

EMULATION POEM: **Three parts**

I come from a place, I am in a place (or I went to a place), and I am going to a place...

To emulate is to copy or use as a guide; it is to echo what you have read or heard or seen.

The purpose of writing the **emulation poem** is to have participants reflect on self (past, present, and future) and when sharing, to gain some greater knowledge of their colleagues' or students' backgrounds. Initially it opens dialogue in a way that frees the writer to say precisely what elements of his/her upbringing, history, or current life are particularly important at this time of life. [SEE examples.](#)

Respond to these prompts:

I come from a place...

I am in a place (or I went to a place)...

I am going to a place...

*The I Am From poem is a form of emulation writing developed by Linda Christensen. An example Protocol can be found here: <https://iel.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/iel-lt2-emulation-poem.pdf>

Emulation Poem Examples

Matt Militello

I come from a place where identity is a function of place. where there is no better place than this, where life revolved around water, where there were hunters and gatherers (literally), where intelligence was hidden, where God's Country was defined. where education was a social endeavor, where long-term, superficial, physical relationships were encouraged by every community, where athletic prowess was the coveted, where I locked into each of these to usurp my inner struggles—and struggles with family.

where I lived in a house that was the hub of hospitality, where mom's cooking was praised, where dad's counsel was sought, where dual languages were spoken, where what was prized to the outside became an internal struggle. where alcohol was a catalyst for internal pangs, where language was ridiculed, where a sense of escapism was found in a secret society, where, once revealed, turned into a title of elitism and marginalization.

I come from a place where the focus of place impeded my own self identity.

I went to a place where identity and self were prized—I went to Mecca, where discovery and exploration were encouraged, where learning and intelligence was the horizon, where relationships were true and love was found, where new mountaintops were seen and targeted, where I became whole.

I am still going to a place where there is a constant search for next, where next mountains are scaled, where next relationships are forged, where next self is discovered, where there is little sleep until I become whole, anew.

Carrie Morris

I come from a place where "military brat" means moving again, where summers were spent with cousins and grandparents, where sunburns, swimming, and the lazy days of August transitioned to school, schedules, soccer fields and high expectations, where "outside" was a required space to inhabit daily and fresh air was the cure to any illness, where "tough boys" and "good girls" were revered, where confrontations were quiet, preferably written, where politics, race or religion were discussed usually only in homogeneous groups, where love was freely expressed, Velveeta was a kitchen staple, and bedtime stories closed every day.

I went to a place where everybody knows your name and students are neighbors, where parent teacher conferences are often held in aisle 5 of the Piggly Wiggly, where I fell in love with a bad-ass former Marine, where we spent summers salty, sandy, and eating fresh-caught fish, where we built a home, welcomed a daughter, saved for our future, and cherished birthdays, holidays, Saturdays, living in the beautiful blur of life... until the gremlins of a past war I never knew decomposed another soul (and ended his life), one of the 22* that February day.

I stayed in that place where my daughter had friends and roots, where sympathy, love, and support were expressed with prayers, greeting cards, and casseroles.

I am going to a place where I am balanced enough to see the resilience of humanity and the pain of those silenced, where I am quiet enough to hear the stillness in nature, the call of the universe, the powerful female voice from within, and where each sunrise leads to new knowledge, deeper connections, and unexplainable joy.

**22 is the estimated number of veterans who take their lives each day.*

Larry Hodgkins

I come from a place full of love, encouragement, and opportunities. A place where everyone looked like me.

I come from a place where relationships were valued (using a transactional lens). A place where ambition was valued and success was defined by material things.

I went to a place where trust and respect are earned, not given. A place where people looked different than me, a place of struggle but also of pride and community. A place where your word means something and relationships are authentic.

I am in a place where success is defined by how many friends you have and how many people you inspire. I am in a place where I continue to learn and grow and am part of several overlapping communities.