

Homegoing Family Writing Project



Prompt

In a well-developed story of at least 800 words, write a piece about family, using one of the prompts below for inspiration **Rather than answering the questions as an essay, use them as a starting point for a piece of fiction about your family and their lives.**

- Imagine you have to describe your family to someone who's never met them before. What makes your family unique and different from others? What are your family's most important traditions, values, and stories? What do you most love about them, and what frustrates you the most about them?
- Consider a challenge you and your family went through. How did it affect your family? How did your family manage to cope with this challenge?
- Interview one of your oldest relatives about their life. What were they like as a child? What are their fondest memories and most significant experiences? What advice would they give to the younger members of your family?
- Describe an unusual family tradition of yours that continues today. What are its origins and significance? Why is it important to your family to do every year? Will you carry on the tradition?
- Research a family member at least two generations removed from you (grandparent or older) and write a story about an experience (real or imagined) they experienced.
- You can only keep one object from your family's home. Which one would you keep and why?¹

Requirements

- The piece should have a clearly defined plot that comes to a resolution.
- The piece must include at least three original metaphors. Don't steal from cliched idea, but like Yaa Gyasi does in Homecoming, invent new ways of expressing old ideas. You may use the structure of one of her metaphors for a model, but do not copy her work.
- Include the motif of fire, earth, air or water in a meaningful way somewhere in the story. It should clearly have some symbolic function the reader will be able to discern.
- The piece should demonstrate the value of tradition or the passing on from one generation to the next as Gyasi does throughout Homegoing.
- Your piece should be carefully proofread. Make sure that you introduce dialogue correctly in quotes, capitalize appropriately using flow and dialogue quotes, and check for errors in writing.

¹ Prompts adapted from Think CERCA's "13 Narrative Writing Prompts About Family"