

## Finding Your Story

Pick three of the invention strategies or prompts below. Take five minutes each of your picks (15 minutes total). Either do a powerwrite or make a list for each one. Don't censor yourself. Think word association. You won't show this to anybody.

### Stories that come from characters and/or relationships

**Mentor, Hero, Role Model** – Tell the story of a mentor or hero in your life

**Family** – What relationships in your family do you need to tell a story about?

**Body** – Write about a physical activity, an illness, what you see when you look in the mirror

**Eyes of another** – What would friends say about you? Why would they call out those things?

*Tip* – Find objects, family heirlooms, gifts, or kitchen appliances that are important. These will often trigger stories about people and relationships.

*Tip* – Think about your favorite foods. What's the relationship between these foods and the people in your lives?

### Stories that come from events or situations

**Fork in the Road moments** – meeting a special person, the birth of a child, the end of a relationship, the death of a loved one...

**Falling Apart** – Tell the story of a time where things just didn't work and a situation fell apart despite your best efforts

**A First** – Tell a story about a first—first kiss, first day on the job, first day at school, first time you heard a favorite song

**Adventure** – Tell a story about a time when you left your familiar world, took a risk, or felt truly challenged.

**Standing Up** - Tell a story about when you stood up for something or didn't and why.

*Tip* – Look through old photos. Find ones that resonate or trigger questions in your mind. Can you tell a story that connects the handful of important photos you find?

*Tip* – What scars do you have (literal or figurative). How did you get them?

### Stories that come from places

**Familiar places** – a room, a house, a neighborhood, a school, a camp...why it is important, how it has changed or what's stayed the same.

**Special places** – a vacation spot, a hide out, a particular tree, a garden

**Strange places** – a memorable place you've never been back to, a storm, a battlefield

*Tip* - Try drawing a map or picture of the place you pick. This can trigger memories and questions that lead to stories

### Stories that come from issues (personal or social), ideas or emotions

**Scared** – Tell a story about a time you felt scared

**Embarrassment** – Tell the story of the most embarrassing thing ever to happen to you.

**Home** – What does home mean to you? When have you felt close to home? Far away?

**Social Justice** – Tell a story related to fairness or inequality

**Other Artists** – Tell a story about a film, novel, poem, or play that has had a profound impact on you. Why? How did it become so important?

*Tip* - What songs or music are you listening to right now? Why is this appealing? What's the story behind your all-time favorite songs?

*Tip* - What kinds of stories do you read about online or in the newspaper? Why do those things grab your attention?

### Stories that come from a specific purpose or for a specific audience

**Peers** – Tell a story specifically to your classmates or friends

**Family** – Tell a story specifically to your parents, grandparents, or siblings

**Campaign** – Tell a story that serves a campaign for office or an issue

**To Say Thanks** – Tell a story to express your gratitude to a particular person or group

*Tip* - Try writing a letter to a specific person. What story would you put in the letter to help them understand what you have to say?