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## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING LISTEN

.....Pilot Program 2015.....

**TEACHER TOOLKIT**

Sponsored by:



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# THE GREAT THANKSGIVING LISTEN

*This Thanksgiving weekend, StoryCorps is working with high school history and social studies teachers across America to encourage students to record an interview with a grandparent or another elder using the free StoryCorps app. With permission from the participants, each of these interviews will be uploaded to the StoryCorps archive in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.*

*This ground-breaking oral history project will use near-universally accessible smartphone technology to capture an entire generation of American lives and experiences while fostering meaningful connections within families, communities, and the classroom. This 2015 pilot may well result in an archive containing **the single largest collection of human voices ever gathered.***

*This is a project about the sharing of wisdom, gratitude, and respect across generations. The Great Thanksgiving Listen offers participants a chance to discover the history in their own families and lives while honoring their elders through the act of listening.*

*To help educators and students participate, **StoryCorps has created this toolkit with instructions for helping students to plan, conduct, and archive interviews.** Teachers will find guidelines and recommendations that can easily be made into lessons that address state standards for social studies or history curricula. There is also an **appendix section** with supporting materials and student worksheets for getting the most out of classroom participation in the Great Thanksgiving Listen.*

***We look forward to making history with you!***

## **i** ABOUT STORYCORPS

Founded in 2003, the nonprofit organization **StoryCorps** has given more than **100,000 Americans** the chance to record interviews about their lives, pass wisdom from one generation to the next, and leave a legacy for the future. StoryCorps shares edited excerpts of these recordings with millions each week through popular weekly NPR broadcasts, podcasts, animated shorts, digital platforms, and best-selling books. StoryCorps helps us recognize that **every life and every story matter.**

## **i** ABOUT TED PRIZE

**Dave Isay**, founder and president of StoryCorps, is the recipient of the **2015 TED Prize**, awarded to an individual with a creative, bold vision to spark global change. With the proceeds of the TED Prize, **StoryCorps released an app** that walks users seamlessly through the StoryCorps interview experience, from recording to archiving to sharing their story with the world. The StoryCorps app, and its companion platform at StoryCorps.me, make a large-scale and historic undertaking like the **Great Thanksgiving Listen** possible for the first time.

## **i** ABOUT LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

**The Library of Congress** is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the **largest library in the world**, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, maps, and manuscripts in its collections. All interviews published to StoryCorps.me through this project will be **archived in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.**



# PROMOTE LEARNING WITH THE GREAT THANKSGIVING LISTEN

*Through the Great Thanksgiving Listen, social studies and history students will have a chance to create a primary source document that can be entered into a national archive for future generations. Students will learn to prepare for an interview and practice their digital, listening, and archiving skills. They will also have a chance to explore the history that is present in their families and communities.*

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING LISTEN WILL HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING:

- ★ Research, archiving, and planning skills
- ★ Speaking skills that enable them to express ideas clearly and persuasively
- ★ Listening skills that reflect increased comprehension, lead to critical analysis, and advance discussion
- ★ An increased connectedness to community and school
- ★ A deepened sense of social awareness, exhibited by appreciation of diversity and respect for others

*Through a shared conversation, participants in the Great Thanksgiving Listen have a chance to gain a deeper understanding of the world around them and to learn what wonderful and unexpected stories can emerge from the simple statement, “**Tell me about your life.**”*

## BE PART OF HISTORY

The Great Thanksgiving Listen provides participants a connection to our nation’s oldest federal institution, granting each student and a person they know a chance to create a primary source document for future generations and **place a lasting record in the Library of Congress.**

## CULTURE

By listening to the experiences of others, students will confront the similarities and differences that exist between people. They will see themselves as part of both local and extended cultures and will consider how those cultures help shape them as individuals and members of a group. Students will have the opportunity to **increase the respectfulness with which they respond to unique experiences.**

## TIME, CONTINUITY, & CHANGE

Conducting interviews will allow students to **understand differences in historical and contemporary perspectives.** They will view significant historical events through individual experience and understand how members of their community shaped those events.

## CIVIC IDEALS & PRACTICES

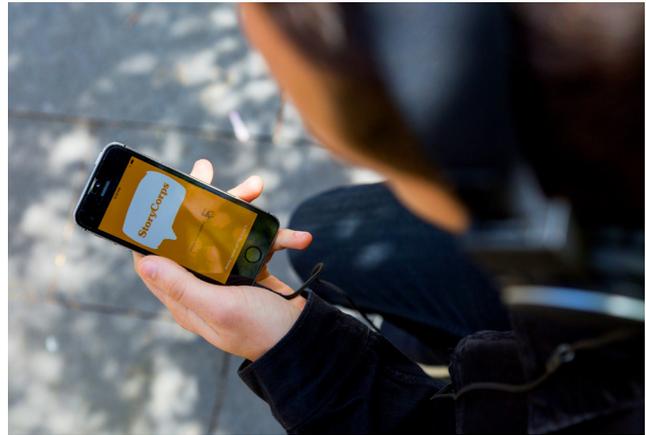
Students will use individual stories as evidence to evaluate our country’s past and present practices and how each individual’s experiences fit into the democratic ideals upon which it is based. Personal interviews are a useful tool for studying the past, and they also preserve the voices of our time for future generations. Collectively, they **tell our shared history through the words of the people who lived it.**



# BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

## GETTING STARTED

- ✓ **The Great Thanksgiving Listen entails** students using the free StoryCorps app (available for iPhone and Android devices) to record an interview with an elder, take a picture together, and with consent of all participants, publish the interview and photo online to the Library of Congress.
- ✓ StoryCorps recommends the Great Thanksgiving Listen for **high school sophomores and juniors who are studying social studies or American history**. The project also fits well as part of a civics, government, journalism, or political science class, or as part of a related extracurricular activity.
- ✓ Introduce the project **at least two weeks prior to Thanksgiving** to provide students time to obtain any permission slips, practice using the app, and plan their interviews.
- ✓ The Great Thanksgiving Listen is a project for students 13 and over only. Under the terms of use for the StoryCorps app, **students under the age of 13 may NOT participate**.
- ✓ **Parental consent is required for students under the age of 18** to register for a StoryCorps app account. This consent is given electronically at the time the student and parent create an account and agree to the terms of use.
- ✓ Out of respect for the privacy of all participants, the Great Thanksgiving Listen should be presented as a **voluntary assignment** and students should **not be required to publish interviews** to obtain credit. Students can get many of the benefits of participation without publishing their interviews online.
- ✓ **Please review** the full toolkit and appendix materials **and practice** all steps (downloading app, registering, recording, uploading, editing title and keywords by logging in at StoryCorps.me, etc.) **before beginning your lesson plan**. Familiarity with the steps will help you customize your lessons for your students and their specific needs.
- ✓ The StoryCorps app is currently available only in English, but **students may record their interviews in any language**.



