My Grandparent Interview

101 Questions to Ask Your Grandparents

Grandparent's name: _____

Interviewed by: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Tips

- Ask permission before you record, and let them skip any question.
- Pick 10 to 15 questions per visit, not all 101 at once.
- Bring old photos, and ask "Tell me more about that."
- Write the answers in your own words, or record and write them later.

Childhood

1. Where were you born, and where did you grow up?

2. What did the house you grew up in look like?

3. What is your earliest memory?

4. What games did you play as a child?

5. Who was your best friend growing up, and what did you do together?

6. Did you have a pet? What was its name?

Childhood (continued)

7. What chores did you have to do?

8. What was your favorite food when you were little?

9. What did you get in trouble for?

10. What was your favorite toy?

11. What did your neighborhood sound and smell like?

12. What did you want to be when you grew up?

Childhood (continued)

13. How did you spend summer vacations?

14. What was the best gift you ever got as a child?

15. What scared you when you were small?

School and teenage years

16. What was your school like? How did you get there each day?

17. What was your favorite subject, and which one did you dislike?

18. Who was your favorite teacher, and why?

19. What did kids wear to school back then?

20. What music did you love as a teenager?

21. What did you and your friends do on weekends?

School and teenage years (continued)

22. Did you have a part-time job as a teenager?

23. Did you learn to drive? Who taught you?

24. What was the first movie you remember seeing in a theater?

25. What was a school dance or big event like?

26. What did you do when you finished school?

School and teenage years (continued)

27. What is something you did as a teenager that your parents never found out about?

Family and parents

28. Who raised you, and what were they like? What work did they do?

29. What is something you learned from the people who raised you?

30. Did you have brothers or sisters? What were they like as kids?

31. Did you know your own grandparents? What do you remember about them?

32. Where did your family come from, as far back as you know?

33. What languages were spoken in your home?

Family and parents (continued)

34. What did your family do together for fun?

35. What was dinnertime like in your house?

36. What family stories were told over and over?

37. Is there a family recipe that has been passed down?

38. Who in the family am I most like?

39. What was the happiest time in your family's life?

Love and friendship

40. Who was your first crush?

41. Who have you loved most in your life, and how did you meet?

42. What was your first date like?

43. What do you think makes a relationship last?

44. Who has been your most loyal friend?

45. How did people stay in touch with friends before cell phones?

Love and friendship (continued)

46. What is the most romantic thing anyone ever did for you?

47. What did you do for fun as a young adult?

48. What advice would you give me about choosing friends?

49. Who are the people who changed your life most?

Work and everyday life

50. What was the first work you ever did, paid or unpaid, and what did you earn?

51. What kinds of work have you done over the years, at home or outside it?

52. What was the hardest job you ever had?

53. Did you ever serve in the military? What was that like?

54. How much did things like a gallon of gas, a movie ticket or a loaf of bread cost when you were young?

Work and everyday life (continued)

55. When did your family get its first TV, telephone or car?

56. What was your first home as an adult like?

57. How did you do laundry, cooking and shopping when you were young?

58. What invention made the biggest difference in your life?

59. What did you do when you took a day off?

History and the world

60. What big news events do you remember most clearly?

61. How did your family get the news when you were young: newspaper, radio or TV?

62. How has your hometown changed since you were young?

63. What was the biggest change you have seen in the world?

64. What do you miss most about the old days?

History and the world (continued)

65. What is better about life today?

66. Who were the famous people everyone talked about when you were young?

67. What did you think the future would be like?

68. Have you lived through any hard times that taught you something?

69. What was the farthest you traveled when you were young?

Holidays and traditions

70. What was your favorite holiday as a child, and how did your family celebrate?

71. What special foods did your family make for holidays?

72. What is the most memorable gift you ever gave?

73. How did your family celebrate birthdays?

74. Were there any family traditions you started yourself?

75. What songs did your family sing together?

Holidays and traditions (continued)

76. What was a typical weekend like in your house?

77. Did your family have a religious or cultural tradition that was important to you?

78. What is your favorite holiday memory with our family?

79. Which tradition do you most hope we keep?

Wisdom and advice

80. What is the best advice you ever received?

81. What are you most proud of in your life?

82. What would you tell your 20-year-old self?

83. What is something you changed your mind about as you got older?

84. What makes you happiest these days?

85. What is one mistake you learned the most from?

Wisdom and advice (continued)

86. What is a skill you are glad you learned?

87. How would you like to be remembered?

88. What do you wish you had asked your own grandparents?

89. What is something you still want to do or learn?

90. What book, movie or song changed the way you saw the world?

91. Is there a story from your life you wish more people knew?

Fun and quick questions

92. What is your favorite song of all time?

93. What is the best meal you have ever eaten?

94. If you could live in any decade again, which would it be?

95. What is your favorite movie, and who is your favorite movie star?

96. What is the silliest thing you have ever done?

97. What car, bike or way of getting around do you remember best?

Fun and quick questions (continued)

98. What is your favorite smell?

99. Which place would you most like to visit again?

100. What is the funniest thing that ever happened to you?

101. What do you enjoy most about this time of your life?