

The Mississippi Poetry Podcast Supplement

Ep. 13: Jermaine Thompson

1. Listen (14 minutes). Play *The Mississippi Poetry Podcast w/ Jermaine Thompson*

2. Write (10-25 minutes, as time allows)

Materials Needed: notebook, pen/pencil

Writing Exercise:

In the podcast, Jermaine Thompson emphasizes the importance of embracing one's individuality in poetry. "Don't be afraid of your own unique voice," he urges, and says "your individuality *is* what makes you a poet, so lean into it." In this exercise, participants will mine their own unique experiences to write the poems that only they can write.

Invite participants to think of an important person from their lives—a family member, a teacher, a friend—and then ask them to come up with the following:

- One phrase or expression regularly used by that person
- A pastime that person enjoys (watching wrestling, rollerskating, baking bread, etc.).
- Three physical details from a place where they've spent time with that person (a kitchen, a roller rink, a backyard garden, etc.)

Title the poem something explanatory, like "What I Love About ____" or "Why I Want to Go to ____'s House."

Example:

"It don't get no better," said my grandfather
when the lima beans were in season,
when he was in his recliner and wrestling was on.
My grandfather loved lima beans and wrestling,
I didn't like either one, but I loved
my grandfather's house—the one big floor vent
that heated the small rooms, the clothesline
out back where his flannel shirts flapped,
the comforting crackle of the weather radio...

3. Share (5-10 minutes)

If time and comfort levels allow, invite participants to share their work!

Related Materials (next page):

[The Coop, Two Poems](https://bit.ly/jermainethompsonthecoop): <https://bit.ly/jermainethompsonthecoop>

[Memorious, Three Poems](https://memorious.org/?author=467): memorious.org/?author=467

[Audio of American Green Tree Frog](https://bit.ly/americangreentreefrog): <https://bit.ly/americangreentreefrog>