## ABOUT OUR WEBSITES

StoryCorps.org is StoryCorps' signature website and contains information about our organization, an archive of our broadcasts, and an overview of our different initiatives and programs.

StoryCorps.me, launched in March 2015, contains information and resources for users to record and publish their own interviews using the StoryCorps app. Additionally, interviews that are published by users of the StoryCorps app appear publicly online at StoryCorps.me and on the app. These interviews are unedited by StoryCorps. Your students can find their published interviews online here.

## STUDENT AND FAMILY PRIVACY

Students who record audio files using the StoryCorps app will have two options:

-  **(1) publish** the interview and participant photo, in which case both will appear publicly on the StoryCorps.me website and be transmitted to the Library of Congress; **OR**
-  **(2) choose NOT to publish** their interviews, in which case the audio file and photo will remain local on the device they used for recording.

Please note that interviews will be archived in the Library of Congress **only if published from the app or from StoryCorps.me.**

After recording their interviews, students should **discuss with their partner** whether the audio file may be published online.

Interviews, including those that have been published, **can be deleted** by the registered account holder at any time. If deleted, they will no longer appear publicly on StoryCorps.me.

## PERMISSION SLIPS AND PARENTAL CONSENT

StoryCorps.me is a website that contains user-generated content. While we adhere to a strict set of Community Guidelines and work hard to maintain a culture of tolerance and acceptance on the website, published content may not be appropriate for all individuals. It is possible that StoryCorps.me will be blocked at your school, in which case your students have to access it from home or from a public computer.

Your school may choose to require a signed parental permission slip as a prerequisite to participating in the project. The appendix includes a sample permission slip that you and your school administrator can customize for your local requirements. **The permission slip is for teacher and school use only and does not need to be submitted to StoryCorps.**

Separate and distinct from the permission slip, students **under the age of 18 must have parental consent** to register for an account on the StoryCorps app. This consent is given electronically at the time the student and parent create an account and agree to the terms of use of the app.

## EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Students will need access to a **smartphone** such as an iPhone (works best with version 5 or better) or an Android device to download the StoryCorps app. Students without their own devices can borrow from a parent or guardian.

Due to technical concerns, StoryCorps **does not recommend** using a shared classroom device.

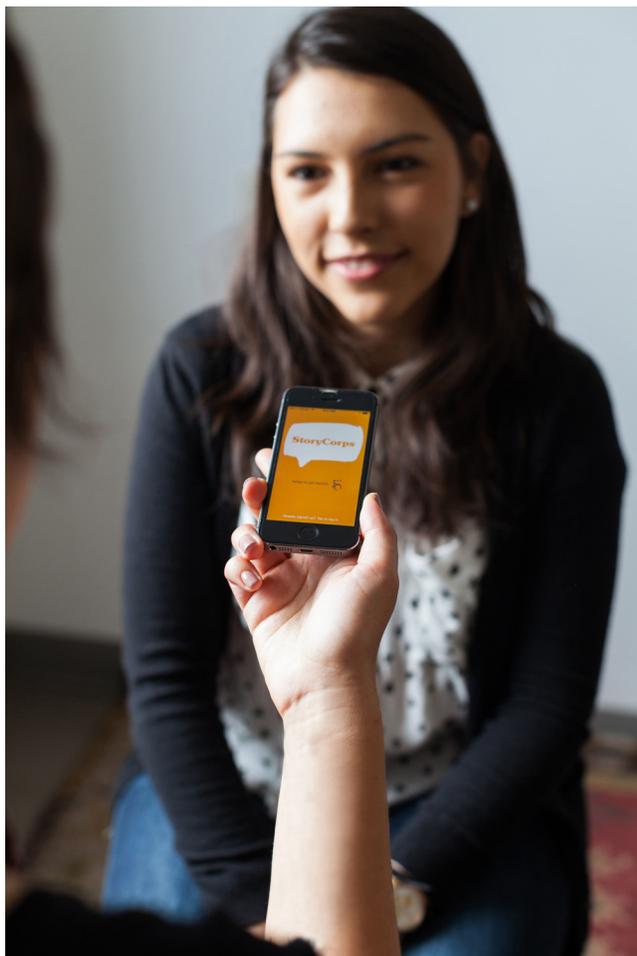
Students will need **desktop access** to StoryCorps.me, at home or in the classroom. Teachers are strongly encouraged to test classroom access to StoryCorps.me before beginning implementation, and adjust lesson plans accordingly.

**Strong Wi-Fi access**, at home, in the classroom, or elsewhere is required to successfully upload published interviews.

## STUDENTS WITHOUT ACCESS TO A DEVICE OR THE APP, OR WITHOUT PARENTAL CONSENT

The project is designed to be implemented using the StoryCorps app. However, the lesson plan can be adapted to allow for **basic participation by students without access to the app**, a device, or parental consent. While these students will not be able to enter a recording into the Library of Congress, they can learn to prepare and conduct an interview.

**Modifications for non-app student participants** are noted throughout the Lesson Planning Guide. Generally speaking, they call for participation through preparation on worksheets and for the student to hold an interview that is either unrecorded or recorded with an alternate device, such as a digital recorder.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There is no minimum interview length, but students must **stop recording after 40 minutes**.

Due to the scale of the Great Thanksgiving Listen, StoryCorps is unfortunately unable to provide individual support to classrooms or students.

### QUESTIONS? SOMETHING GREAT TO SHARE?

Please reach out to us on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/thegreatlisten](http://www.facebook.com/thegreatlisten)

We will be providing **regular tips** and **advice** via our Facebook page and encourage you to check in with us.

