

SLCC StoryCorps Interview Tips

Interview Tips (For relatives, friends, neighbors, or loved ones of Storytellers) (from bellmorelibrary.org)

Forty minutes can seem like a long time, but the recording session may go faster than you think. Here are some tips for getting the most from your interview experience.

Think about what you want to talk about during your interview before the recording session. There won't be time to go over every aspect of one's experience during the interview, so choose a few areas you would like to ask your partner about. If you like, you can use the questions list as a guide.

Ask general, open-ended questions that don't assume the answers. An open-ended question is a question that cannot be answered with one word, such as "yes" or "no." Questions such as, "Tell me about..." or "How did you feel when..." are good places to start.

Make the interview a natural conversation. Ask follow-up questions if you are curious about something. If your partner goes off topic, let them do so. You can redirect them to your original question later.

Be patient. Keep in mind that it might take a while for your interview partner to process a question or come up with an answer.

Don't follow up with another question too quickly. Share favorite stories and memories about your interview partner as your conversation goes along. The interview is a great time to tell your interview partner how much they mean to you or to share something you've always wanted to tell them.

Be prepared for an emotional experience. The interview can evoke all kinds of feelings for you and your partner.

End your interview with reflective questions. "What are the most important lessons you've learned?" or "What legacy would you like to leave?" You may also want to thank the Storyteller for sharing with you. The most important thing is to be in the moment, listen carefully, and enjoy your time together!