

Biography of a Grandparent

STEP 1- Conduct an Interview

While schools are open for distance learning only, students and their parents are at home and it can be difficult to feel connected to the extended family. If you have a child at home that is in the Intermediate Grades (7 and 8), you can suggest that they interview one (or both) of their grandparents, other relative or friend. That way, they can begin to gather some of the information that they can use to write a biography of that person.

Your son or daughter can use *one, some, or all* of the questions below to guide them. Make sure that your child has a copy of these questions before they start. To make it easier, they can write down the ones they want to ask, leaving enough room between each question to write down the answer. Your child may also want to use a tape recorder so that if their grandparent gives a long answer, they can record it without having to write down the whole response.



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Features of a Biography

Purpose:

To give an account of someone's life



Structure:

Opening statement introduces the subject, and explains why he/she is known

Significant events are ordered chronologically

Closing statement explains how this person will be remembered, and sometimes gives the writer's opinion

Language Features:

Refers to named individuals

Contains dates linked to specific events

Written in the past tense

Can include direct and indirect speech and quotes from other sources

Written in 3rd person

Includes time connectives to link ideas

Events are anecdotal in style (rather than lists of facts), and engage the reader

- Where and when were you born?
- How did your parents choose your name?
- Did you have any childhood nicknames?
- Who used those nicknames (e.g., family, school friends, work colleagues)?
- Where did you grow up?
- Did you live in one house or different places?
- What schools did you go to?
- Which school was your favourite?
- Do you remember a teacher you loved (or hated!)?
- What was your favourite subject at school?
- Did you learn anything off by heart, like a poem or times tables, that you still use today?
- Did your family have any pets?
- Did you have a favourite book or TV series?
- Who were your best friends growing up?
- What did you like to do with these friends?
- What was your favourite snack, meal, dessert, drink?
- Did you have any family traditions?

- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- What was your favourite family holiday and why was it great?
- Did you play any sports at school, or go to any after-school clubs or classes?
- After you finished school, did you start working or did you go to university?
- What was your first job?
- During your adult life have you lived in different places?
- How did you meet Grandma/Grandpa?
- Can you remember when you first saw them?
- How did you get engaged to be married or start living together?
- What was your favourite age to be, and why?
- What are you most proud to have done in your life?



STEP 2 - Use a Graphic Organizer to Plan Your Finished Product

<https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/162833342761214127/>

STEP 3 - Write the Biography

The form is titled 'Biography Research' and includes the following sections:

- Name: []
- Persons Name: []
- Picture: []
- Where and when born: []
- Parents Names: []
- Studied: []
- Overcame: []
- Worked: []
- Challenged: []
- Personal Traits: []
- 3 Interesting Facts:
 - 1) Always - []
 - 2) Never - []
 - 3) Best known for - []

Once your son or daughter has completed the Graphic Organizer, they can start writing the Biography in full sentences. They should complete the Biography in sections so that they can focus on taking the time to write sentences that are complete and grammatically correct.

*You can refer to the activities focusing on Conjunctions that we have included in previous Calendars as they can help Intermediate Level students to write sentences that are more complex.

Once the Biography is complete, you can add illustrations and/or photographs that can make it more personal.

This writing activity can be really rewarding because it is so personal and meaningful and because it captures part of your family history.

Father's Day is coming soon so the Biography could become a cherished gift that your child could make for a grandfather or other special male in their lives.