### TEACHER CHECKLIST

- Review** full contents of the Great Thanksgiving Toolkit and Toolkit Appendix, available at [thegreatlisten.org](http://thegreatlisten.org).
- Determine** with a school administrator whether your school will require permission slips.
- Familiarize** yourself with StoryCorps.me, and check whether you can access StoryCorps.me from your classroom. If your school blocks the site, investigate whether it can be unblocked for the duration of the project.
- Download** the StoryCorps app to your smartphone (iPhone or Android device) and register for an account.
- Conduct** a test recording and upload it to see whether you can use the school or classroom Wi-Fi to complete an upload (if not, students must upload at home or elsewhere).
- Practice** editing a test title, summary, and keywords by logging into your account at StoryCorps.me from a desktop computer (you can delete the test later).
- Practice** browsing by keywords on StoryCorps.me.
- Using our Lesson Planning Guide, **plan** your lessons, customizing as necessary for access levels to the site, Wi-Fi, and student equipment and permission status.
- Fully review** the worksheets “Titles, Summaries, and Keywords” and “Interview Preparation and Recording Assignment.”



# LESSON PLANNING GUIDE

*The goal of the Great Thanksgiving Listen is for students to interview an elder about his or her life. The StoryCorps app facilitates this process by supplying questions and a timer, and it also provides participants a chance to archive their interview in the Library of Congress. But even without the app, students can participate by planning questions and conducting an interview, recorded or not, over the holiday weekend.*

*This lesson planning guide sets forth a roadmap to help your students prepare and conduct their interviews on the StoryCorps app. You are encouraged to customize it according to your curricular goals, school Wi-Fi and StoryCorps.me accessibility, and levels of parental permission for the students in your classroom. You can also modify the lesson plan or create other materials to help your students prepare for their interviews. StoryCorps encourages you to make the Great Thanksgiving Listen your own.*

▶ The plan encompasses three general lessons with classroom and homework components and includes an introduction to StoryCorps; a worksheet on writing excellent titles, summaries, and keywords; a test upload assignment; a worksheet for interview preparation. We estimate **2–4 hours of classroom time**, depending on how you allocate the assignments.

▶ **If you are short on time**, you can condense the steps below, or simply proceed by encouraging students to conduct an interview with an elder using the built-in features of the app. The question generator, timer, and user-friendly prompts will guide students through the planning and recording process.

## LESSON 1: INTRO AND REGISTRATION

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide students with an introduction to StoryCorps and the Great Thanksgiving Listen. You will need time in class to discuss the project and prepare students to obtain their permission slips and set up their accounts.

### ✓ TEACHER RESOURCES

- ✓ **PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS** in pages 1–2 of this toolkit (talk about StoryCorps, oral histories and archives, and the Library of Congress).
- ✓ **SAMPLE PERMISSION SLIP**
- ✓ **CLASSIC STORYCORPS RECORDINGS** (on next page)  
Play some classic StoryCorps broadcast interviews to familiarize your students with the concept of a StoryCorps interview and the power of personal narrative.

### ✎ STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

- Obtain** signed permission slips.
- With parental consent, **download** app and register for accounts.
- Practice** logging into account on StoryCorps.me from app and a desktop computer.
- Optional assignment:** Write a paragraph about the role of personal narrative in history, or another topic that you discussed in class.

## ✓ TEACHER RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

-  **Julio Diaz:** Julio Diaz remembers being robbed on a subway platform in the Bronx.
-  **Carl McNair:** Carl McNair remembers his brother, Ronald McNair, who was one of the astronauts killed about the space shuttle *Challenger* on January 28, 1986.

 **Joshua Littman:** Twelve-year-old Joshua Littman, who has Asperger's syndrome, interviews his mother, Sarah.

 **NOTE:** You can find these on the **Listen** page of **StoryCorps.org**, and animated versions of the Carl McNair and Joshua Littman clips on our **Watch** page. These started as 40-minute interviews and were edited down to shorter segments.

## TEACHER FOLLOW-UP

 Depending on results of permission slips, adjust subsequent lesson plans for students who are **non-app participants**.

### AFTER LISTENING TO CLASSIC STORYCORPS RECORDINGS, ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

**DID** anything about these stories surprise you?

**WHAT** can you learn from listening to personal stories?

**WHAT** do we learn about history from listening to everyday people?

## LESSON 2: WRITE ARCHIVE-QUALITY TITLES, SUMMARIES, AND KEYWORDS, AND PRACTICE UPLOADING A RECORDING.

**OBJECTIVE:** Use the provided worksheet “Titles, Summaries, and Keywords” to teach students about labeling their audio files with good titles, summaries, and keywords. Additionally, help students get familiar with the app by recording and uploading a test audio file and editing these fields. You will need time in class to talk through the worksheet and explain the test upload assignment; the students can do the test assignment at home or in class, depending on your Wi-Fi access.

 **Non-app student participants:** Instead of recording a test upload and sending a link to the teacher, these students will send their teacher an email (or hand in a worksheet) with a sample title, summary, and keywords for an imaginary interview of an elder (the idea is to have them practice the process of creating archive-quality descriptive elements).

## ✓ TEACHER RESOURCES

### ✓ WORKSHEET

The worksheet “Title, Summary, and Keywords” contains detailed descriptions and guidelines for titles, summaries, and keywords, as well as instructions for how students can add and edit them.

### ✓ CUSTOM KEYWORDS GUIDE

In addition to descriptive keywords, which are explained on the worksheet and will be unique for each interview, StoryCorps requests that all participants use their state custom keyword, which takes the basic form: **TheGreatListen2015[State Abbreviation]**, such as **TheGreatListen2015NY** or **TheGreatListen2015AZ**.

You might also be interested in **generating a unique custom keyword for your classroom or school, as well**. This will make it easy to search for your classroom's published interviews.

 **NOTE:** Students will enter all keywords into the same field (there is no special field for custom keywords).

## STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

 **Read** and **complete** the exercise on the worksheet “Title, Summary, and Keywords.” The assignment for editing elements of a test upload is on the second page.

Students will **log in to StoryCorps.me** from a computer and use the sample language provided on the worksheet to **edit** the title, summary, and keyword fields.

Students will **email** you the link to the test recording.

**Non-app students** provide you with a sample title, summary, and keywords in email or on paper.

Students can **delete** the test when you have reviewed it.

