

From Me to We:

Engaging the Writing Process Through Personal Essay and Poetry

Artist: Trelani Michelle

Dates: February 22nd-February 24th, 2022

THEME: Personal history is family history, which is community history, which is world history.

OBJECTIVE: to teach students how to express themselves through personal essay and poetry, from freewriting to final draft, by writing about themselves, their generation, their family, or their community within Frederica's Academy or St. Simon's Island.

PROCESS + DELIVERABLES:

- Pre-K and Kindergarten Students will experience creative writing in their pre-writing by choosing a "tiny topic" focused on elements of home and family.
- Lower School Students in Grades 1-4 will create individual and collective poems, per class, that affirms who they are using the prompt of "I Am." They will be challenged to consider how they define themselves personally and socially. A couple lines from each individual poem will be compiled into a collective poem.
- 5th and 6th Grade Students will partner up to interview one another. I will provide three questions for them to start off with then prompt them to continue adding questions based off of interview responses. The lesson will also include notes on the importance of active listening, open-ended questions, and avoiding emotional triggers. Following interviews, students will draft featured articles, essays, or poems that reflect their partner's story. Students will work with me and their partners in the revision stage to create a strong final piece.
- 7th and 8th Grade will extend this lesson concept by finding shared experiences/perspectives between themselves and their partner. They'll draft featured articles, essays, or poems that weave those commonalities together with meaning/purpose that considers how those experiences/perspectives might lend themselves to the greater good. Children of business owners, for instance, tend to have entrepreneurial spirits as well. And entrepreneurs create value and opportunities for society. If they're both athletic, they most likely understand the importance of unity and perseverance. Both of those traits are necessary for both leaders and creating long-lasting relationships.

Prior to the workshop, Upper school students will have gathered information from an elder in their family or community.. They will use that information to do basic research to build context around the quotes and build a story. The story will juxtapose their own personal experiences. We'll use freewriting as a brainstorming method then begin our first draft. Final drafts will be finished at home or a later date. I'll bring printed examples that I did for Women's History Month. In lieu of writing about women whose names are already in textbooks, I wrote about my followers' grandmothers. I asked them to send me their name, birthplace, birth year, and what they loved/appreciated about them.

Instructions will be left with the school on how to create a physical book that includes all of the students' work