

**“Things” prompts for middle school students, from YWA Writing Mentor, Carter Mckenzie** (used fall term, '09 in her after school workshops)

1. Inspired by the poem “Spice” by April Lindner:

How can a shelf of objects inspire you to imagine different times and places? Think of a particular group of objects that, through any or all of the senses, have strong associations of time and place. As you write about the subject, focus not only on what these things are but on how their associations are felt.

You can write about a group of objects in various ways: collections of shells or coins; cooking utensils used to make a favorite dish; a kitchen drawer of unrelated objects; or your own shelf of spices.

2. From **Poetry Everywhere**, ed. Jack Collom & Sheryl Noethe, p. 87:

Create a list poem on one of the following subjects:

- Animals That Should Exist But Don't
- Things I Want to Toss Out
- Things I Wish People Would Say to Me

3. Inspired by Kim Stafford's poem “A List to Memorize,” published in **Writing Across Cultures**, Edna Kovacs, p. 18:

Using photographs as prompts, create a poem or short prose piece telling three silent, three loud, and three eternal things. Use all of the senses—how would a particular word or image taste or smell or feel?