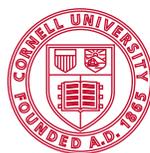


CORNELL YOUTH IN SOCIETY PROGRAM



Cornell University

Life Stories Teacher's Guide



Credits

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Why *Life Stories*?

Youth will learn how to engage adults in telling their *Life Stories*. Youth work in teams to interview adults who interest them, and create products (such as articles or pod casts) to communicate what they learned to others. *Life Stories* is phase 1 of the **Community Mobilization for Mentoring Youth**. This project will increase opportunities for youth and adults to work together on common goals. In phase 2, youth and adults will assess and develop *Community Action Plans* to increase opportunities for youth and adults to work together. Phase 3 opens an array of *Community Opportunities*, such as service learning (see Guides), jobs, internships, and training.

These opportunities for youth and adults to work together toward common goals will encourage mentoring relationships to develop naturally. Youth who have natural mentors (i.e., not in a mentoring program) are more likely to enter higher education. The **Community Mobilization** project will open opportunities to all youth to contribute to their communities' vitality and to reflect on and pursue their goals, especially via higher education or training.

In turn, the project will increase the youth development capacity of adults and of community organizations, specifically by building opportunities for: supportive relationships, sense of efficacy and mattering, and skill building (see *Logic Model*). It will create new opportunities to promote youth development, especially connectedness to adults, school, and community; civic engagement; and planfulness. We will simultaneously develop and test a program, conduct evaluation research on the program itself, and conduct basic research on how natural mentoring relationships form and foster youth development, and how to mobilize communities.

The project is based on the hypothesis that youth are more likely to make and follow rewarding life plans, succeed in secondary school, and engage in their communities when they have opportunities to work alongside adults to learn about their communities, make plans and take action to improve them. Such goal-directed activities are optimal for fostering natural mentoring relationships. By inter-

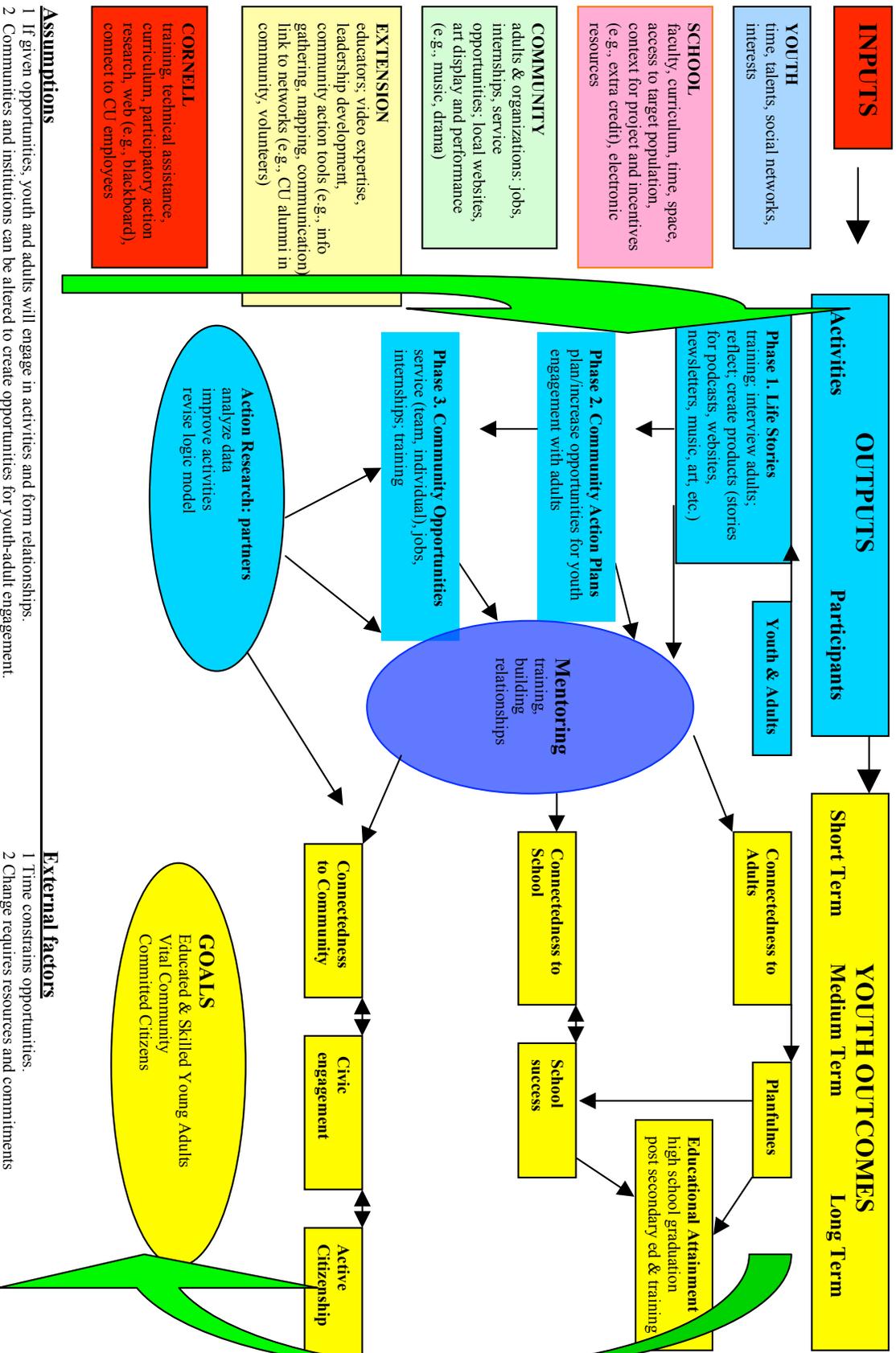
viewing adults and then creating and communicating their life stories youth will simultaneously learn about how adults have made satisfying lives in their communities and create conditions for developing enduring relationships with the adults whose stories they hear and then communicate to others. The *Life Stories* will also provide important information for use in joint planning and action to make communities more supportive of youth.

