



Voices of Resilience

A 9/11 Living History Interview



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What is a Living History Interview?

Living History Interviews gather information directly from people who personally experienced major historical events. They give us immediate, personal connections to events in the lives of the people around us. By learning directly from those who were there, we have the opportunity to learn about their emotions, thoughts, and experiences.

Why is Living History important?

Rather than learning about significant historical events by reading facts in a textbook or on a webpage, Living History allows us to learn through individual experiences and personal memories. Collecting oral or written histories through Living History Interviews is an important method of recording historical events and keeping individual memories alive.

Choosing an Interviewee:

Living History is about the experiences of someone who personally remembers the historical event. In the case of September 11, 2001, many people who are now adults will remember where they experienced the news, their own personal reactions to watching the events unfold, and how 9/11 changed their lives and their communities.

Tips for Mindful Interviews:

When interviewing about any emotional or traumatic event, it is important to ask thoughtful questions and be respectful of your interviewee's feelings. Remember that this person's memories may be emotionally difficult.

Keep In Mind:

- **Respect:** Be respectful of your interviewee's feelings.
- **Consideration:** Allow them time to consider the question and answer without interruption.
- **Attention:** Ask follow-up questions that show them you are listening, while continuing to respect their feelings.
- **Understanding:** If you believe that an interview question will be too difficult for your interviewee, ask another, less emotional question, or thank them and politely end the interview.
- **Appreciation:** Thank your interviewee for helping you learn about this important event.

Interviewer (Student) Name: _____

Interviewee Name: _____

Living History Interview Questions

1) How did you experience the news of the attacks on September 11, 2001?

2) How did you see the community come together in response?

3) Who was a “helper” you remember from that time?

4) What did an ordinary day feel like in the weeks afterward (at school, at work, in your neighborhood)?

5) What would you like future generations to remember about 9/11?

Thank your interviewee for their time and for sharing their experience with you.

Interviewer's Reflection

After the interview, think about what you learned and the emotions of your interviewee.

1) What is *your* main response to their words and memories?

2) What have *you* learned about their personal experience of 9/11?

3) How have you benefited by learning directly from someone who experienced a historic event?

4) What significant historical event have *you* lived through that someone could interview you about? How could your point of view help future generations understand personal experiences of that event?
