

Name:

Period:

Where I'm From Poem



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.

Questions:

- 1) What is the purpose of this poem?
- 2) List **five** everyday objects the author uses to describe where she's from.
- 3) How do the items listed help you to get to know the author?

Where I'm From (Ms. Dalziel)

I am from mosquitoes in summer,
From macaroni and cheese with
hotdogs

I'm from three legged races
In my dad's fireman boots,
Barbie doll weddings,
The BFG and *Matilda*,
Figure skating in the driveway,
And sleepovers in the playhouse.

I'm from French braids and tea
parties,
Soccer games on Saturdays,
Teaching to a classroom of dolls,
Eating mints at grandma's house,
Wearing dress ups and high heels
That never ever fit right.

I'm from laughter and tears,
From carols under the Christmas tree
And prayers in the village church
I'm from "Eat your vegetables!"
"Who wants cherry pie for dessert?"
"Cou cou!" and "Salut!"

I'm from Burgundy Road in Encinitas,
Past the speed bumps,
After the bamboo grove,
Across the street from Capri,
In a house my father built,
With his bare hands.

That's where I'm from.

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Directions: After reading the poem "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon, you will be writing a poem about where *you* are from. Below is an outline to help you get started. You are not required to follow this outline, but it is here to help you if you need it. There are seven options for stanzas below; your poem must include a **minimum of four stanzas**. Your lines do not need to rhyme. The goal is to give the reader an idea of what made you the way you are – what your roots are!

Stanza One – do not write this!

I am from

List items found around your home (bobby pins, skateboards, chore lists, stakes of newspapers, discount coupons for a Mercedes – you can be creative and stretch your imagination!)

Stanza Two – do not write this!

I am from

List items found in you yard (broken rakes, chewed-up dog bones, hoses coiled like snakes – use metaphors as you create your lists!)

Stanza Three – do not write this!

I am from

List items found in your neighborhood (the corner grocery store, a 7-11, Mr. Tate's beat-up old Ford, the "home base" plum tree.)

Stanza Four – do not write this!

I am from

Names of relatives, especially ones that link you to the past (Tio Fernando and Aunt Eva, Claude and the Anderson bunch)

Stanza Five – do not write this!

I am from

Sayings that your have heard from your mom, dad, or grandparents (If I've told you once...

Stanza Six – do not write this!

I am from

Names of food and dishes that recall family gatherings (lutefisk, tamales, black-eyed peas)

Stanza Seven – do not write this!

I am from

Names of places they keep their childhood memories (diaries, underwear drawers, inside the family Bible.)

That is where I am from.