The project was initially developed for rural communities in NYS and elsewhere, to address "Brain drain" and loss of the young adult population, and the decision of youth who remain to drop out or not to pursue post-secondary education. If rural youth are to contribute to the vitality of their communities, they must graduate from high school and then pursue post-secondary education and training. Young adults must feel sufficiently engaged with those communities to remain in or return to them and to be active citizens.

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Logic Model: Community Mobilization for Mentoring Youth



Local task force

The local Task Force will include 10-15 members who represent a broad spectrum of the community (e.g., youth, school faculty and administrators, parents, community organizations, business, and educators from the county Cornell Cooperative Extension)

The Task Force will:

- Advise and oversee the project about goals, objectives, and implementation strategy, in regular meetings and individually
- Confer with constituency groups and others as well
 - e.g., youth members will be part of a leadership team, and confer with peers about project issues as well as parents, community members and teachers.
 - e.g., extension educator and specialist will disseminate findings within the extension system.
 - teachers may consult other faculty and administrators about increasing project linkages to existing curriculum
- Perform specific tasks to aid the project
 - help secure additional resources
 - assist in public relations, publicity
- Serve as key contacts to identify and attract others to participate as needed
 - link to other organizations and individuals
 - e.g., recruit adults as potential interviewees for Life Stories
- Participate and take leadership in the Community Action Planning phase

Getting organized

- Close gaps in information about project
- Convene a local task force (see Task force purposes)
- Make a timeline
- Decide what shape the Life Stories project might take in your community
 - When? (during/after school, summer; how many weeks or months?)
 - Where?
 - Who will be the teacher/leader?
 - What is the target group of students? How many?
 - What is Cornell's role
- Designate a team (from the local task force?) to be at an orientation for the Life Stories project
 - two youth
 - a teacher/leader of the project
 - a school counselor
 - maybe others

Materials

Digital recorders, transcribers
Digital cameras
Video camera
Life Stories: Youth Workbook
Life Stories: Teacher's Guide

Activities — Getting started

1 A favorite adult: Share a story

Purpose

To introduce youth to the *Life Stories* project.

Objectives

1. Youth introduce themselves (if needed).
 2. Youth identify a favorite adult outside their family and share a story.
 3. Youth learn about the *Life Stories* project objectives.
 4. Youth participate actively right away.
 5. Youth receive a *Life Stories: Youth Workbook* and learn about purposes.
-

Sit in a circle.

Structure activity for time available, number of youth, familiarity of youth with each other and facilitator, etc.

Introductions

5 minutes

Ask youth to introduce themselves, and identify a favorite adult, not related to them, by how they know them.

- Your first name
- Identify a favorite adult outside your family, such as
 - my football coach, my track coach, swim, etc.
 - my English teacher, Spanish, math, etc.
 - my advisor
 - my piano teacher
 - a family friend
 - my neighbor
 - a minister in my faith community
 - an adult in my faith community
 - my supervisor at work
 - my 4-H leader
 - my scout leader

Share a story

10 minutes

Ask the youth to share a story about why that person is a favorite. Probe for details if time allows.

Why did you choose that person as a favorite?

Sample Probes

- Oh? Really?
- Tell us more about that.
- How did that happen?
- When was that?

Summary

10 minutes

Summarize discussion and give an overview of the project. For example:

- We just heard about some of your favorite people
- I heard you talking about several things. Your stories featured
 - What you admired about these adults: what they achieved, their pathways, their challenges, how they treat youth, their values, etc.
 - And their special relationship with you, how they made a difference in your life.
- This phase of the project gives you an opportunity to learn about the life stories of adults outside your family who are interesting to you
 - Learn about choices they made in their lives, especially regarding where to live and how to make a career,
 - Learn about relationships they had with adults outside their family when they were your age, and how these adults made a difference in their lives,
 - Learn how to interview adults, to help them tell their life stories,
 - Create products from your interviews, such as news features for the web, videos, etc.,
 - Learn how to work in teams and take leadership to do all this!
- In the next phases of the **Community Mobilization Project**, you will
 - clarify your dreams and hopes,
 - identify & create opportunities to work with adults (e.g., service learning, internships, youth jobs)

Introduce and distribute *Life Stories: Youth Workbook*

Point out three workbook sections

1. **Journal:** for your eyes only, if you wish! You will find questions about each activity we do together, giving you a chance to reflect on what is important to you.
2. **Guides:** tools we will develop in our sessions together, such as team responsibilities, interview questions, found in the middle section of your notebook,
3. **Notes:** during our sessions together or after, a place for your notes about what you want to remember, important points, your questions, your ideas about interview questions, your observations, etc.

1

Journal

Record your reflections on a question below or related to Activity 1.

1. You shared a story about a favorite adult outside your family (e.g., a teacher, coach, a neighbor, etc.) Describe why this person is so special to you?
 - a. What qualities make this person a favorite?
 - b. Why are these qualities important to you?
2. Describe a time in which an adult outside your family supported your dream or hope?
 - a. How were you supported?
 - b. How did this impact you?

2 What is natural mentoring? *Sister Act II* film clip

Purpose

To become aware of natural mentoring around you.

Objectives

1. Youth learn about natural mentoring by watching and discussing an example from a film.
 2. Youth reflect on their experiences with mentoring.
 3. Youth think about what they would like from a mentor.
-

Introduce activity

3 minutes

Teacher/leader: A group of Ithaca youth and Cornell students identified some movies that they thought included good examples of young people who had close relationships with adults outside their families. We're going to view scenes from *Sister Act II* that illustrate close relationships and how they can work.

How many of you have seen *Sister Act II*?

This clip shows Rita, a high school student, with a gift for singing, who has quit the choir. Three different people try to help her figure out what to do.

View *Sister Act II* film clip: 53:00 – 59:00

6 minutes

Scenes:

- Rita, singing with a friend, is asked why she is not in choir. "Not exactly living in land of opportunity. So what's the point?"
- Sister encourages Sister Mary Clarence (Whoopi Goldberg) to talk to Rita, she needs help.
- Sister Mary Clarence talks to youth, confronts her, gives her Rilke book.
- Rita reads book by poet.
- Youth joins choir, welcomed by Sister Mary Clarence.

