

THE VIETNAM WAR

TELLING THE PENNSYLVANIA STORY

Interviewing Tips

Your children or students likely have family members who were coming of age during the Vietnam Era. They could conduct an audio or video interview to discuss their experiences. Follow these recommendations for a smooth, natural interview.

1. PREPARE, PREPARE, PREPARE

- Research the topics you plan to ask about ahead of time.
- Write your short, open-ended questions down before the interview.
- Become familiar with your recording equipment and test it before beginning the interview.
- Interview in a quiet, well-lit room and avoid background noises such as televisions, phones, chiming clocks, fans, pets, other conversations, etc.
- The more prepared you are, the better the interview will be.

2. RELAX

- Be yourself.
- Don't be tied to just the questions you have prepared.
- For more difficult questions, you can preface the question with "I understand this may be difficult; can you help me understand..." This softens the line of questioning.

3. LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN

- Listen to what the interviewee is saying and follow the conversation.

4. FOLLOW UP

- The best questions may come from asking more questions to dig in a bit deeper.

If Interviewing a Veteran:

The Library of Congress Veterans History Project has a fantastic list of suggested interview questions for Veterans: <https://www.loc.gov/vets/vetquestions.html>.

More great interviewing resources from StoryCorps:

- <https://storycorps.org/do-it-yourself-guide/>
- <https://storycorps.org/participate/great-questions/>