also be a way to creatively learn about ourselves and each other. Today we are each going to write a poem about ourselves.

Give directions for creating this kind of poem

- This poem will have four stanzas, and each stanza will have four lines.
 - Each Stanza begins with the words: “I am from...” after which you will write the following:
 - 1ST Stanza: Familiar sights, sounds, smells of your neighborhood
 - 2ND Stanza: Familiar food
 - 3RD Stanza: Family sayings
 - 4TH Stanza: Friends, family, other important people in your life
- Note: You can add stanzas if you like

Give everyone time to individually write or record their poem. Once everyone is done divide students into groups of three.

Each student should read their poem to their small group and allow the group to ask questions:

- Tell us about the sights and sounds you listed. Why did you include those?
- What do your family sayings mean?
- Are the familiar foods the ones you like the most? The ones you eat the most?
- Who are the important people you mentioned?

If there is a time, ask a few volunteers to share their poem in front of the entire group.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS |

- How did it feel to do this activity?
- What did we learn about ourselves and each other in this process?
- What do we have in common? How are we different?



SUPPORTING MEDIA |

<https://www.michiganlearning.org/sharing-who-we-are/>

NOTES |

This activity may not be appropriate for groups in which participants cannot write.

Consider sharing other forms of poetry, spoken word, or rap with students.

“I AM” Poem

Directions

There are four stanzas in the poem.

There are four lines in each stanza.

Each Stanza begins with the words: “I am from...”

- 1ST Stanza: Familiar sights, sounds, smells of your neighborhood
- 2ND Stanza: Familiar food
- 3RD Stanza: Family sayings
- 4TH Stanza: Friends, family, other important people in your life

Example

I am from green grass, climbing trees, stone houses, deep snow.

I am from chicken casserole, Kool Aid, BBQ, and collard greens.

I am from “you chose him to be your brother”

“skinny mini”

“bed roll”

“half-in-two”

I am from Pamela, Thomas, Geneva & Margarett times two.

-By Shayla Reese Griffin