"What Is Home?" Activity

Activity format: Online resource for in-person activity

Theme: Intergenerational connection, Belonging, Shared resilience

The activity is related to the web story *What Makes Home, Home?* and to the public program for National Housing Day on November 22, 2026.

Audience: The activity can be used for children (age 7 and up) and adults alike. It is best done in a group of *at least* eight people with people working in groups of two.

Goals: The activity aims to encourage dialogue and explore a sense of belonging through discussing what components enable people to call a *place* home and, just as important, when does a place cease to feel like home.

Participants will be given questions inspired from the web story and print the downloadable sheet to then build their own paper house and share it with others once it's done. This will create an opportunity for people to share their story and be engaged. After answering the questions, participants will be able to share what home is for them, what does it look like, what leads them to call it home and finally, what would cause them, or has caused them, to not call it home anymore. Feel free to post on socials and share with us your home!

How It Works

The activity follows a three-step process: construct, reflect and share. Participants use the provided 2D template to build a 3D paper house, which then serves as a canvas to write their answers to a series of guided questions.

1. Construction

Using the printouts, participants will:

- Cut: Participants follow the solid outer lines to cut out the "flat" shape of the house.
- Personalize: Before folding, participants can identify the walls, windows and door to plan where their answers will go.
- Fold: Using the dashed lines as guides, participants fold the paper inward. The tabs are tucked or glued to secure the shape, resulting in a small, freestanding 3D home.

NOTE: You may choose to do the "Reflection" step before folding and shaping the house.

2. Reflection

Once the house is built, participants engage with the questions. Instead of writing on a standard sheet of paper, they use the house as a sort of diary and are encouraged to write, doodle, or draw their responses directly onto the different surfaces of their paper home.

Example:

Exterior walls: write or draw answers to “What does your home include?” (e.g., specific memories, smells, or people).

The foundation/bottom: in answer to “Where is your home?”, write the physical or emotional location of the home here.

Internal spaces: if participants feel comfortable doing, they can write “hidden” thoughts on the inside of the flaps before sealing the house.

3. Sharing

The final phase is an opportunity for inclusion and connection. Participants are invited to hold their 3D homes while sharing their stories with the group. This physical representation of home helps bridge the gap between abstract feelings and tangible experiences, allowing others to see a glimpse of what home is to different people.

Questions:

- What makes your home, home?
- Where is your home?
- What do you call home? Do you have multiple homes?
- What does your home include?
- What are some feelings of home?

NOTE: This activity is designed to be a safe space for people to share their story. It acknowledges that “home” isn’t always a positive or permanent place, providing a supportive environment to process those complexities through art.

Example:

