

Poem I:  
*This River Here*

Ex. I.3:

“This river here” has many universal elements because, for most people who live close to the land, rivers are important sources and markers. Yet this poem is also about a very specific place, significant to the life of the poet and to her family.

Choose a natural setting where you have felt comfortable in the past, or a place you imagine that you would find peaceful—a park, your backyard, even an image only seen in a photograph. If you can only get to this place in your head, try to find an appropriate place to write that will be consistent with the place-based poem you will be writing. The poem does not have to describe the setting, but the feeling you get from that setting. Let your senses drift, and let the setting influence the flow of the writing process.

—Exercise provided by Kamala Platt, author of *On the Line*