



STORY COLLECTOR'S KIT

Choose Your Event

Online

In-Person

Possible Dates: _____

Possible Locations: _____

Theme Ideas

War Stories

Immigration Stories

Bygone Eras

Faith Stories

Career Stories

Community Stories

Family Stories

Racial Reconciliation Stories

Holiday Tradition Stories

Make Them Comfortable

One of the big challenges of being a Story Collector is learning how to make your storytellers comfortable and willing to open up. Sometimes they'll feel most comfortable in their own home, but other times that's the last place you can expect a productive conversation. Consider inviting them to your home or to a neutral location (preferably where you have a bit of control over noise and light). Have water on hand for them—we all know how talking a lot will dry out your mouth and throat! And you could also consider offering a cup of tea or coffee to get them relaxed.

Make sure they know that you care about their stories—that their stories matter, they're important. Perhaps explain a bit about why you're interested in collecting these particular stories, and point out that after they've shared them and you've uploaded them to SeeingtheStory.com, they'll be available for their families and friends to read, watch, or listen to. **Be sure to have them sign the release form**, but make it clear that their stories are always their own; they're just agreeing to let us share them.

As they tell their story, chime in with questions and reactions—the interviewer can be a crucial part of a story too!

Be sure to thank them afterward, no matter how you think the telling went. You can always have a follow-up Collection to dig deeper or to cover another topic!



FILL YOUR BAG

- Paper
- Pens
- Sticky Notes
- Pencils
- Release Forms
- Laptop or tablet (for quicker recording of written stories)
- Audio recorder (cell phone, handheld recorder, microphone that connects to computer, etc.)
- Video recorder (cell phone, digital camera with video capability [be sure to know if your camera has a limit to its recording time! Many cut off at 20 minutes], video camera, laptop with webcam)
- Business card or thank you notes with your contact information
- Address book or something to take down their information
- Category and tag list to fill out as you go



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Thematic Questions

- War Stories - Did anyone in your family serve in a war? What did they do? Where did they go?
- Immigration stories ~ How did your family come to live in this area? In this country? Do you know any of the stories of their journey?
- Bygone eras ~ Do you have any stories from the Great Depression? From the turn of the century? From the Roaring Twenties? From the Sixties? From ... ?
- Faith stories ~ How did you or your family come to faith? Was anyone in your family in the ministry? What are the most life-changing lessons you've learned about faith?
- Career stories ~ What is your career? How did you get involved in it? Was it always a dream of yours? What do like about it? What do you hate about it?
- Community stories ~ What is something unique to your town? Is it an event? An item? An interesting history? Tell me the story about it.
- Family stories ~ Tell me a story about your childhood. How many siblings do you have? Where did you grow up? What has changed about that area or neighborhood since then? Where did you go to school? Did you like school? Tell me about your family members. Did you know your grandparents? Great-grandparents?
- Holiday tradition stories ~ What is one of your favorite holiday traditions in your family? How did it begin?

General Questions

- Where did you grow up? Where did you go to school?
- Where's your family from? When did they come to this region, state, country, etc?
- What was the most challenging thing you ever lived through? What lessons did you learn from it?
- How did you meet your spouse?
- What jobs have you held? Which was the most interesting? The one you worked the longest? What did you love about it? What did you hate?
- What do you see as the biggest difference between the world today and from when you were a kid?
- What do you think sets you apart from others around you? What do you wish others understood about your life?
- If you could talk directly to a grandchild or great-grandchild who isn't even born yet, what life lessons would you want to make sure you passed along to them?
- What's the most dangerous thing you ever did?



- What's the most interesting trip you ever took or place you've been?
- If you were talking to a friend who didn't believe like you do, look like you do, have the same health issues you have, or live the same sort of life you live, what would tell them to help them understand what has made you who you are?
- What event or series of event do you feel has done the most to shape you into the person you are today?
- Did you know your grandparents? Great-grandparents? Great-great? Did they tell you any stories that have stuck with you?
- How many siblings do you have? Are you close to them?
- How many children do you have? Do they live near you? What do you remember most from when you first became a parent?

Follow-Up Questions

- Would you like me to send you the interview once it's completed?
- Would you like to talk again about another topic?
- Do you know anyone else whose stories you'd like to see preserved?

Do you have suggestions of things that could be added to the kit to benefit other Story Collectors? Please email them to share@seeingthestory.com!

Download your Collector's badge at <https://seeingthestory.com/story-collector-kit/>



INTERVIEW RELEASE

PARTICIPANT

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail address: _____

PRODUCER: _____ (“The Producer”)

PUBLISHER: Seeing the Story (“The Publication”)

DATE: _____

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Title _____ Address _____

Phone number _____ Date _____