Comments on *Sister Act II*

5 minutes

Teacher/leader: Any comments about Whoopi Goldberg's character (Sister Mary Clarence)?

- Acted as both in your face and funny.
- How did Sister Mary Clarence encourage Rita to use her talents?
- Not everyone who helps/advises a youth has the same style.
- Some young people have adults outside their families who give them advice and support.

Small group discussion about adult help**10-20 minutes***Teacher/leader:*

- Tell us about a time when an adult outside your family helped you in some way?
- How did you know that adult? (teacher, coach, employer, neighbor, etc.) You don't have to give a name.

*First respondent, then go around circle in order. If "no" response: OK, we'll come back to you.**Facilitator/group recorder writes responses on newsprint.*

- Adult role
- Type of interaction

Probe for detail

- Tell me more about that.
- When did that occur?
- Where did that happen?

2**Journal***Record your reflections on a question below or related to Activity 2.*

1. Identify a favorite film or novel that illustrates a close relationship between an adolescent and an adult outside the family.
 - a. How did they know each other?
 - b. In what way was the adult important to the youth? Why? Describe a scene that illustrates how this adult mattered to the youth.
2. If you could have another adult in your life, describe the kinds of things you would like to do together, talk about, and/or learn about.

3 Who's in our community? A photo portrait

Purpose

To create a portrait of adults with potential for diverse life stories within the community.

Objectives

1. Youth take photos of people they might be interested in getting to know.
 2. Youth understand their role as “reporters” to create a portrait of adults in the community who might have interesting life stories to tell.
 3. Youth interact with an adult contact who helps identify potential adults and photo opportunities.
 4. Youth explore their community by photographing everyday events – just the regular happenings that formulate life.
 5. Youth begin to identify an adult they will work with on their Life Story.
-

Introduce photo activity

Facilitator explains activity:

- Youth will take photos of adults outside their family who might have an interesting life story to tell.
- Cameras are available. Photos can be downloaded on a project computer and youth will create a photo portrait of who's in the community.
- This activity is intended to help you begin to figure out whom you would like to interview for a life story.

Brainstorm/discussion

Facilitator leads brainstorming, lists responses. Discussion follows brainstorming.

1. Where could you find adults outside your family who might be candidates for the life stories?
 - a. What “criteria” might make these life stories interesting to you? (e.g., family, community volunteer, work, interests, grew up in community, education, character, role in an organization, etc.)
2. Who can help you find those adults?
 - a. Who could approach these contacts?
 - b. How could they help you?
3. How much time do you need to accomplish this project?

(Facilitator could note that this activity could continue simultaneously with other life story training activities.)

4. Do you want to do this with a partner(s)? If so, choose teams (of 2, 3, 4 youth).

Make a timeline

Youth teams make their timeline for the photos (such as)

- Strategy to get photos
 - possible adults outside family
 - possible contact who might help identify people/locations for photos
- Date(s) team will need camera
- Download photos
- Input into photo portrait of who's in the community

Suggestion

Teacher/leader notes that this activity is intended to help youth begin to identify potential candidates for the life story interviews. You will have two things to figure out over the coming weeks:

1. Whom do you want to interview? Use your Journal to record your ideas to help you figure that out.
2. Whom will you work with on the life story? You will form teams of 2-5 youth to work on the life story project. You should talk together about possible candidates over the next few weeks, sharing ideas about adults who would be interesting to you and why.

3**Journal**

Reflect on one or more questions below, to help you decide whom you would like to interview:

1. List one or more persons you would like to interview? Why?
2. Describe the kinds of things you would like to find out about in a life story interview. Why?

4 Team roles

Purpose

To enable all youth to take responsibility for project tasks and to work together as a team.

Objectives

1. Figure out how to conduct the timeline and story-telling interview as a team.
2. Figure out logistics for the timeline and the story-telling interview.
3. Make a check list to prepare for the timeline and the story-telling interview.

Teacher Notes: Once youth have formed teams and decided whom to interview, they need to figure out together what they need to do to get ready for the Timeline and the Interview. Encourage youth to distribute responsibilities, giving opportunities for all to take some leadership roles in one or more tasks. Teams record decisions/actions on the Guide: Team Checklist.

Contact adult for timeline and interview

1. Figure out what you need to say.
 - a. want to meet for 2 interviews
 - b. amount of time
 - c. purpose of interviews
 - d. why that is important
2. How will you contact the adult?
 - a. letter? Should this be uniform for the project?
 - b. If so, who will sign?
 - c. agreements to make docs public, right to see draft, etc.
3. Follow-up by phone.
 - a. who will call
 - b. get adult's response if willing or not
 - c. set a date
 - d. set a place

Timeline

1. Who will be the interviewer during the "timeline" interview?
 - a. At what point should other members of the team ask questions?
 - i. clarifying understanding?
 - ii. other?
2. Who will draw the timeline?
 - a. Add events to the timeline during the timeline interview?
3. Will the "timeline" be photographed or videotaped?
 - a. Who will do this?
4. Who will edit the "timeline draft" for use during the interview?
 - a. team members may want to work together, and divide roles
5. Who will modify the interview questions using information from the timeline?'

Story-telling interview

1. Who will be the interviewer during the recorded interview?
 - a. primary responsibility for asking the questions:
 - i. follow-up questions
 - ii. probes
2. Who will take notes?
3. You will need to note some responses for later follow-up during the interview
 - a. what adults mentioned as most important
 - b. key incidents, items to ask for detail about
 - c. items you don't understand
 - d. Best for a couple of you to take notes?
4. How will team members communicate with one another during the interview?
 - a. What if the person who is not interviewing has a question?
5. Decide on other roles:
 - a. digital camera pictures
 - b. video camera if needed
6. Test recording equipment
 - a. Day before interview, prepare all equipment/supplies
 - i. Camera/recorder
 - ii. Tapes
 - iii. Batteries
 - iv. Paper
 - v. Pens/pencils
 - vi. Interview questions
 - vii. Etc.
7. Review interview questions
 - a. Review or practice exactly how the interview will be conducted

4**Journal**

Record your thoughts about your responsibilities on the team: Your confidence about what you will do? Any fears? Other?