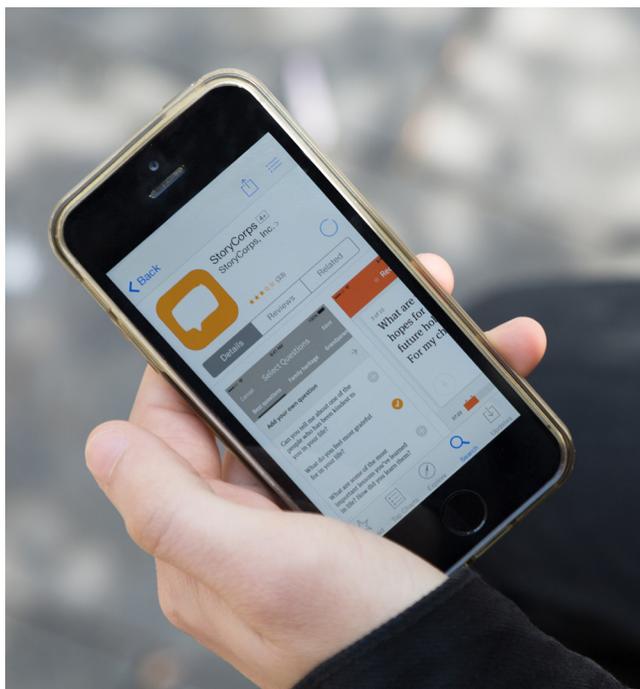
## LESSON 3: INTERVIEW PREPARATION

**OBJECTIVE:** Prepare students to conduct their interviews. You will need time in class to talk to students about choosing a partner and preparing questions. You will also explain the student deliverables, such as: **(1) for published interviews**, students will email you a link to their interview with edited title, summary, and keywords; **OR (2) for unpublished interviews**, students will email you a sample title, summary, and keywords, unaccompanied by an audio file (or hand in a piece of paper with the same). Students can prepare in class or at home using the app and worksheet.

**Y Non-app student participants** can participate in all aspects of this lesson, except they will use the Interview Preparation Sheet and Great Questions List instead of the question generator in the app, and will conduct an interview with an alternative recording device (or conduct an unrecorded interview).

### ✓ TEACHER RESOURCES

- ✓ **INTERVIEW PREPARATION SHEET**
- ✓ **QUESTION GENERATOR** (built into the app) and/or **GREAT QUESTIONS LIST**



### TEACHER FOLLOW-UP

**Review emails** from students containing links to audio files on StoryCorps.me, or, for non-app participants, their sample titles, summaries, and keywords.

## GOOD LUCK AND HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

### ✎ STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

- Using the Interview Preparation Sheet to document their work, students **select** interview partner, **plan** questions, and **provide** questions to partner.
- Students **conduct** interviews over Thanksgiving weekend.
- After recording, students **discuss** with their partner whether to publish the audio file and photograph online.
  - Y If published**, then from a computer students edit keywords, descriptions, titles, and email the link to you.
 

Students can share their published interviews with family members and on social media, including our Facebook page and at **#TheGreatListen**.
  - Y If unpublished**, students can listen to the interview locally on their device and submit sample titles, summaries, and keywords to the teacher on paper or by email unaccompanied by an audio file.
- Unpublished audio files will remain on the device on which they were recorded and can be replayed for personal use.
- ! REMINDER:** Students must be signed into their account to record, and **must end interviews after 40 minutes**.



## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

*Discussion questions and recommendations for follow-up activities based on the Great Thanksgiving Listen.*

### ” DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

- ❓ **WHOM** did you interview, and why did you choose that partner?
- ❓ **WHAT** was your partner’s reaction to the interview experience?
- ❓ **WHAT** did you learn from your interview?
- ❓ **DID** anything you learned surprise you?
- ❓ **DID** you learn anything that changed the way you previously thought about an event or person?
- ❓ **DID** you learn anything that contradicted what you have learned previously from school texts?
- ❓ **DID** the interview go by quickly? Did you run out of time?
- ❓ (Listen to your interview.) **ARE** there any places where you could have asked a follow-up question?
- ❓ **WHAT** would you do differently if you were to conduct another interview?
- ❓ **WAS** there any question that evoked a particularly memorable response?
- ❓ **WHAT** do you have in common with your interview partner?
- ❓ **WHAT** is the historical value of an in-person interview?
- ❓ **WHAT** makes an interview different from a text-based resource as a historical reference?
- ❓ **WHAT** historical events have you lived through? How would an interview with you about one of those events provide a unique perspective for future historians?
- ❓ **WHAT** is the value of primary resources?
- ❓ **WHAT** are some of the challenges of creating primary resources?
- ❓ **WHAT** are some of the challenges of audio files as a historical resource?
- ❓ **WHAT** is the value of different perspectives in research?
- ❓ **WHAT** are the components that contribute to differing perspectives on historical events?
- ❓ **IS** there anyone else in your life you would want to honor with an interview? Tell me about him or her.



*These are just some ideas about how to get the most out of the Great Thanksgiving Listen. StoryCorps encourages teachers and students to develop their own ideas and projects using the app.*

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

-  **FIND** supporting material for an idea or historical “fact” you first heard/learned about during the interview. Conduct additional research into that fact.
-  **CONDUCT** a follow-up interview with the original participant or a new participant to learn more about a specific event.
-  **CREATE** a TED-like talk based on the process of preparing for and conducting an interview, plus what was learned, and present to the class.
-  **CREATE** a story board of the process of preparing for and conducting the interview, plus what was learned, and present to the class.
-  **TRANSCRIBE** your interview, and/or use quotes from the interview to support another project or research paper.
-  **WRITE** a reflection paper, a follow-up essay, or a poem inspired by your interview.
-  **USE** the app to amplify digital presence for your clubs, teams, and activities.
-  **CREATE** a larger project by interviewing more people in your family or community
-  **COORDINATE** with your school or local library to start an oral history project.
-  **EDIT** interviews by downloading them from your profile on StoryCorps.me.
-  **CONSIDER** starting a podcast for your classroom or school.
-  **HOST** a classroom “Listening Party.” You can invite guests of honor to hear and share stories.

**QUESTIONS? SOMETHING GREAT TO SHARE?** Please get in touch with us via our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/thegreatlisten](http://www.facebook.com/thegreatlisten). We’d love to hear from you.

