

Creative Writing Examen

1. Become aware of God's presence.
 - Find a peaceful space where you can focus. Take a few deep breaths and invite God's presence into your reflection.
2. Review the writing with gratitude.
 - Read through a piece of writing (poem, lyrics, chapter in the Bible, short story, journal entry/reflection you have just written, etc.) slowly and intentionally. Highlight or pay attention to the words, phrases and ideas that resonate with you.
 - What is the tone of the writing, the voice, does anything rhyme?
 - What parts of the writing do you appreciate?
 - What parts of the writing makes you pause?
 - What parts of the writing do you struggle with?
3. Sit with your emotions.
 - As you read, what emotions come up. Do certain lines bring joy, curiosity, sadness or frustration? What do these emotions tell you about God's character.
4. Choose a section of the writing and pray from it.
 - Select a section from the writing that stands out to you (a sentence, paragraph or theme). After you reflect on why the section is meaningful, consider what God may be trying to communicate with you through the writing. Ask for insight and understanding.
5. Give thanks/express hope
 - Thank God for what he has revealed through the text. Reflect on how you can apply what you've learned in your writing and daily life? Ask God for direction on how to integrate this insight into your daily journey and the hope to keep trying when you fall short.

A poem

won't you celebrate with me by Lucille Clifton

won't you celebrate with me

what i have shaped into

a kind of life? i had no model.

born in babylon

both nonwhite and woman

what did i see to be except myself?

i made it up

here on this bridge between

starshine and clay,

my one hand holding tight

my other hand; come celebrate

with me that everyday

something has tried to kill me

and has failed.

A response

The tone is resilient. The voice is proud. Phrases that make me pause include born in Babylon, one hand holding tight the other, everyday something has tried to kill me and has failed. Phrases that I look over include come celebrate with me, what I have shaped into, between starshine and clay.

My emotions include pride, frustration and satisfaction. The first and third emotion is for the writer. The second is for me. Today, it's difficult to focus on the sections that are positive, and I'm frustrated by that – I'm also a bit frustrated with God and that's evident to me in my response.

God,

This poem has been on my mind a lot lately. So, I thought it would be the perfect creative writing examen reflection. Today, the section that has captured my thoughts is the end.

;come celebrate

with me that everyday

something has tried to kill me

and has failed.

Although no one has tried to literally kill me, several experiences have felt like an attack or attempt to kill my joy, my peace and most importantly my hope. The writer is asking us to celebrate with her, because she has overcome difficulty daily. I think this poem is a good reminder to trust in you, because you are not done with any situation until it's good. I trust that you are working out all the areas I am unhappy, uncertain and unsatisfied out for my good. In the meantime, I am grateful for the little things like the cool breeze I am experiencing while I write this examen and for the ability to see you in all things, even poems. I ask that you continue to reveal yourself in between these lines and give me strength to look for you in them again when I need to. Amen.