

Your name: _____

Learning about Family History Interviews

Who is the Kin Keeper in your family? _____

Don't know who the Kin Keeper is? Who will you ask for this information? _____

What types of information can PEOPLE give you when researching family history?



Presentation Notes:

Important Dates:

- ✓ Reach out to your Kin Keeper and have interview scheduled by _____
- ✓ Complete your interview by **Monday, August 17th**
- ✓ Use your interview to write your focus question on **Tuesday, August 18th**

Your Oral History Interview Checklist

- ◇ Schedule a time in advance. This gives everyone a chance to prepare.
- ◇ Practice with your recording device ahead of time. Do a sound check to make sure it's working properly.
- ◇ Read the list of interview questions ahead of time. Share them with your relative beforehand so they know what you want to ask them.
- ◇ Encourage them to share feelings, stories and descriptions.
- ◇ Show interest and make eye contact while they're talking. Smile!
- ◇ Use props, when possible. Old photographs, favorite old songs and treasured items may bring memories flooding back.
- ◇ Don't push for answers. Your relative may not wish to speak about someone who has passed away or may have other reasons for not wanting to share. Move on to something else.
- ◇ Use your prepared questions as a guideline, but don't be afraid to let your relative go off on a tangent. They may have many things to say that you never thought to ask!
- ◇ Don't interrupt or attempt to correct your relative.
- ◇ When you are done, be sure to thank your relative for his/her time.

Your Name: _____

Name of person you're interviewing: _____

Relation to you: _____

Date of interview: _____ Place of interview: _____

Interview questions:

Part 1: Your childhood

1. What is your full name?
2. When and where were you born?
3. What is your earliest childhood memory?
4. Who is the most memorable relative from your childhood? Why?
5. Who is the oldest relative you can remember? Describe him/her.
6. What world events had the most impact on you while you were growing up? Did any of them personally affect your family?
7. Of all the things you learned from your parents, which do you feel was the most valuable?

Part 2: Your family tree

8. How did your family come to live in the town where you grew up?
9. Were there other family members living in the area? Who?
10. Describe the personalities of your close family members.
11. Do you know if any of your ancestors were immigrants? If yes, who were they and where did they come from?
12. Does your family have any special traditions? Who started those traditions?

13. What do you know about your family surname?
14. Is there a naming tradition in your family, such as always giving the firstborn son the name of his paternal grandfather?
15. What stories have come down to you about your parents? Grandparents? More distant ancestors?
16. Are there any stories about famous or infamous relatives in your family?
17. Are there any special heirlooms, photos, bibles or other memorabilia that have been passed down in your family?
18. Are there any other questions that you want to ask?

Source: Ideas taken from Fifty Questions for Family History Interviews by Kimberly Powell
<http://genealogy.about.com/cs/oralhistory/a/interview.htm>