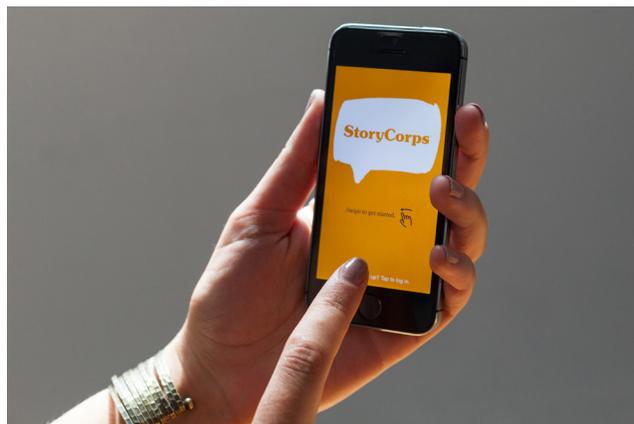


## MORE ABOUT STORYCORPS

*Thank you for participating in the pilot program of the Great Thanksgiving Listen. We hope that you will encourage your students to continue interviewing and that you and your classroom will participate again next year.*

### MORE ABOUT STORYCORPS

Founded in 2003, the nonprofit organization StoryCorps has given more than 100,000 Americans the chance to record interviews about their lives, pass wisdom from one generation to the next, and leave a legacy for the future. It is the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered. Participating in StoryCorps couldn't be easier: You invite a loved one, or anyone else you choose, to one of the StoryCorps recording sites. There you're met by a trained facilitator who brings you inside a quiet audio recording booth and sits you across from your interview partner. For the next 40 minutes, you record a meaningful conversation about your lives. At the end of the session, you receive a CD or digital



copy of the interview, and a digital file goes to the Library of Congress, where it will be preserved for generations to come. Someday your great-great-great-grandchildren will be able to meet you and your grandfather, your mother, your best friend, or whomever it is you chose to honor with a StoryCorps interview, through your voices and stories.

StoryCorps shares edited excerpts of these stories with the world through popular weekly podcasts, broadcasts on NPR, animated shorts, digital platforms, and best-selling books. These powerful stories illustrate our shared humanity and show how much more we share in common than divides us.

- ✓ Visit us at [www.storycorps.org](http://www.storycorps.org)
- ✓ **Download our app** for iPhone and Android devices and publish your own story on [StoryCorps.me](http://StoryCorps.me)
- ✓ Listen to our weekly podcast and broadcasts on **NPR**
- ✓ Read our books **The Ties That Bind; All There Is; Mom, Listening Is an Act of Love**
- ✓ Like us on **Facebook** and Follow us **@StoryCorps, #TheGreatListen**



## OUR SPONSORS



## OUR PARTNERS



## OUR EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS





## SAMPLE PERMISSION SLIP FOR TEACHERS/SCHOOLS (1 of 3)

Dear Parents,

Over the coming weeks our class will be participating in a national program created by StoryCorps called the Great Thanksgiving Listen.

Using near-universally accessible smartphone technology, students will record an interview with a grandparent or other elder using the free StoryCorps app to foster meaningful connections within families, communities, and the classroom, and create a firsthand archive of American history and wisdom.

In order to participate in the Great Thanksgiving Listen, you must acknowledge that your child is not under the age of 13. If your child is under the age of 18, after downloading the free StoryCorps app he or she will need your consent to register for an account in accordance with the terms of use.

I understand that this project will include my child recording an interview with an elder and taking a picture with that individual. I understand that with the consent of all interview participants, my child will have the option to publish the interview and photograph online to a public website at [www.StoryCorps.me](http://www.StoryCorps.me). I understand that the publication of the interview and photograph will result in them both being archived in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

I also understand that publishing an interview online is not a requirement for credit in this project and that my child will have the option to keep the interview and/or photograph private if they or their interview partner desire.

I hereby give permission for (student's name) ..... to participate in the Great Thanksgiving Listen.

.....  
(parent/guardian signature), (date)

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## SAMPLE PERMISSION SLIP FOR TEACHERS/SCHOOLS (2 of 3)

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**Dave Isay**, founder and president of StoryCorps, is the recipient of the **2015 TED Prize**, awarded to an individual with a creative, bold vision to spark global change. With the proceeds of the TED Prize, **StoryCorps released an app** that walks users seamlessly through the StoryCorps interview experience, from recording to archiving to sharing their story with the world. The StoryCorps app, and its companion social media platform at StoryCorps.me, make a large-scale and historic undertaking like the **Great Thanksgiving Listen** possible for the first time.

### **i** ABOUT LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

**The Library of Congress** is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and serves as the research arm of Congress. It is also the **largest library in the world**, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, maps, and manuscripts in its collections. All interviews published to StoryCorps.me through this project will be **archived in the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress.**



## SAMPLE PERMISSION SLIP FOR TEACHERS/SCHOOLS (3 of 3)

# PROMOTE LEARNING WITH THE GREAT THANKSGIVING LISTEN

*Through the Great Thanksgiving Listen, social studies and history students will have a chance to create a primary source document that can be entered into a national archive for future generations. Students will learn to prepare for an interview and practice their digital, listening, and archiving skills. They will also have a chance to explore the history that is present in their families and communities.*

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING LISTEN WILL HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING:

- ★ Research, archiving, and planning skills
- ★ Speaking skills that enable them to express ideas clearly and persuasively
- ★ Listening skills that reflect increased comprehension, lead to critical analysis, and advance discussion
- ★ An increased connectedness to community and school
- ★ A deepened sense of social awareness, exhibited by appreciation of diversity and respect for others

*Through a shared conversation, participants in the Great Thanksgiving Listen have a chance to gain a deeper understanding of the world around them and to learn what wonderful and unexpected stories can emerge from the simple statement, “**Tell me about your life.**”*

### BE PART OF HISTORY

The Great Thanksgiving Listen provides participants a connection to our nation’s oldest federal institution, granting each student and a person they know a chance to create a primary source document for future generations and **place a lasting record in the Library of Congress.**

### CULTURE

By listening to the experiences of others, students will confront the similarities and differences that exist between people. They will see themselves as part of both local and extended cultures and will consider how those cultures help shape them as individuals and members of a group. Students will have the opportunity to **increase the respectfulness with which they respond to unique experiences.**

### TIME, CONTINUITY, & CHANGE

Conducting interviews will allow students to **understand differences in historical and contemporary perspectives.** They will view significant historical events through individual experience and understand how members of their community shaped those events.

