

**Making Art Our Own:**  
*Friday Art-Making*

**Location:** Lee Elementary, *approximately 34 students* - broken into two groups of 17ish

**Length:** 1 hour

**Agenda:**

Introduction/Classroom Agreements

The Truth About Me

Poetry Writing and Sharing

Sculpture Making and Sharing

It Made Me Think

**Materials/Prep:**

- *We'll need to begin by moving desks out of the way and setting chairs in a circle-- do we want to move them back for poetry writing and sculpture making?*
- Essential question and agenda on the board or on a big sheet of paper (one for each room)
- Example poems from each facilitator on a big sheet of paper
- Poem template on a big sheet of paper (one for each room)
- Extra big paper
- Blue tape (one for each room)
- Aluminum foil

**TEKS:**

**§110.18. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 6**

(15) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are expected to:

(B) write poems using:

(ii) figurative language (e.g., similes, metaphors); and

**§117.202. Art, Middle School 1**

(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artworks using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected to:

(A) create original artworks based on direct observations, original sources, personal experiences, and the community;

(C) produce artworks, including drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures/modeled forms, ceramics, fiber art, photographic imagery, and digital art and media, using a variety of materials.

**Essential Question: How do artists represent personal connections to identity through creative expression?**

Divide into two groups Stephanie, Ellie & Meredith and Katie, Ken & Bekah

**Introduction/Classroom Agreements (5 min): TA LEADER: (assign here)**

*Hi y'all, today we have an opportunity to build on our work that we began together at the Blanton Museum of Art on Wednesday. Today's work will continue to use skills from drama and theatre that engage our voices, bodies, and imagination as ways to make meaning. If we know that our work involves voices, bodies, and imagination, what guidelines should we keep in mind so we can be successful in our work together?*

Generate a few ideas about ways of working.

Katie/Stephanie will Lead This:

*Today we are going to be thinking about the question: **How do artists represent personal connections to identity through creative expression?** What key words or phrases do you see in this question that will help you know what we will do? Make connections between what we did at the Blanton and what we are going to do today. Introduce that today we'll be working with "figurative language" and "sculptural representation" (may need to define what these mean).*

Go over the agenda.

**Opening Activity "The Truth About Me", 15-20 minutes:**

**TA LEADER: (assign here)**

**Description: (have chairs set up in a circle)**

*Our first strategy today is called **THE TRUTH ABOUT ME**- although you may know it by a different name. We will use this strategy today to warm up up bodies and brains and then we will use to generate some material for our work together.*

Invite participants to stay in their seated circle (in chairs), with the facilitator in the circle holding a space. The facilitator explains that in this strategy a caller introduces themselves with the name they like to be called and then completes the phrase, "The truth about me..." with a fact that is true about themselves, but could/should apply to others in the group. Then, **anyone for whom the phrase is also true must then switch** places with someone else (for whom the statement is also true) by crossing the circle and finding a new chair. Practice once or twice (with no one in the middle; the facilitator provides a statement or two from their seat).

Once the switching is understood the facilitator takes their chair out of the circle and goes to stand in the middle. They explain that the activity will work the same way but now the person that does not get to a new spot in the circle goes to the center of the circle. That person then begins the cycle again by completing the phrase: My name is.... And The Truth about me is... Also offer the rule that each person can only be in the center once. If they end up their a second time they will be replaced by a volunteer.

(Play until most students have had a turn in the center).

POSSIBLE SWITCH HERE IN TA LEADER Or could be same person:

Then, explain that we will be doing a revision. This new version uses the phrase: Where I'm from... as way to introduce a memorable experience from their childhood or short memory. Give an example *Where I'm from we played Ghosts in the Graveyard with flashlights.* OR *Where I'm from we ate lots of mashed potatoes for Thanksgiving.* Brainstorm other types of memory topics (favorite games, favorite activities, favorite foods, family traditions) so the group has ideas to work with. Play the game again with the new prompt. Students may need some think/support time to come up with something - it's okay if it goes slow. The other facilitator could scribe down topics as they come up. The goal is to generate ideas for your poem! :)

NOTE: we could give students some time to pre-think ideas here first before they play and write them down or think pair share with a partner.

After a few students have played, sit down and reflect.

**Reflection KD/SK:**

D: How did that strategy go for you? What did you notice about the group? What topics got the most of to move?

A: When we thought of topics about where I'm from ...what ideas do you most remember that someone offered? (Make connections to the use of language, the specificity of the offer, and other choices that help us remember or connect more with someone else's experience)

R: In our work today we are going build off this strategy as we work with a simple poetry structure that starts with...Where I'm from.

**NEW TA LEADER HERE: (assign)**

**Transition:** *Great! Thanks for engaging in that activity with us, I'm seeing that a lot of you have a solid grasp on figurative language which is going to be important for our main activity today! **Before we begin our next activity, let's move our desks back in place.***

**Primary Activity "Poetry Writing", 20 minutes:** Facilitators will reference the concluding "art-making" activity at the Blanton Museum of Art, and the students' exploration of identity through movement, and sensory language. Art interpretation will blend into artistic application by building upon Levi Romero's adaptation of George Ella Lyon's poem *Where I'm From* and allow them an opportunity to create their own pieces turning their classroom into their own museum of identity. Tell the students that we won't be looking at Lyon's poem today, but we'll share it with Mr. Hubbard if you're interested in checking it out.

