

## Writing About Home: Length can be 45 minutes to 1 hour.

In this exercise, we'll be writing about the people, places, and concepts that are homes for us. Since quarantine began, many of us have been reflecting on where we feel most at home to try to combat the cabin fever, frustrations, and anxieties we feel. Establishing deeper connections to the things we identify the concept of home with can help relieve some elements of disconnection or distance. Though some of us may be far from our concepts of home, we can remain connected to them. How can we practice this proximity, even in quarantine?

Some suggestions for participants to think about their home:

- Maybe you miss a particular person that you feel at home with or you want to find a new way to write about someone you care about now that you've been home for a while.
- Perhaps home, for you, is an idea or a feeling that you experience in a certain setting or mindset.
- Maybe you feel at home everywhere because you're not connected to a colonial concept of space, borders, and land (see prompt poem by Joy Harjo).

We can explore all of these versions of home through poetry!

### Joy Harjo's Poem: 5 minutes

- "My House is the Red Earth"—have one or two people read aloud, and then have participants point out which parts of the poem particularly stuck out to them.

### Brainstorm: 3 minutes

- Encourage participants to not stop writing, even if they're just repeating the same phrase over and over again. This is the brainstorm they will draw from to write their poem.

*Brainstorm for a few minutes what home means to you. Is it a person, a place, an idea? What do you first think about when you imagine being safe or truly happy? Try to remember what makes it special or different from other spaces you typically occupy. What makes this thing different?*

- *Who do you picture at "home?" What are they doing? What do you see, smell, hear, taste, feel? What is the temperature? What season is it? Are you indoors or outdoors? What is nearby? What is the most vibrant color? How do you arrive at your home? What would you have to do to get there?*
- *If your home were an object in nature, what would it be? How does the light fall around your idea of home? When do you find yourself most thinking about home? When do you miss it the most? What makes you feel closer to it? Is it surrounded by laughter? What color is your memory of it?*
- After the time is up, you can ask people to share lines or words they particularly liked that they wrote down or that they were surprised they came up with (if you have time!)

Freewrite: 15-35 mins.

- Begin the poem with “My home is \_\_\_\_\_,” mirroring Harjo’s poem as an option. Build off of the brainstorming.
- If a participant gets stuck, encourage them to refer to Harjo’s poem and how she’s organized it. Structure is not as important as the content of the poem in this workshop, so encourage writers to continue writing without much concern for form.

Sharing: 7-10 mins.