5 Life story products: Media choices

Purpose

To help youth shape a life story into a final product.

Objectives

1. Students identify examples of media products for the Life Stories.
2. Students get familiar with purposes of different media.
3. Students become familiar with the concept of media-audience fit.

Materials

- Blackboard, newsprint, or other to record brainstorming activity
 - Colored markers/chalk
 - Handouts of “Interview with photography contest winner”
-

Facilitator may use/adapt the following steps to prompt students to explore possible media and their fit to different audiences.

Instructions

25 minutes or less

Students sit in a circle, so that they can see each other and share ideas easily

Facilitator asks questions to establish students' familiarity with popular social networking sites on the web

2 minutes

- How many of you have a MySpace page?
- What about Facebook? If you do not have one, have you heard about it?
- How about Youtube? How many times do you go on Youtube?
- Are there other sites that you use?

Youth discuss common features of these websites

5 minutes

What kinds of things are on these websites (My Space/Facebook & Youtube)?

Probe for details as needed.

Who uses these websites? Who looks at these websites?

Point out differences within sites

Youth reflect on media choices for audience & message**5 minutes**

You have control over how much information you make public, communicate to your audience. Reflect on what kind of media best suit your purpose, for example?

- Would MySpace be an effective way to inform adults about the Life Stories?
- Would MySpace be an effective way to inform youth about the Life Stories?

Youth brainstorm a broader list of media**5 minutes**

What are other types of media that you could develop for your Life Stories?

List responses on newsprint

Youth identify potential audiences for media**5 minutes**

What is the audience you are thinking about for (e.g., podcast, journal article)?

Facilitator writes audience initial(s) (e.g., employer, parent, community member, teacher, youth) after each product on list.

Youth generate principles to guide their media choice**5 minutes**

What are some things to keep in mind as you decide what kind of media you use?

5**Journal**

Record your reflections on the question below or related to this activity.

List your preferred media choices for your *Life Stories* product. Record:

1. Your target audience for your product.
2. Strengths or disadvantages using your preferred media to reach your target audience.
3. How will this media product influence your team preparation steps?

Activities — Learn to interview

6 Introduce interviewing techniques

Purpose

To introduce interviewing techniques to enrich a story about an adult who mattered to the interviewee.

Objectives

1. Observe storytelling techniques.
2. Work as a group to build understanding of the story and interviewing techniques.
3. Create respect for different perspectives about a story.
4. Identify key questions.
5. Identify probing questions.
6. Reflect on the meaning of the interviewee's story for students' personal lives.
7. Write in journals about one or more things learned about interviewing techniques or about the story's meaning for students' personal lives.

Materials

A digital audio recorder, a digital video camera, a digital still camera. Video and audio recordings can be used as examples, specific questions and responses can be played back.

Introduction

The interviewer/facilitator introduces activity

- Students will sit in a circle as Observers. Interviewer and adult storyteller (e.g., class teacher, visitor) sit in middle, in the “fishbowl.” Teacher/leader introduces interviewer and brief background of the adult storyteller (introductory remarks about their livelihood, their birthplace, their education, etc.)
- Interviewer will ask the storyteller to identify one or more adults outside their family, important to him/her during their high school years. Interviewer will follow-up with more detailed questions for a few minutes. Observers actively listen and are quiet during the interview, but will discuss what they observed after the interview.
- After a few minutes, the interviewer will stop and ask youth to ask the storyteller additional questions.

Students' assignment during the fishbowl activity

- Remember what the storyteller says.
- Notice the interviewer's key questions.
- Think about what else you would like to know or are curious about.
- What other question(s) would you ask the storyteller?

First interviewer questions

7 minutes +

1. When you were in high school, did one or more adults outside your family, 21 years or older, influence you in important ways, matter to you, or make a difference in your life?
2. IF YES, Could you name one adult and how you knew him/her? First name is sufficient (or pseudonyms). I just need to be able to refer to this person as we speak. [Interviewer may ask storyteller to name several adults, and then ask about those relationships if time allows after discussing the first adult, or on another day.]
3. Initial Connection: How did you meet _____ ?

4. Length of relationship: When did you meet _____? (year in high school, or earlier)
5. What kinds of things did you do together? Where?
6. In what way did _____ influence you, (matter to you, make a difference in your life)?

Probes

Oh? Um hmmm.

Can you tell me more about . . . (that)?

Can you tell me about a time when you did that. . . ?

 when . . . (that happened)?

 how. . . (that happened)?

How did... (that) come about?

When was that (at what point in time after you first met)?

Why was that important to you at that time?

 In what way was that important to you?

 How did that matter?

 What kinds of things did you talk about? (e.g., values? goals?)

Student interview questions

5 minutes +

Facilitator/Interviewer asks students:

- Is there something else that one of you would like to ask the storyteller?
- What else would you like to know?
- What are you curious about?

Student observers' discussion

10 minutes +

1. What caught your interest? Why was that?
2. What did you see as the most important parts of the story? Let's make a list. . . .
3. What key questions worked to get the storyteller to tell his/her story?
For example, when the storyteller talked about _____, what had the interviewer asked?
4. Interviewers follow up their key question with questions designed to get more information about the topic they already mentioned. These follow-up questions are called probes. Did you notice any probes? What were they?
5. Interviewer to the storyteller: Sometimes when a person is interviewed, she/he learns something new about him/herself by telling the story.
 - a. Did that happen to you?
 - b. What did you learn?
 - c. What about the interview made that happen?
6. Sometimes you will learn something new about yourself when you hear a story and think about it.
 - a. Did that happen to you?
 - b. What did you learn?
 - c. What about the interview made that happen?

6

Journal

Record your reflections on one or more of the questions below. Or record other thoughts related to today's activity.

1. Describe something that you learned about the storyteller that surprised you.
2. Describe an interviewing technique that you noticed.
3. What else did you want to know? What questions would you ask to get that information?