**Description:** The facilitator will ask students to recall their response from the Blanton's concluding activity and write down the person/place/thing that was a significant part of their identity.

The facilitators will then share one of their own poems that they've written following the template below.

The facilitator will ask students to share phrases that were particularly resonant in the poem, and the facilitator will circle/underline/checkmark them. Ask the students why these phrases or words resonated with them.

Then invite students to create their own poem following the same structure!

*The structure we will use looks like this (tape up poster of the template):*

Levi Romero's "I am from-" poem template.

I am from \_\_\_\_\_ (a memory) where the/a/an \_\_\_\_\_ (particular aspect of the memory), reminds me to \_\_\_\_\_ (share why this memory is important).

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am

(Sensory detail) \_\_\_\_\_ and (Sensory detail) \_\_\_\_\_, and

I am \_\_\_\_\_ (the person/place/thing from the Blanton).

I am from LATE NIGHTS AROUND A BONFIRE, where the SOFT SINGING IN GROUP, reminds me to ALWAYS LIVE IN THE PRESENT.

My name is "XXXX" and I am

FIRE STINGING YOUR NOSE, and (feel)

LULLABIES, and (hear)

I am A DAUGHTER.

Talk with students about how what they heard (and see - I would show this visually too) ties to the template. Students are then asked to write their own I am from poem.

Students will be encouraged to refer to the recorded phrases on the board for inspiration if stuck. While the student poets are at work, facilitators will support students who need help. Students may just write a portion of the poem, this is FINE. :)

### **Poetry Share, 10 minutes:**

Students will pair up with a partner (or with a small group) and share a favorite line from their poetry. Facilitators will encourage students to consider particularly resonant language and connections between metaphor and identity. Facilitators will check on students as they share.

### **Sculpture Making, 15 minutes: TA Facilitator: (assign here)**

The facilitator will inform the students that they will end their time together returning to visual art as a way to make meaning. The final activity involves students using tin foil to create their own art piece to represent their identity poem. They will be asked to think about some of the ways they noticed concepts relating to the visual shapes, textures, and figures they noticed about the pieces they observed in the Blanton.

They will look at one of the example poems with the group and ask the group which line of the poem do they think it might be most interesting to represent. (get an idea from group) Then make a quick sculpture as an example. Check to see if there are any questions. Remind them that sculptures can be concrete or realistic representations or they can be abstract and represent a feeling or mood through shape.

The facilitator will hand a few pieces of tin foil to each student if they are in individual seats, or a small pile in the center of a table if that is the set up. They will have time to create, and, when the activity concludes, the students will be a part of their own “gallery walk” in silence to observe each others poems and sculptures.

**Reflect on Sculptures: TA FACILITATOR: (assign here)**

**D: What sorts of shapes did we see or did you make? Were these realistic representations or abstract representations? Why might that be?**

**A: How does making an art piece ask you to think about your words in a different way? What did you discover about the words you were trying to represent? (May try to make connections here to metaphors/similes and/or sensory language if useful)**

**R: How does trying to describe a memory in different ways-- with figurative words and with actual figures in sculpture -- help us to better express a mood or feeling to someone else?**

**Concluding Activity, It Made Me Think, 5 minutes: TA FACILITATOR: (assign here)**

The facilitator will gather students back as an entire group. Students will share one phrase or word followed by the phrase ‘it made me think.’ The facilitator will model an example response, for example ‘*Sensory images, it made me think.*’ Once all students have shared, facilitators will thank students for their work. That will conclude the facilitator’s time at Lee Elementary.

Levi Romero’s “I am from-” poem template.

I am from \_\_\_\_\_ (a memory) and the/a/an \_\_\_\_\_ (emotional, physical feeling) and it reminds me/me of \_\_\_\_\_ (Be creative!).

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am  
(Sensory detail) \_\_\_\_\_, and  
(Sensory detail) \_\_\_\_\_, and  
(Sensory detail) \_\_\_\_\_, and  
(Sensory detail) \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ (the person/place/thing from the Blanton).

**EXAMPLE:**

I am from LATE NIGHTS AROUND A BONFIRE, and the SOFT SINGING IN GROUP and it reminds me TO ALWAYS LIVE IN THE PRESENT.

My name is “FACILITATOR” and I am  
FIRE STINGING YOUR NOSE, and (feel)  
LULLABIES, and (hear)

FAMILY BONDING, and (sight)  
AND SWEET S'MORES. (taste)  
I am A DAUGHTER.

KD

I am from THE CROWDED FAMILY WAGON and the THE STICKY SWEET POOL OF MELTED  
GUMMIES ON THE SEAT and LONG HOLIDAY DRIVES WITH MY FAMILY.

My name is Katie and I am  
I SPY WITH MY LITTLE EYE,  
And ORANGE TIC TACS ONE AT A TIME SO THEY LAST  
I AM STRESSED OUT and READY FOR THE OPEN ROAD.

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.