

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**Do NOT let the person you are interviewing write out the answers for you. This is *your* work to do, not theirs. Recording the interview is a *great* idea so you don't have to take notes while you talk.**

**All along the way, ask the person you are interviewing to tell you stories and to add details. Don't feel like you have to ask the questions in a set order. If something comes up in an answer that you didn't anticipate, go in that new direction with your next question.**

***Definitely* don't expect to write out the interview in the order of the questions. You will probably need to reorganize it all to make it flow in a logical order.**

**You may find that you don't need to include the answers to some questions and that you have answered other questions not on this list. That is *good*. It would be boring if everyone's work was the same.**

### **Typical, Everyday Life**

#### **Houses and Cars**

When were you born? Who was President?  
Where were you born?  
Where did you grow up?  
What kind of neighborhood did you live in?

Did you live on a farm or in the city?  
How big was your house? Do you know how much it cost? How was your home heated?  
Did you have indoor plumbing? Did you have electricity? If you didn't, what was that like?  
Where did you sleep? Did you have your own room or share? How big was your room?

Tell me about the first car you remember that your family had.

Tell me about the first car you bought.

#### **Food**

What kind of food did you eat? Did you get much food to eat?  
What was your favorite food?

Did you ever have dessert or a snack? What was your favorite ice cream?  
What kinds of things did you have to drink?  
Do you think food was better then or now?

## **Clothes**

Did you have very many clothes? What were your clothes like? Were they comfortable?  
What do you think of clothes kids wear today? What do you think of *my* clothes?

## **Family and Friends**

Who did you live with? What did your mom and dad do? Did you have brothers and sisters?

How am I related to you?

Did you have a lot of friends? Did you see your friends often? At school or at your home?

Did you have any pets?

Did your family go to church? What was it like?

## **School**

How old were you when you started school?

What kind of school did you go to? What was it like?

Did rich and poor children have the same opportunity to go to your school?

How did you get to school?

How big was your school, and what did it look like?

When did school start in the morning, and how long were you there each day?

What subjects did you study at school? Did you have classes for music, band, art, or PE?

Did you get recess? What did you do during recess?

What kind of a dress code did you have for school?

What were your books and materials like?

What were your teachers like? What punishments were given at school?

Did you like school? Were you a good student?

## **Work**

What kind of chores did you have to do? What kind of other work did you do to earn money?

What was your first full-time job? Where did you work? How much were you paid?

## **Games and Sports**

What kind of games did you play? What was your favorite board game?

What kind of outdoor activities did you do? What was everyone's favorite sport to do?

What was everyone's favorite sport to watch?

Was baseball fun back then? Who was your favorite player?

## **Fun Stuff**

What kind of things were popular when you were a kid? What did you do for entertainment?

Did you have a lot of toys to play with? What kind were they, and what were they made of?

Did you have a public library? Who was your favorite author? What was your favorite book?

Did you have TV? What was it like? What shows did you watch?

What was your favorite music? What were your favorite songs?

### **Unusual, Out-of-the-Ordinary Experiences**

What accidents or illnesses did you have?

Did you take any great trips?

Did you ever meet or get to know anyone famous?

Did you ever win a contest?

Did you ever get into big trouble?

### **The Way The World Was**

What was the environment like? Did you worry about pollution?

Were there any civil right changes that you remember?

How has technology changed? What invention made the most impact on you?

What big events happened in your lifetime that you especially remember?

When you were a kid, what did you think the future would be like?

Is it fun to watch the world change from how it was then to how it is now?

What do you enjoy the most in your life?