

Students in two separate classes and schools, Grade 2 and Grades 6/7, have worked towards building reading and writing skills through *I am From* poems. They developed Heart Maps by sketching and writing about what mattered most to them, from family members to special experiences and places. They used Adobe Voice, an app on their school iPads, to try out lines for their poem, using their Heart Maps as a starting place.

These simple poems reflect a process in which we (teachers) shared our own development of Heart Maps and lines of I am From poetry. Students talked about their Heart Maps, shared them with each other, and then added more to their own maps as they heard each other's ideas. They tried out lines on Adobe Voice, resaying them until they were happy with what they heard. They added photos, icons or text as they created these poems. From here they wrote their poems on paper, using their own recorded voices to help them write poems. Next they began to record their poems as finished pieces, sometimes recording their written poem, sometimes working orally to record what they wanted to say about their photos.

These poems are not meant to be perfect pieces of spoken poems, but rather a journey of sharing, oral rehearsal, sketching, talking, reading and listening to each other's poems. We hoped to see young authors emerge who owned their own writing, who talked with each other and began to see themselves as readers and writers with a 'story' to tell through their writing. And we did.

A grade 6/7 class also created poems which will be great for young authors to hear. We included them as well. A grade 4/5 class in Denmark joined us, and although we did not have the time to connect by sharing writing, they also created Heart Maps and poetry which we have added to the grade 6/7 section of this playlist.

The poems are simple beginnings in the early process of students seeing themselves as writers. We saw a growing engagement of students who were in the process of becoming stronger readers and writers. They began to work hard to record and write what they had said, and then to read it to others, and eventually to do more of this for longer periods of time. Their comments included a noticing that they could write about what mattered to them, that they were writing more than they had before. Students began to take themselves seriously in this process and to listen to their recordings as a way to revise and develop their writing.