

# **10-12th Grade: Creating an oral history**

## Curriculum and tools

## **Create Your Own Oral History**

This high-school lesson plan has been developed to help students understand perspective. By examining the stories of individuals, they can see the different perspectives on an issue. Different people view historical events differently depending on factors like gender, race, socio-economic status, age at the time of the event, and political affiliation. The oral tradition is important, but it is often forgotten about in modern times. Students will learn how they can be utilized. They cannot be taken as 100% true because memories fade or change over time, but they can offer a unique perspective that other sources may not.

Oral history is a great way to preserve the historical record with firsthand accounts. It preserves the stories of individuals who lived through pivotal time periods, which gives a deeper sense of the evocative and emotional aspects of the experience that often are missing from retrospective narratives. Students can be encouraged to record their own experiences and stories for later use. Saving these stories is often a time-sensitive matter because people do not realize the importance of their personal view of historical events until time has passed and memory may be less detailed.

For the assessments, students can either create their own oral histories or analyze other oral histories that exist within an archival collection. They will have access to the archives of the History Center of Lake Forest-Lake Bluff. This way they have the option to learn about the process by reading it or by doing it themselves. The students have the option to create a photostory or video so that they could share the story of their interviewees using pictures of them as well as audio clips from the interviews.

## Create Your Own Oral History (11th Grade)

### Materials Needed:

Teacher:	Student:
Oral Histories from LFLB	Recording Device (Smartphone)
	Questions from activity at LFLB
	Google Slides

### Summary:

Students will learn about the importance of oral histories by creating their own, or analyzing oral histories provided by the museum. Students can choose to present their information through a reflection paper, a video/photostory, or a class presentation.

### Standards:

**D2.His.4.9-12.** Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

**D2.His.6.9-12.** Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.

**D2.His.3.9-12.** Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

### Learning Objective:

Students will be able to evaluate oral histories by synthesizing information into a personal project of their choosing.

**Instructional Procedures:**

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Time</b>
At school, teacher provides background information about topics (Topic ideas: Unions, White Flight, Suburbanization, or the Vietnam War)	Engaging in classroom activities.	n/a
If working with the History Center or an archive, curator/archivist explains to students what an oral history is and why a historian would conduct an oral history.	Students listening	10 minutes
Describe the steps of carrying out an oral history interview, including coming up with questions.	Students listening	10 minutes
Based on topic, as a class, come up with sample topics that should be covered in an oral history.	Students sharing ideas	5 minutes
Based on student sample topics, come up with a couple sample questions as a class.	Students sharing sample question ideas	5 minutes
Break students into small groups and have each group come up with questions to be used in oral history.	Students working in small groups to come up with their own sample questions.	15 minutes

Teacher introduces project (see assessments)	Students get work time	20 minutes
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**Assessment(s): Students can choose one project...**

<b>Oral History w/ Reflection paper</b>	Students will conduct an oral history using the interview questions created with the archivist. They will then write a 4-5 page reflection paper comparing the information gained from their oral history with other primary sources and secondary sources.
<b>Analyze oral history w/ reflection paper</b>	Students will analyze 3 oral histories and synthesize information on the topic of their choosing. They will then write a 4-5 page reflection paper comparing the information from the oral histories to other primary sources and secondary sources.
<b>Oral history w/ Photostory or Video</b>	Students will conduct their own oral histories with the questions created. They will then create a 2-3 minute photostory or video including audio from their interview.
<b>Analyze oral history w/ Photostory or Video</b>	Students will analyze 3 oral histories from The History Center or other online archives and synthesize information on the topic of their choosing. They will then create a 2-3 minute photostory or video including audio from an interview.
<b>Oral history w/ presentation</b>	Students will conduct their own oral histories with the questions created. They will then do their own supplementary research, using primary and secondary sources, and present to the class how their oral history compares to the information they found in their oral history (5-7 minutes).
<b>Analyze oral history w/ presentation</b>	Students will analyze 3 oral histories and synthesize information on the topic of their choosing. They will then do their own supplementary research, using primary and secondary sources, and present to the class how their oral history compares to the information they found in their oral history (5-7 minutes).

**Adaptations or Accommodations needed:**

<b>Learners</b>	<b>Adaptations/Accommodations</b>
Highly Proficient	Students will be able to choose the project they work on and do additional interviews/source compilation and evaluation. They can also articulate the local significance of the event based on their own research and the information from their interviews.
ELL	Students will complete the assignment of their choosing, and they will be provided all background information prior to conducting/ analyzing any interviews. They will also be given additional time as well as the transcripts of all oral histories to analyze.
Struggling Learners	Same as ELL

**Resources:**

LINK TO ORAL HISTORIES

History Center of Lake Forest-Lake Bluff: <https://lflb.passitdown.com/stories>

International Oral History Association: <https://www.ioha.org/media/>

US Holocaust Memorial Museum: <https://www.ushmm.org/collections/the-museums-collections/about/oral-history>

ORAL HISTORY BEST PRACTICES AND SAMPLE QUESTIONS

<https://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices-revised-2009/>