

Oral History

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This is a Primary Level worksheet and is suitable for children from Class 2-4.

We all have stories to tell about our lives and our experiences. These stories are a rich source of information about where we live, times we live in, our culture, traditions and belief systems.

When we hear stories told by older people, or people from different countries, cultures or background, we get a peek into their lives. The stories become windows through which we can see how their lives are similar to or different from ours.

Trying to understand a history of people, events, places or culture based on stories people narrate from their memory is called Oral History.

Activity 1

Part 1: Think of an interesting incident from your childhood. Narrate the incident to a classmate.

Do you remember the incident or do you remember what someone in your family told you about it? Write it down here.

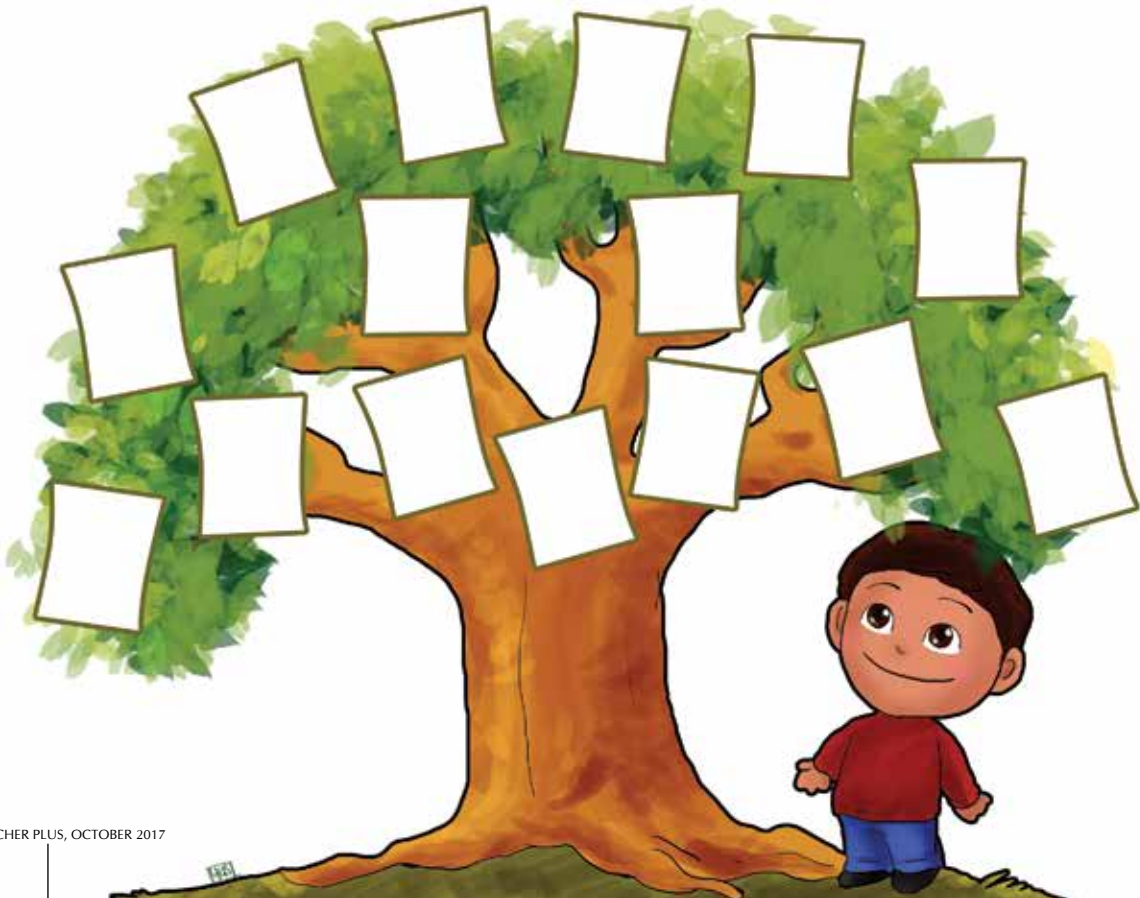
Part 2: Listen to a friend tell a story from his/her childhood. Make notes while he/she is narrating. Now narrate it to another friend.

Notes

Activity 2

Find out about your family history.

Part 1: Make your family tree like the one given below. Stick pictures of family members and write their names.



Part 2: Make a list of all the family members in the family tree and find out the following details about them.



Name	Date of Birth	Place of Birth	Your relationship with them (granny, aunt, etc.)

Activity 3

You have a school project. You must write a mini biography of one person who you meet daily but don't talk to often, like a neighbour, house help (maid), driver, gardener, milkman, fruit seller, vegetable vendor, etc.

Part 1: Make a list of things you should know to write their bio.

List

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Part 2: Make an interview script. List 10-12 questions you will ask the subject of your biography.

Questions
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.

Activity 4

You prepared an interview script to collect information about your subject for the mini biography.

Part 1: Now interview the person and fill in the info in the script you created. Listen carefully and jot down notes in the correct boxes. Don't be shy to ask questions again if you missed important information.

Questions	Answers
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	



Part 2: Use the information you gathered in the interview and write a mini biography. Visit these websites to read a few biographies before you begin.

- <http://mrnussbaum.com/explorers/earhart>
- http://www.ducksters.com/biography/explorers/neil_armstrong.php
- <http://gardenofpraise.com/ibdghandhi.htm>

Activity 5

Compile a history of your city.

Part 1: Talk to older people and gather the following information about your city. You can also add other information not listed here.

Name

Old name or names, if any.

What state is it in?

Was it always part of the same state?

Names of the oldest buildings or places in the city.

Names of the oldest markets and roads in the city.

What did the city look like 50 years ago?

When was the city born?

Interesting facts about the city from the past.

Did any interesting event happen in the city during the Independence movement?

Did kings and queens ever rule over the city? If yes, collect a few names.

Part 2: Write a Wikipedia entry for your city in 100-200 words.

Activity 6

For the school magazine, you have to write a brief history of your school.

Talk to the principal, teachers and help staff. Take notes and write the 200-word history of your school.

Activity 7



Part 1: Identify the oldest person in your family. Ask them about transport (plane, train, bus, roads, etc.) and communication (phones, mobiles, etc.) when they were children. Take notes.

Notes

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Part 2: Write the differences and similarities in the mode of transportation and communication today and in the past.

Activity 8

Interview your grandmother/grandfather and make a video of them talking about their life. Use the mobile phone to record. Edit it in the computer lab to make a 2-minute bio. Share it with your class. Take permission from the person you interviewed to share it.

Here are a few sample questions you can ask them:

When and where were you born?

What was it like when you were my age?

What were the most important things that have happened to you?

Activity 9

Set up a hunt for the oldest photograph your family owns. Ask your parents/grandparents for the oldest picture in the family. Find out all you can about the photograph – the people in it, when it was taken, where it was taken. Try and find out about the daily routine of the person or people in the photograph. Write a summary.

Before you embark on this hunt, you can explore this website: <http://www.indianmemoryproject.com/>.

Activity 10

Do you know what your parents or grandparents played with as children?

Talk to five adults in your family. Ask them to tell you about their favourite game or toy they remember playing as a child.

If it is a toy, ask them to describe the toy in detail. Make a sketch.

If it is a game, ask them to describe how the game was played. Write down the rules of the games.

This worksheet has been developed by Neelu Singh. She is a writer and photographer specializing in creating learning content. She has written scripts for children's TV shows, created e-learning content for K-12 and corporates, and her photo stories have been published in national magazines. She can be reached at <neelu.sng@gmail.com>.