### CIVIC IDEALS & PRACTICES

Students will use individual stories as evidence to evaluate our country’s past and present practices and how each individual’s experiences fit into the democratic ideals upon which it is based. Personal interviews are a useful tool for studying the past, and they also preserve the voices of our time for future generations. Collectively, they **tell our shared history through the words of the people who lived it.**



# WORKSHEET

## TITLE, SUMMARY, AND KEYWORDS || PRACTICE A TEST UPLOAD (4 pages)

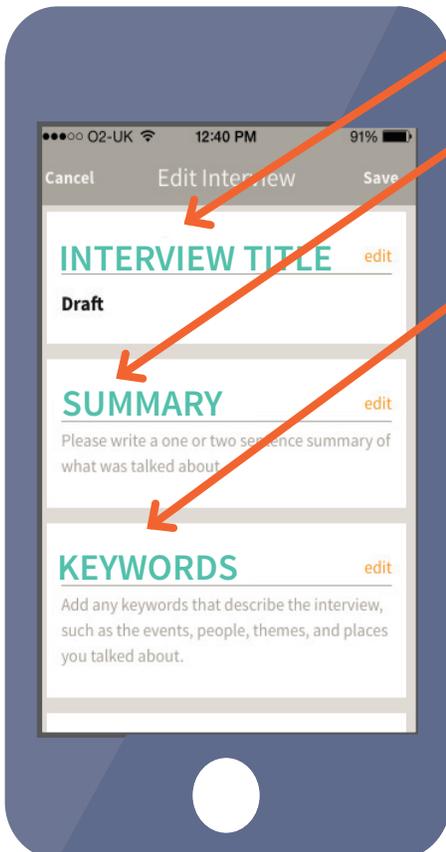
Welcome to the Great Thanksgiving Listen. For this project, you will use the StoryCorps app to record an interview with an elder in your family or community. At the conclusion of the interview, you and your partner will have an option to enter it into the Library of Congress, where it will be available for generations to come.

Future historians and researchers will use the title, summary, and keywords that you add to your interview to understand the contents of your audio file.

This worksheet will teach you to write archive-quality titles, summaries, and keywords. It will also guide you through the process of publishing a test recording that you can use to practice editing these fields. Consider it a practice run for your official interview.

**NOTE:** Even if you are not using the app to record an interview, this worksheet provides practice at writing the useful titles, summaries, and keywords that are essential to the archive process.

### ELEMENTS OF AN ARCHIVE-QUALITY AUDIO FILE:

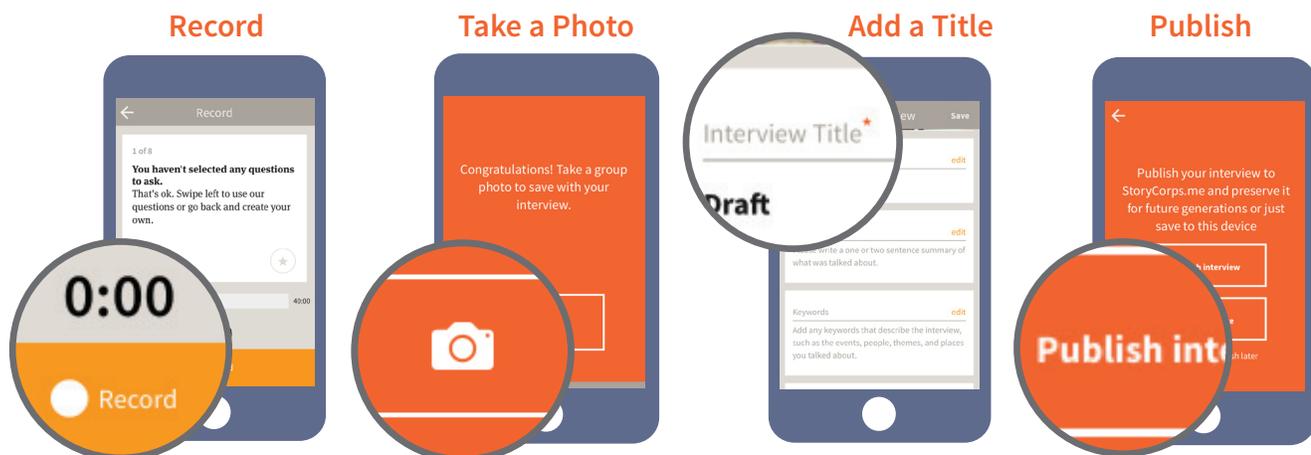


- ✓ **TITLE:** The best interview titles are one sentence, include the first and last names of participants, and refer to the main idea of the interview.
  - ✓ **SUMMARY:** Summaries are 4–5 sentence descriptions of the interview. Excellent summaries include the location and date of the interview, the names and basic autobiographical details of the participants, and a general overview of the topics discussed.
  - ✓ **KEYWORDS:** Keywords are descriptors that indicate important themes, topics, places, and people described or discussed in an interview. Researchers, producers, and librarians at the Library of Congress use keywords to find interviews about particular subjects, and future researchers will search through the archive by using keywords as search terms.
- ▶ **Descriptive keywords** describe the subjects discussed in the interview and are consequently different for every interview. These include names of people, groups, and organizations; occupations or businesses; names of events, especially historical events, discussed in the interview; places discussed at any length, and general themes that are discussed more than just in passing in the interview. **Descriptive keywords will be unique for each interview based on its participants and their conversation.**



- ▶ Try to provide **5–15 keywords** to make your audio recording more valuable to the archive.
  - ▶ Any **topics discussed at length** should be represented among the keywords.
  - ▶ Think beyond what you find most interesting or important. Details that seem mundane or even boring to you may prove crucial to others.
  - ▶ You are encouraged to conduct your interview in **whatever language** you and your partner are comfortable speaking together. If you record in a language other than English, **please enter that language as a keyword** (i.e. Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic, etc.).
- ▶ **Custom keywords** are standardized keywords listed on the Custom Keyword Guide provided by your teacher. They are not descriptive per se, but help cluster together groups of interviews that share something in common.
- ▶ StoryCorps requests that every participant use the custom keyword for their state. They take this basic form: **TheGreatListen2015[State Abbreviation]**, such as **TheGreatListen2015NY** or **TheGreatListen2015AZ**.

## PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT FOR STUDENTS USING THE APP



### Practice using the app by recording the following sentence:

- ▶ “This is [Name] conducting a test recording for the Great Thanksgiving Listen, 2015.”
- ▶ Follow the prompts in the app to publish your test recording.

