

Training Agenda

Community/School Oral History Projects

Objectives:

- Understand the interviewing process
- Learn about the history of the community in which you serve

Training Time: 2–3 hours

Time	Activity	Materials
20 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have members brainstorm in small groups (3 or 4 people) questions they need to ask in order to learn more about the history of the local community in which the AmeriCorps program is located or of the school to which the member is assigned. 2. Ask one member of each group to write down ideas on flip-chart paper. See brainstorming tips below. You may need to review those tips aloud. 	Flip chart and markers
30–40 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Come together as a whole group. 2. Ask one member from each group to be the spokesperson and share the ideas of each group. 3. Combine similar questions and ideas on a new sheet of paper and formulate a list of 15–20 questions for the interview process. 	White board/flip chart and markers
15–20 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a whole group, create a list of older people in the community who would be good interview candidates. (As general as “teacher,” “shop keeper”; as specific as individual names.) Remember that students can help members with the interview process. 2. Assign members, or members assign themselves to a person they will interview. 	White board/flip chart paper/markers
30–45 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review guidelines for conducting oral histories using the history.com website. The link on the resource page gives very complete “fill in the blanks” information and would work best with younger students. 2. In pairs, do practice interviews using the previous list. 	Overhead projector/transparencies of history.com pdf file. Scrap paper and pens for mock interviews.
10 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask members if there are still lingering questions about the oral history process. 2. Give a timeline for interview appointments, completion of the interviews, and completed version of the histories (written as a story? typed in interview form?). The followup workshop will be to share interview results and offer additional assistance. 	Flip chart and markers
5–10	Reflection activity and training wrap up.	Reflection supplies

Brainstorming Tips

- Useful to generate potential solutions to a problem
- Useful for gathering in one place the group's knowledge or perspective on a topic
- Quantity is valued over quality, to encourage creativity and full participation
- No evaluation or comments on input is allowed during brainstorming
- Encourage input that builds on ideas or suggestions on the list
- Accept and record all contributions exactly as stated or check for accuracy if you attempt to summarize or capture key words only
- In later processing, the group may categorize brainstormed responses, summarize, evaluate, prioritize or select items for further discussion or action