

A Poem About Joy

Teré Fowler-Chapman

Facilitator Notes: This assignment can be used as a discussion in an in-person lesson plan or as a virtual worksheet. Based on the feedback of the class the assignment can be extended through classroom discussion for one week or one hour. The assignment is designed for students' ranging from 8th-12th grade.

Sequence of Activities:

Discussion:

Answer the following questions:

- Do you like poetry?
- What makes a poem, a poem?
- What's the last thing you enjoyed reading?

The Poem:

[Read](#) the poem "Sorrow Is Not My Name" by Ross Gay and underline anything that catches your eye. Facilitator Note: You may have to copy and paste the lyrics in a separate document to make it easier to read for your participants.

Answer the following questions:

- What are some things that you notice about this poem?
- In your opinion, despite sorrow, what brings the poet joy?
- What brings you joy?

Poem Brainstorm:

- Create a list of all the things that bring you joy.

Poem Writing:

1. Grab a clean sheet of paper
2. On the upper right-hand corner of a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions:
 - What is your name?
 - What are your [pronouns](#)?
 - Write the date, time, and location you begin writing this poem?
 - What is the title of your poem?
 - Example Poem Header:

Teré
They/He
03/02/23, office, 6:53 am
Title of Poem

3. **Using the people from your timeline. write a poem that celebrates those that have been most influential to you.** If you need help, here are some of the prompts that can help you start your poem:

- I still find joy in
- Joy finds me