7 Key Questions

Purpose

To introduce the concept of key questions, that are open-ended questions.

Objective

1. Identify open vs. closed-ended questions.
2. Reflect on how to interview as a team.
3. Observe the importance of remembering your role as interviewer.

Background

Explain the difference between open-ended questions (responses open thoughts and reflections, opinions about an issue, descriptions) and closed-ended questions (responses with only one answer usually result in one word, yes or no).

Film clip from *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* 2 minutes

Scene 1: Tibby and Bailey interview Brian Scene location: DVD chapter 14 (40:50 – 42:50), 2 minutes

Discussion questions 15 minutes

1. To begin the interview, Tibby says, “So, you prefer to spend all day here at the Quick Mart instead of out in the real world?”
 - a. How did Brian respond?
 - b. What kind of judgment was Tibby making about what Brian was doing by asking this question?
 - c. How would you have responded?
2. Bailey responds to Tibby’s question by saying, “Well, maybe he finds the world of Dragon Slayer more interesting. Tell us about it Brian.”
 - a. How did Brian respond to Bailey’s question?
 - b. Do you think that Bailey’s key question was more effective than Tibby’s? Why?
3. Did you notice any “silent cues” that Tibby and Bailey used?
 - a. What were they?
 - b. What worked?
4. At the end of the clip, what were Tibby and Bailey doing with Brian?
 - a. Can you think of any strategies that they might use to keep on target?
 - b. How would you have handled this situation?

7	Journal
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You want to get your friend’s reaction to a recent event, movie, or game. Draft a question that is open-ended. 2. What risks could result from opening an interview or a conversation with a judgmental question? Can you think of a situation where this has happened to you? How did you respond? 3. Any ideas about how Tibby and Bailey could have handled the conflict between their need to finish the interview and their desire to play the video game in a positive way? Has something like this ever happened to you? 	

8 Probing

Purpose

To introduce probing techniques.

Objectives

1. Learn to get people to tell their stories.
2. Learn to probe for more detail.
3. Learn to check for understanding.

Facilitator asks two volunteers to read an interview excerpt.

Background

Jane describes how their youth group leader supported them in selecting high school activities that would help them with their college applications.

Interviewer: You said earlier on that she would say, “So what activities are you in?” What was going on with that?

Jane: Like, um, because we have, usually have, in the summer especially, weekly readings. In the school year, we have monthly readings. And so it’s just more of a like an update on your life. And you’re like, “Oh, I think I’m going to join this.” And then she’d ask, “Oh, is your schedule too full?” or, you know, “That’s a good idea.” Like, one time I wanted to do Mock Trial and, at the same time. Oh, and get a job.

Interviewer: Um.

Jane: And she was like, you know “I don’t know if you can handle that, attempting the work and school work. I don’t want you to not have enough time to focus on school work and Mock Trial.” Mock Trial is very time consuming in my high school. But I ended up doing all three, school, Mock Trial, and work.

Interviewer: School, Mock Trial, work too.

Jane: And I eventually had to quit work, because I couldn’t devote enough time to an actual job.

Interviewer: Okay.

Jane: She just always knew what’s going on with our lives, because we’d pray, we’d have requests, and she would come to like competitions, come to dance concerts.

Interviewer: Oh.

Discussion questions

1. What is the key question? Where do you think this question comes from?
2. Let's list probes the interviewer used to encourage Jane to elaborate & share more detail about her activities?
 - a. Why do you think the interviewer repeated the words, School, Mock Trial and Work?
 - b. Any probes you might use?
3. Can you think of non-verbal probes that might have been used by the interviewer?
4. How would you describe the support that this youth group leader gave to Jane?

8

Journal

Reflect on the questions below. Or record other thoughts related to today's activity.

Listen to 5 minutes of a TV interview (e.g., *Oprah*, *Lehrer News Hour*, *Today Show*, *Evening News*) of a personality you find interesting:

1. Identify the interviewer and the personality interviewed.
2. What was the topic?
3. Note a few probes used by the interviewer.
4. How effectively did the probes work? Why?

9 Silent cues

Purpose

To introduce active listening skills that are silent.

Objectives

1. Identify “silent cues” – active listening techniques.
2. Practice “silent cues” in a mock interview.
3. Learn to engage an interviewee without speaking.
4. Learn when “silent cues” are effective.
5. Learn when “silent cues” are ineffective.
6. Understand the interview experience from both perspectives.
7. See how helpful/essential “silent cues” are.

Introduction

20 minutes

Facilitator introduces “silent cues” – silent listening techniques. Sometimes an interviewer only has to ask the main question, and then the interviewee is able to talk at length, often beginning a story! To encourage the interviewee, the interviewer might respond with nods, smiles, an engaged look, rather than verbal probes. Let’s try it!

Group activity

1. Students pair off with someone they don’t know well.
2. Hand out index cards with an open-ended question.
Sample questions:
 - a. What was it like making the move from middle school to high school?
 - b. How have you changed since middle school? Since elementary school?
 - c. Is high school how you thought it would be? How so or how is it different?
 - d. Tell me about one of your proudest accomplishments.
 - e. What do you want to be when you grow up and why?
 - f. If you could go anywhere in the world where would you go?
 - g. If you won the lottery, what would you do?
 - h. If you had a time machine what period in history would you travel to and why?
3. Explain rules of this game:
 - a. Interviewee responds to the question for one minute
 - b. Listeners use “silent cues” – no words
 - c. After one minute, the interviewer summarizes what the interviewee said.
 - d. The students switch roles and repeat the activity.
 - e. When students in the pair have acted as both interviewer and interviewee, larger group reconvenes for a discussion.

Group discussion questions

Facilitator leads discussion (possible questions below).

Recorder: Write responses on newsprint to capture points for good listening skills.

1. The interviewee's perspective
 - a. Was it difficult to talk for the whole minute? Why?
 - b. Do you feel that your partner was listening to what you said? Why?
 - c. Did you feel comfortable and want to say more? In what way?
 - d. How well did your interviewer summarize your main points?
2. The interviewer's perspective
 - a. Was it hard to stay quiet for the whole minute? Why?
 - b. Was there a time when a verbal cue or question would have been more appropriate? Explain.
 - c. How did you engage the speaker without talking?
 - d. Did you have any problems making the summary? Why?
3. Ask for volunteers to summarize at their convenience the good listening techniques learned from the notes on newsprint.