- ! **TIP:** The app will prompt you to take a photo after you finish recording. You can take a selfie, or if you prefer, take a picture of a piece of paper with the date on it.
- ! **TIP:** The app will prompt you to enter an interview title. You will have a chance to edit it later by logging into your StoryCorps.me account from a computer.
- ! **TIP:** You will have the option to enter a summary and keywords straight from the app, but for this project, enter them instead after publishing by logging into your account at StoryCorps.me. From StoryCorps.me, you can easily edit all of the information associated with an audio file (and also delete the audio file if you choose).

- ! **Log into** your account at StoryCorps.me from a desktop computer to **edit** the title, summary, and keywords for your test interview. Click on your **user name**, choose **view profile**, select your **test interview**, and **enter** the following text to practice editing the information about the file.



## 2. Interview Details

### Interview Title

1

[Your Name]'s Test Interview for the Great Thanksgiving Listen, 2015

### Summary

2

In this test recording, [Your Name] at [School Name] in [Town, State] records a practice audio file for the 2015 pilot of the Great Thanksgiving Listen. [Student Name] is in [grade level] and is studying [course name].

## 3. Enter keywords, separated by commas

### Keywords help people find your interview by topic.

3

test interview, [custom keyword for your state]

### Places help people find your interview by topic.

### Organization help people find your interview by topic.

Save & Upload

**TIP:** You will see keywords fields for General, Organizations, and Places. On your official recording day, if there are any organizations or places discussed at length in your interview, enter them in the appropriate fields. Otherwise, enter your keywords in the general field (including your state custom keyword), separated by commas.

- Save your work** by clicking **Save & Upload** and then finish the assignment by emailing a link of your test audio file with edited title, summary, and keywords to your teacher. With the permission of your teacher, once the assignment is complete, delete your test interview.

## PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT FOR NON-APP STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

- Write** down a sample title, summary, and keywords for an imaginary interview and **submit** these to your teacher.

**REMINDER:** When you conduct your interview over Thanksgiving, you will **customize** your title, summary, and keywords to the **specific contents of your interview**, and you will include **5–15 keywords**.



### SAMPLE PROFILE WITH TITLE, SUMMARY, AND KEYWORDS

StoryCorps.me Home Browse More User Donate

StoryCorps March 13, 2015 Following

## Andrew Ross Interviews Great-Grandma Colleen Johnson About Her Service in World War II

2:00 ♥ 272 ▶ 2188

#### Keywords

- Women's Army Corps
- WAC
- army
- World War II
- military
- women in the military
- war
- service
- WAC disbandment
- General Douglas MacArthur
- TheGreatListen2015MO**

#### Share



#### Participants

StoryCorps

#### Summary

In this interview, conducted in October 2015 in Kansas City, Missouri, Andrew Ross (16) interviews his great-grandmother Colleen Johnson (97) about her service as a First Officer in the Women's Army Corps during World War II. She shares her story about joining the military and what she learned in the army. Additionally, she reflects upon the disbandment of the WAC in 1978. Near the end of the interview (minute 38:45), she shares a personal story about the time she met General Douglas MacArthur.

*\*Not a real profile*



# WORKSHEET

## INTERVIEW PREPARATION AND RECORDING ASSIGNMENT

(2 pages)

### GETTING STARTED

**(Q)** Whom will you interview?

**(A)**

**(Q)** How old is your interview partner?

**(A)**

**(Q)** Why did you choose this person?

**(A)**

### QUESTION PREPARATION

*In this section you will prepare 10–15 questions that you will ask your partner.*

You can write your own questions, use the question generator in the app, or refer to the o Great Questions List for inspiration. If you are using the app, you can select and store your questions in your account, but please also write them down below.

**(1)**

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**(2)**

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**(3)**

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**(4)**

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**(5)**

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**(6)**

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**(9)**

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**(12)**

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**(13)**

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**(14)**

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**(15)**

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**! Remember:** If you can, try to provide the questions to your partner in advance.



## RECORDING ASSIGNMENT

- Conduct your interview **following the prompts** in the app.

When you've finished recording, **take a selfie** with your partner and **enter a title** for the interview (remember, you can edit the title later by logging into your account at StoryCorps.me). If you prefer, you can take a picture of a piece of paper with the date on it instead of a selfie.

- You now have two options regarding your interview. Please discuss them with your partner. You can: **(1) publish the interview and photo**, in which case both will appear publicly on the StoryCorps.me website and be transmitted to the Library of Congress; **OR (2) choose NOT to publish the interview**, in which case the audio file and photo will remain local on the device you used for recording.

**! Please note that interviews will be archived in the Library of Congress only if published from the app or from StoryCorps.me.**

- Interviews, including those that have been published, **can be deleted** by the registered account holder at any time. If deleted, they will **no longer appear publicly** on StoryCorps.me.
- Depending on what you and your partner decide, either **publish** the interview or **keep it local** on your device.

- **If you published** the interview, then **log in** to your account at StoryCorps.me to **edit** the title, summary, and descriptive and custom keywords. **Save** and **upload** your work and then **email the link** of your interview to your teacher.

- **If you did not publish**, you can **listen** to the interview from your device and **submit** sample titles, summaries, and keywords to the teacher on paper or by email unaccompanied by an audio file.

## STUDENTS PARTICIPATING WITHOUT THE STORYCORPS APP

- If you are participating **without the app**, you can conduct an **unrecorded interview** or use a **digital recorder** or **other recording device**.
- **Submit** to your teacher, via email or paper, a sample title, summary, and keyword report (as though you

were creating an archive file from your recording). This will be submitted unaccompanied by the audio file.

## TIPS FOR RECORDING DAY

- 💡 **Log into your account** before you start recording (you might lose your interview if you are not logged in).
- 💡 Audio files and images take up a lot of storage space, so before you start your interview, **check that your device has at least 500MB of available storage**. (You can find an article explaining how to do this in the Support and FAQs section of **StoryCorps.me**).
- 💡 **The app will prompt you to take a picture** after your interview. Double check that you've allowed the StoryCorps app permission to access the camera on your device.
- 💡 **Ask your partner** if it is ok for you to record him or her before you start.
- 💡 **Bring this sheet** to your interview for reference.
- 💡 **Start your interview** by introducing yourself and your partner. State your **names** and the **geographic location** where you are conducting the interview.
- 💡 If you are using a **smartphone**, try to hold the device's microphone **6–12 inches from the speaker's face** for the best sound quality.
- 💡 Remember: you **MUST stop your recording after 40 minutes**. The app has a timer to help you pace yourself. There is no minimum length for an interview.
- 💡 You are encouraged to conduct your interview in **whatever language** you and your partner are comfortable speaking together. If you record in a language other than English, **please enter that language as a keyword** (e.g., Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic, etc.).
- 💡 If your partner **does not agree** to publish the interview, you can hold it **locally on your device** and it will only be accessible to the registered account holder.

