

Multicultural Monologues

Daniel Duarte & Friends

Multicultural Monologues

Today some of your colleagues will be sharing some moments in their lives with you around two themes: *Our Foundations* and *The Journey*. With *Foundations* they have been considering things like beginnings, family and friends, birthplace, community, values, schools, identity, significant experiences growing up, etc. In *The Journey* they have been prompted by the words personal and professional, identity development, pain and healing, joy, dilemmas, discoveries, learning, recognition of help received, internalizations, transformation, etc.

After their monologues, you, the audience, will be invited to share, if you choose, your experiences around the aforementioned themes or any related topic (3-5 minutes). You will also have the opportunity to choose to read a poem written by you in the fashion of Linda Christensen's "Where I Am From" writing activity.

Linda Christiansen's article, "Where I'm From: Inviting Students' Lives into the Classroom" is in *Rethinking Our Classrooms, Volume 2*, published by Rethinking Schools. You can also find it at <http://youthvoices.net/node/2737>

Where I Am From

On the brainstorm work sheet provided, list as many words as you like under each topic. When you are done go back through your words and "color them up" with adjectives or descriptive phrases. (Change up the topics if you like or even focus more directly on the monologue themes above). Then, begin creating your poem on the page provided. It may be useful to use a hook like "I am from" to "move the poem forward" however, use whatever form or structure you like keeping in mind the themes of "Where I Am From."

An example of an "I Am From" poem is provided as well.

Enjoy the creative process as time permits and join us later to hear the monologues and the poems created by your colleagues.

"Where I Am From" brainstorm worksheet

Items found around your home

Items found in your yard

Items found in your neighborhood

Names of relatives, especially those that link you to the past

Sayings your family used/uses

Names of foods

Names of places you keep your childhood memories

Create Your Poem Here

Yo Soy de El Centro

Daniel Duarte

I am from
barrio dust walking me home after school
dried-out houses that might not stand another day
protestantes desde Mexico, the catholic church I never attended
the schools that never attended to me and
the railroad tracks de tras de la casa.

I am from
Saladitos from the corner store
the rooster from the house next door that ran the calle, wild
the clothes pin match guns that set fire to things I dare not confess
my second-hand Schwin, a todo dar, ese
and endless jars of brilliant canicas, marbles, marbles everywhere.

I am from
my grandfather Fermin, el guero and my abuelita Susana, la prieta
from Nana the coveted actress of the colonia, my mother the subtle genius de la
familia, my spirited father the recipient of the purple heart, the bronze star, and
post-traumatic stress disorder
and my beautiful kid brother who died the summer of 2007 from pulmonary arterial
hypertension

I am from
“¡Me lleve el tren!” for when my dad was frustrated
“¿Y yo quien soy, hijo de policia?” for when he felt short changed
and “Never forget, mijo, you’re not better than anyone, and no one is better than
you.”

I am from
tamales, menudo, beans and rice, tortillas, cow tongue, nopalitos con huevo
curried peas, curried salmon, curried whatever came through the door
huge lamb roasts to please my uncle Jimmy, the Greek
dining out in Mexicali on filet mignon or family style Chinese at Alley 19
hamburgers and hotdogs that would never go to waste
and blood tacos offered that I could never quite accept.

I am from
Photographs collecting in an abandoned, black accordion case
From Corky’s poem, Rodolfo Anaya’s Bless Me Ultima, from la raza cosmica
I am from stump city dinners and bid Whist with the ones I love over Bombay and
tonic and Mexican cuisine
and the barrio dust that follows me home.

Yo soy de El Centro