9

Journal

Reflect on one or more of the questions below. Or record other thoughts related to today's activity.

1. Describe a time when someone's question actually interrupted your train of thought.
 - a. What do you think happened?
 - b. Do you think the listener was not listening, just got excited about what you were saying, was not paying attention, or . . .?
2. Why would you decide to use a "silent cue" rather than a key question or a verbal probe?
3. When is it better not to use a "silent cue?"

10 Key incidents

Purpose

To introduce the concept of “key incidents” as a focus for rich detail in storytelling interviews.

Objectives

1. Learn how to ask your interviewee for stories.
2. Learn how to ask for more detail.
3. Learn when to ask for more detail.
4. Learn how to identify a key incident.

Materials

Prepare handouts of selected interview excerpts below.

Facilitator introduces selected interview excerpts and leads a discussion, over one or more sessions:

- Adam, a pseudonym for the youth, identifies several non-related adults, whom he felt made a difference in his life. These excerpts are selected from the transcript of Adam’s interview.
- Ask two volunteers to read of the Excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1 Beginning the life story interview

Interviewer: Testing. One, two, three, four. Okay. So when you were in high school did one or more adults, twenty-one years or older, not related to you, make a difference in your life or matter in an important way?

Adam: I would say there would be three to four individuals.

Interviewer: Okay. Want to just give me first names?

Adam: [A], [B], and um, well, it was a family, so I would just say the [D].

Interviewer: Okay. So I’ll ask you then about each of them. So [A], how did you get to know [A] or when did you get to know her?

Adam: Umm, well Miss [A], she was my sophomore year U.S. History teacher.

Interviewer: Okay.

Adam: And I took her again in third, oh actually one more individual, Miss [F]. Sorry. Just to add that, one last person. Back to Miss [A], she was my teacher from sophomore year ‘til junior year. She was also my, not a mentor, well, she was a mentor to me but not a per se per se mentor in which I always, if I ever had a problem I could go and talk to her and she also wrote my college recommendations for me. Yeah, so.

Excerpt 1 Discussion

- What is the first thing the interviewer did? (Why is it important to check the tape recorder?)
- Notice that the Interviewer asked Adam to list names. This gives Adam a chance to identify an initial list of the most important people he wants to talk about. The interviewer then uses this list to follow up on each of these people he identified.
- Why do you think that the Interviewer asked: “How did you get to know A?” (e.g., To start a conversation by asking about concrete events that can be recalled, and that don’t require a lot of interpretation or thought at this stage of the interview.)

Excerpt 2 Ask for clarification

Facilitator picks two new volunteers to continue reading the excerpt, and introduces Excerpt 2: Later in the interview, the youth adds an additional point about Miss A.

Interviewer: Yeah. Excellent. Right. So one of the things that she was helping you with was how to feel about yourself in a minority situation.

Adam: Not even, well that, and just that she helped me grow a lot as a person. I think her class, it pushed me to my limits and like my beliefs and making sure I was open to new things. So just like, as the minority situation (that is, only African American in the class) was something that constantly came up but she always just pushed me beyond anyone else to just grow as a person and umm take--

Excerpt 2 Discussion

Facilitator pauses reading once again to talk about the importance of asking for clarification during the interview. The interviewer comments on the person's statement "So, one of the things she was helping you with..." to clarify where she thought the story was going. The student corrected her. In interviewing other people, our own experiences and biases affect the way we view or understand situations. It is always good to check with the interviewee to make sure you are getting the story right, and to give them a chance to correct or clarify, sharpen the points they want to make.

Excerpt 3 Key incidents

Facilitator asks for two new readers to continue.

Interviewer: Can you give an example of that? How that happened? A particular--

Adam: Cause I was a very, well, especially being in school, I was a very quiet kid, and with situations like that, umm, it was a constant reoccurrence. So. She just let me, she talked to me a lot, "Just put yourself out there, you know. Just try and grow." And it was her and another person, Miss [F], whom I'll come up to later. So they helped, especially during writing my essay for college. I had had some help with some other people and I was like "Miss [A] can you read it," because out of all the adults, I think in that school, she's the one I respected the most and she probably is to this day, the person I respect the most out of anyone I've ever met. So I asked her to read it. I'll never remember [forget?] this. She read the paper, put it down, leaned back in her chair and said, "[Adam], you know I love you. You're an honor student, you're a great student so I say, I'll tell you this out of love and compassion. Your college essay is crap. It's crap. I can't believe you wrote this. There is no emotion behind it. There is not [Adam]. This is a general essay, any one could have written it, so, I seriously think this is total garbage."

Excerpt 3 Discussion

- What is the interviewer's key question in this section of the interview?
- If you were to give a title to this section of the interview, what would you title it? (college essay or ?)
- Why do you think this story about his "college essay" is so important?
 - It reveals specific characteristics of Miss [A] and his relationship with her, such as honesty, respect, trust, etc
 - It can also be called the "meat" of the story, where the interviewee trusts the interviewer enough to focus on a specific story and to talk about it in great detail
- When you get to what you think is the meat of the story, feel free to ask for more details.
- Asking for more details in this case led to learning about a specific way this mentor was important to Adam, that he had not previously talked about.

Excerpt 4 Open-ended questions for more detail

Two new readers continue the story to the end.

