

LEARNING EXCHANGE PROTOCOL
PERSONAL NARRATIVE
Father and Mother Stories

Father stories are about establishing origins and through them legitimizing claims of ownership, of occupancy and identity. They connect what's momentary and passing to what surpasses, materiality to ideal... Men's stories. Women's stories. How they are about blood and roots and earth, how they must be repeated each generation or they are lost forever. If the stories dim or disappear altogether, a people's greatness diminishes, each of us becomes a solitary actor. The fighter fights along, for riches or survival, or finds himself a puffed-up brawler, a sideshow performer of other people's stories about themselves, if there is no chorus remembering, connecting him to GREAT TIME.

John Edgar Wideman, *Fatheralong*
A Meditation on Fathers and Sons, Race and Society

1. Read the above quote.
2. Write for 10 minutes about a family story. It may be apocryphal (not quite true at this point) or some story you have heard over and over, or told your own children about your origins and history. It could be something important that your father or mother wanted you to know.
3. Then share your story using the appreciative/constructivist listening protocol or Think Pair/Trio Share (2 minutes each to read your story)

After you have shared this story, talk about how it connects to your work right now (5-10 min).