## AFTER THANKSGIVING

- You are welcome to **share your interview** on social media. We invite you to check out our Facebook page at **www.facebook.com/thegreatlisten** and follow us **@StoryCorps, #TheGreatListen**.
- **We hope to hear from you again!** You are welcome to **keep interviewing** people in your family and community and to publish interviews after



# STATE CUSTOM KEYWORDS GUIDE

All participants in the Great Thanksgiving Listen in November 2015 are requested to enter a custom keyword for their state or region.

TheGreatListen2015AL

TheGreatListen2015AK

TheGreatListen2015AZ

TheGreatListen2015AR

TheGreatListen2015CA

TheGreatListen2015CO

TheGreatListen2015CT

TheGreatListen2015DE

TheGreatListen2015FL

TheGreatListen2015GA

TheGreatListen2015HI

TheGreatListen2015ID

TheGreatListen2015IL

TheGreatListen2015IN

TheGreatListen2015IA

TheGreatListen2015KS

TheGreatListen2015KY

TheGreatListen2015LA

TheGreatListen2015ME

TheGreatListen2015MD

TheGreatListen2015MA

TheGreatListen2015MI

TheGreatListen2015MN

TheGreatListen2015MS

TheGreatListen2015MO

TheGreatListen2015MT

TheGreatListen2015NE

TheGreatListen2015NV

TheGreatListen2015NH

TheGreatListen2015NJ

TheGreatListen2015NM

TheGreatListen2015NY

TheGreatListen2015NC

TheGreatListen2015ND

TheGreatListen2015OH

TheGreatListen2015OK

TheGreatListen2015OR

TheGreatListen2015PA

TheGreatListen2015RI

TheGreatListen2015SC

TheGreatListen2015SD

TheGreatListen2015TN

TheGreatListen2015TX

TheGreatListen2015UT

TheGreatListen2015VT

TheGreatListen2015VA

TheGreatListen2015WA

TheGreatListen2015WV

TheGreatListen2015WI

TheGreatListen2015WY

## COMMONWEALTH/TERRITORIES

American Samoa | TheGreatListen2015AS

District of Columbia | TheGreatListen2015DC

Federated States of Micronesia | TheGreatListen2015FM

Guam | TheGreatListen2015GU

Marshall Island | TheGreatListen2015MH

Northern Mariana Islands | TheGreatListen2015NMI

Palau | TheGreatListen2015PW

Puerto Rico | TheGreatListen2015PR

Virgin Islands | TheGreatListen2015VI



# GREAT QUESTIONS LIST

(2 pages)

## GREAT QUESTIONS FOR ANYONE

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- Tell me about one of the most important people in your life.
- Tell me about the person who has had the greatest influence on your life. What lessons did he or she teach you?
- Who has been the kindest to you and why?
- Share some important lessons you've learned in life.
- Share some of your earliest childhood memories.
- Are there any funny stories people tell about you from when you were growing up?
- What have you accomplished so far—personally and professionally—that makes you proudest? Why?
- Tell me how you would like people to remember you.
- Would you be willing to share a happy or sad memory with me?
- Thinking about future generations, and knowing that they may hear this recording, is there wisdom or advice you would like to share with them?

## FAMILY HERITAGE

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- Tell me about some traditions that have been passed down through our family. When and how did they get started?
- Are there any classic family jokes, stories, or songs you can share with me?
- What do you see as our family's legacy?
- Where were our ancestors born? If they moved to the United States, when did they arrive?
- What are some of the jobs/careers held by past generations in our family?
- Of all the family members you have either known or heard stories about, who do you think lived the most interesting life? Why?
- What are your favorite family holidays, and why?

## GRANDPARENTS

---

- Tell me about your parents.
- Tell me about your grandparents.
- Where did you grow up, and what was your childhood like?
- Share with me the story of how you and grandma/grandpa met.
- Tell me about when you found out you were going to be a mother/father.
- What was my mother/father like when she/he was growing up? Do you have any favorite stories about her/him?
- Do you remember any songs you sang to her/him when she/he was a baby? Can you sing any for me now?

## GROWING UP AND SCHOOL

---

- Tell me about where you grew up and what your childhood was like.
- Did you like going to school? Why/why not?
- What are your most vivid memories of school?
- Tell me about a teacher or other adult that impacted your life while you were growing up.
- What did you do during the summer when you were off from school?
- What jobs did you have when you were a teenager? What did you do with the money you earned?
- If you could go back and relive your teenage years, would you? Why/why not?
- Did you have a nickname? What was it and how did you get it? Does anyone still call you by that nickname?
- Has your life been different from what you imagined as a teenager?

## LOVE & RELATIONSHIPS

---

- Tell me about the love of your life.
- How did you meet your wife/husband/partner?
- Describe your first date with your husband/wife/partner.
- Describe your marriage proposal.
- Tell me about your wedding day. Did it go as you imagined?
- Where did you spend your honeymoon?
- What have you learned from your wife/husband/partner?
- Tell me about your happiest moments together.



## WORKING

---

- What job do you currently hold, and what jobs have you held in the past?
- How did you find your way to your current job/career?
- Thinking of the jobs you've held, is there one that stands out as your favorite?
- When you were younger, what did you imagine your job would be?
- What lessons has working taught you?
- If you could choose any career, what would you pick? Why?

## MILITARY SERVICE

---

- When were you in the military? Which branch did you serve in?
- What motivated you to join the military?
- Tell me about basic training. Were you prepared for military life? What were you unprepared for?
- Describe your daily life while in the service.
- What is the most difficult part of being in the military?
- Did you serve in a war zone? When and where?
- What lessons did your service teach you that you still carry with you?
- Describe your transition from military to civilian life. Was it easy or difficult? Why?
- If given the opportunity, would you serve in the military again? Why?

## RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

---

- When you were growing up, what role did religion/spirituality play in your life?
- What does religion/spirituality mean to you, and what role does it play in your life today?
- Have you ever had a profound religious/spiritual experience? Will you tell me about it?
- What important lessons have your religious/spiritual beliefs taught you? Will you share them with me?
- Do you have any favorite religious holidays? What do they mean to you?