- Interviewer: A lot of people had already looked at it, right?
- Adam: Yeah, a lot of people. I had been working with some people and, so, and like I know any student would be like “Oh my god. I put so much [into it]” I was like “Thank you, Miss [A].” And I re-worked my whole essay because she said it, because there is only probably a few individuals in the world who know me as well as Miss [A] does. And she was correct. It was just like a very general like “Hi I’m Bob, etc. etc. etc. I’ve done this and that, this and that.” There was no true passion in it. There’s none of myself so I’m really glad that I did it.
- Interviewer: So how did you go about changing it? Did she give you clues or questions or?
- Adam: When most teachers. . . read your essay, (they) mark it up, (they) say, “This and that. This is what you need to change.” She’s like, “Okay, what about your essay?” She’ll ask you questions about your essay. One, to make sure you know the subject and instead of asking her “How can I get an ‘A’?” It will be “What do you think of me saying this or that because I thought this so can you give me feedback? Is this correct? Is this not?” So, she’ll make you think even more in front of her because if you did just wrote an essay and just gave it her and didn’t know the subject and expected her to re-write your essay for you, she would never do that. So. That was a really tough thing to do because I knew a lot of my teachers used to just like re-write my essay for me, basically, when they marked it up. So I would just come in, not know anything about the subject, re-type everything and then give it back. But Miss [A]’s class, she worked me to the bone. And I’ll have to say, maybe I had one “A”, like the whole time I had Miss [A] as a teacher, and that was still my favorite class. That was one of the classes I had, not the lowest grade, it was probably my lowest grade class actually, and that’s not even like biology, like chemistry, I even liked my AP class. Just like okay, whatever, Miss [A] she worked me to, she worked me.
- Interviewer: Worked you to the bone.
- Adam: And like I thank her. If anyone ever asks, one of the most influential people will always be Miss [A]. So, yeah.

Excerpt 4 Discussion

- Adam describes the college essay incident, a key incident, in 4 paragraphs. How did the interviewer help him go into so much detail? What kinds of questions? (Explain open-ended versus yes/no questions.)
- What types of questions encourage the interviewee to give more detail about a particular incident?

10

Journal

Record your reflections on a question below or other thoughts related to this activity.

1. Why is the “college essay” story a key incident in Adam’s life?
2. Did this story make you think about a non-related adult in your life? What questions would you ask?

11 Develop timeline questions

Purpose

In anticipation of the life story interview, youth may meet with their adult interviewee to develop a timeline listing major life events and experiences. The timeline can serve as a point of reference in the interview.

Objectives

1. Students learn the purposes of the Timeline.
2. Students prepare questions for the Timeline.
3. Student teams decide how to construct a Timeline for their purposes.
4. Students learn how the Timelines could help their Interview.

Brainstorm timeline events

Youth brainstorm [quick generation of many ideas without discussion or evaluation] important events in a person's life that could be included in a timeline. Youth then discuss list and decide what to include. Refer youth to the Timeline Questions Guide in their Workbook.

Examples of important life events or background information:

- date of birth & birthplace
- education (high school, after high school)
- places the adult lived
- current work & community involvement
- types of work (and locations)
- types of community involvement
- family (marriage, children, deaths, etc.)
- historical events (local or national) recalled as significant/important

Suggestions for timeline display

- Students note the selected life events and facts on a horizontal line on a large sheet of paper marked with dates (interviewee's birth year to the present).
- This sheet can then be filled in during the timeline component of the interview.
- Color coding might be useful (during the interview or after) to differentiate elements (e.g., family, education, work, place of residence).
- Electronic recording of this component is not necessary.

11

Journal

Draw your timeline suggested below, or reflect on your future.

Draw a timeline into the future, for the next 20 years. Record dates of important events or experiences you hope to have during that time period. Note your age at the dates.

12 Develop interview questions

Purpose

To help youth identify key questions they want to use in their life story interview guide.

Objectives

1. Students decide the purposes of their life story interviews.
2. Students decide questions.
3. Students learn how to ask questions to get the information they want.

Note

The *Life Stories'* Interview Questions Guide suggests key questions and follow-up probes. Youth could use this without modification. However, we recommend it serve as a starting point, and that youth modify it to incorporate the questions they are most interested in. The actual interview may not follow the guide precisely. But it is important for the students to work on preparing a guide so that they understand what kinds of information they should try to get, and how they could get it. Developing the guide could take several sessions. Youth teams should conduct practice interviews using parts of a guide. A fishbowl activity is an excellent setting for practice interviews, because other teams can observe and then discuss what they learned. Practice interviews may also be conducted without the fishbowl. Audio and visual recordings of the practice interviews may then be reviewed by the facilitator and other students. Facilitators and youth should decide when a team is ready to conduct a *Life Stories* interview. Some teams will be ready earlier than others. The first interviews can be shared with all of the teams and can be part of the preparation for other teams. Facilitator introduces possible purposes of a *Life Stories* interview.

1. Learn more about key events or experiences that made a difference in their life, following up on some events identified in the Timeline, if appropriate.
2. Ask for reflections about important adults during the interviewee's adolescence
3. Learn why the adult is living in the community

Facilitator explains that youth will record the interview digitally and take photos and possibly video. If they opt to also do a Timeline, it could take place a few days later. It will require about an hour. If needed, youth may return to adult for follow-up questions and clarification.

Develop interview questions

Refer youth to the Interview Questions Guide in their Workbook. Teams modify questions, refer to their Timeline, as needed.

After the interview: Identify follow-up interview questions, if needed

The team debriefs about the interview and transcribes the tape. Teams may want to request a follow-up interview if they have more questions.

12

Journal

Record your reflections on a question below or other thoughts related to this activity.

1. Do you ever wish that you could have more contact with adults outside your family? Why?
2. Have any adult relatives ever talked about how adults outside their family made a difference in their lives? Who were they? What did they say about them? In what ways were they important to them?

Guides — *Life Stories*

Team Checklist Guide

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
initials

Adult Interviewee _____

Date(s) for Scheduled Interview(s) _____

Timeline	Date	Team member initials
Draft on newsprint	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Review by another team (coach) _____	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Review by adult (coach) _____	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Create final copy	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Interview Prep

List timeline leads/topics you want to know more about	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Figure out where lead/topics fit in interview	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Figure out questions to get “stories” on leads	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Consult with coach (____), as needed	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Decide interviewer pairs* for main questions	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Interview

Part I: Key Experiences

Practice	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Consult with coach (____), as needed	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Interview

Part II: Important Adults

Practice	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Consult with coach (____), as needed	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Interview

Part III: Living in Community

Practice	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Consult with coach (____), as needed	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Decide note taker(s)	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Decide photographer(s)	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Practice	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Prep: get camera, check batteries, download	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Decide audio-recorder(s)	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Practice	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Prep: get recorder, check batteries, download	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
Decide video-recorder(s), if needed	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Practice	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____
• Prep: get recorder, check batteries, download	_____	_____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Notes

Timeline Questions Guide

1. Birth date, birth place, and childhood

When were you born?

