



"I am from these moments -- snapped before I budded -- leaf-fall from the family tree." ~George Ella Lyon

English 9

Unit: NA

Assignment: *I Am From Poem*

Learning Targets: NA

Assignment Due Date: Friday, January 12th

Directions: You will be creating your own "I Am From" poem. This poem will be displayed in the classroom. Each poem should be on a piece of paper – please no binder paper!

You may look for examples online (there are MANY out there). Follow the examples as strictly or as loosely as you wish.

Assignment Parameters:

Your poem **MUST**:

- Include the phrase "I am from" or "I'm from" at least five times.
- Include images and memories from your childhood.
- Portray a vivid picture of "where you're from."
- Be at least 18 lines long.
- Be "wall ready" - these are going to decorate our classroom

Some things you could include in your poem:

- Items found around your home
- Items found outside or in your yard
- Things or people found in your neighborhood
- Names of family and friends
- Things your family says to you all the time, "If I told you once..."
- Names of foods your family/friends eat together
- Smells that evoke memories for you.
- Names of places
- Childhood memories
- Words from your home language
- Family traits and tendencies
- Family traditions



EXAMPLE POEMS:

***I Am From Soul Food and Harriet
Tubman
By Lealonni Blake***

I am from get-togethers
And Barbeques
K-Mart special with matching shoes.
Baseball bats and BB guns,
A violent family is where I'm from.

I am from "get it girl"
And "shake it to the ground."
From a strict dad named Lumb
Saying "sit yo' fass self down."

I am from the smell of soul food
cookin' in Lelinna's kitchen.
From my Pampa's war stories
To my granny's cotton pickin'.

I am from from Kunta Kinte's strength,
Harriet Tubman's escapes.
Phyllis Wheatley's poems,
And Sojourner Truth's faith.

If you did family research
and dug into my genes.
You'll find Sylvester and Ora, Geneva and Doc,
My African Kings and Queens,
That's where I'm from.

***Where I'm From
By George Ella Lyons***

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.