

Your Grannie Annie Interview

Young People Learning and Sharing Family Stories – www.TheGrannieAnnie.org

The Grannie Annie invites you to interview one of your family storykeepers to learn about your family's history. You will use the information from this interview to write your Grannie Annie story. The tips below will help you make good use of your interview time and will help you write the best possible story.

1. Identify your family storykeepers

- Think about your family members—**ask yourself who enjoys telling stories about the past.**
- With the help of your parent(s) or guardian, **schedule an interview** with one of these people. Family get-togethers, such as Thanksgiving or winter holidays, might provide a good opportunity. If you seldom see this family storykeeper, consider a telephone interview.

2. Plan for your interview

- **Decide which family or historical events, or family members you'd like to learn about** in your interview. Consider asking about hard times as well as good times.
- **Write down some questions** that you'd like to have answered. Try to put your questions in a logical order. Write only two or three questions on a page (with space between them) so that you'll have room to write your storykeeper's responses. Allow space even if you expect a very short answer; your storykeeper might share surprising information with you.
- If you'd like to record your interview, ask your storykeeper if he or she would be willing for you to do so on videotape or audiotape. If you are going to videotape the interview, ask someone else to handle the camera for you so that you can focus on the interview.

3. Conduct the interview

- ***Listen* to what your storykeeper tells you.**
- **Take notes.** You needn't write everything your storykeeper says, but write enough so that you will understand your notes later.
- When you hear something that you'd like to know more about—either because it is interesting or because it is unclear—**ask a follow-up question.** Your interview should be a conversation, not just a long sequence of questions and short answers.
- Try to capture details that will enable you to vividly recreate your storykeeper's experience for your readers. Looking together at old photos, letters, newspaper articles, or objects from the past can inspire more detail.
- Be sure to **thank your storykeeper** for the interview. A thank-you note would further show your appreciation.

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4. Fill the holes (Not always necessary)

- As you write your story, you may find that some of your information is incomplete or you may think of other questions that you wish you'd asked. Some of those questions may be answered through research or by asking another family member. If you can't find the answers to your questions, plan for a follow-up interview (perhaps by phone), and then contact your storykeeper to get the information you need.

5. Share your story

- When you have finished writing, revising, and editing your story, **give a neatly written copy to this family storykeeper** who shared an experience with you and made your story possible. You may want to bind, decorate, and/or illustrate your story.