Where were you born?

Where did you grow up as a child? How old were you when you lived there?

2. School

When did you graduate from high school/ or end high school?

Where was your high school located?

Did you go to school after that? *If yes,*

When?

Where? (name of college, location)

Did you get a degree or diploma? What kind?

If more schools, repeat questions for dates, location, kind of school, degree.

3. Work history

Are you currently working? *If yes*

What is your job? (lawyer, teacher, reporter, etc.)

When did you start this job?

Where do you work (location – town or city)?

Have you worked, or had other jobs? *If yes, for each job ask*

What kind of job did you have? (lawyer, teacher, reporter, etc.)

Who was your employer?

When did you start this job? And end?

Where did you work (location – town or city)?

Did you serve in the military? *If not previously mentioned*

When?

Where were you stationed?

What did you do?

4. Family

Any brothers or sisters?

Do you have any children? When were they born? Where?

5. Community, hobbies, volunteer work

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Do you want to add to your timeline any involvement now or in the past with organizations, community activities, volunteer work, churches, or faith-based organizations, etc.

When? Where (location and type of activity)?

6. Historical events

Are there any important local events you want to add to your timeline?

Are there any important national events you want to add to your timeline?

7. Additional key experiences or events

Are there any other key experiences you had that you want to add to your timeline?

Interview Questions Guide

Part I. Key experiences from timeline

1. On your Timeline you named some important events and experiences in your life? Read List below.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
2. Could you tell us more about (a) _____? What happened?
 - a. This was during (time period)?
 - b. How did that impact your life? Make a difference in your life?
3. Continue to probe about events (b), etc. listed above.
4. Are there other events that you remember now, that you think were important? Probes.

Part II. Important adults during adolescence

1. When you were in high school, did one or more adults outside your family (21 years or older) influence you in important ways?
 Did an adult outside your family matter to you, or make a difference in your life?
 IF YES, Could you *name these adults and how you knew him/her?* First name is sufficient (or pseudonyms). I just need to be able to refer to these persons as we speak. [List names of adults, and their roles.]

Adult #1 _____	Role _____
Adult #2 _____	Role _____
Adult #3 _____	Role _____
Adult #4 _____	Role _____
2. Interviewer asks a series of questions about Adult #1, then Adult #2, etc.
 - a. Initial Connection How did you meet _____?
 - b. Length of relationship: When did you meet _____? (year in high school, or earlier)
 - c. What kinds of things did you do together? Where?
 - d. In what way did _____ influence you, (matter, make a difference in your life)?
 Probes Oh?
 Um hmmm.
 Can you tell me more about . . . (that)?
 Can you tell me about a time when you did that. . .
 when . . . (that happened),
 how. . . (that happened)?
 How did . . . (that) come about?
 When was that (at what point in time after you first met)?
 Why was that important to you at that time?
 In what way was that important to you?
 How did that matter?
 What kinds of things did you talk about? (e.g., values? goals?)
3. Interviewer continues with same series of questions above about Adult #2, then Adult #3, etc.

Part III. Reasons for living in this community (depends on what you learned from timeline)

1. What brought you to _____ [this community]?
2. Why did you remain in _____ [this community]?
3. Why did you return to _____ [this community]?

Transcription Guide

Purpose

To transcribe your *Life Story* Interview so team has a record to refer to when creating products.

Save your file

- Simply rename the template using the name of your interviewee and date of your interview, e.g, Marcia Johnson May 15 2008.doc
- Using the attached sample transcript as a template, change the information for your interview!
- Remember to save your file frequently!

Header

- Identify the interviewee
- Include the date of the interview, location of interview
- Insert page number

List roles of team members

- Interviewer(s)
- Videographer(s)
- Recorder(s)
- Photographer(s)
- Transcriber(s)
- Editor(s): who proofed the transcript?

Content – Body of interview

- Use initials on left, so that it is clear who is talking. (See attached sample transcript page.)
- Hit “tab” after the initials and then begin typing dialogue.
- This does not need to be double spaced, but there should be an extra line when the speaker changes.
- Note everything in your transcription. This includes filler words like “uh” and “um,” when something is inaudible, and if the recording stops for any reason.

General notes

- The key is to be as accurate as possible. Don’t change person’s words.
- Make use of the rewind button on the transcriber. Keep going back until you are sure you have things right.
- Once you are satisfied with your transcription, have some one else listen to the tape while reading it. (These people should be listed as Editors). They should save the document as a separate file, so that you can compare later. For example, Marcia Johnson May 15 2008-edit 1.doc
- Once your team is sure of the accuracy of the transcript, save the file as final, for example, Marcia Johnson May 15 2008 FINAL.doc

Sample transcript

Marcia Johnson, Interviewee

Date of Interview: May 15, 2008

Location: Home of MJ

Interviewers: Jane Smith, Paul Adams, Peter Jefferson, Susan Abbott, Margaret Allen

Videographer: MA

Recorder: PJ

Photographer: PA & SA

Transcribers: JS, PA, PJ

Editors: SA, JS, MA

JS: Testing. One, two, three, four. Okay. So when you were in high school did one or more adults, twenty-one years or older, not related to you, make a difference in your life or matter in an important way? If you could just name or was there any one?

MJ: I would say there would be three to four individuals.

JS: Okay. Want to just give me the first names?

MJ: [A], [B], and um, well, it was a family, so I would just say the [D].

JS: Okay. So I'll ask you then about each of them. So [A], how did you get to know [A] or when did you get to know her?

MJ: Umm, well Miss [A], she was my sophomore year English teacher.

JS: Okay.

MJ: And I took her again in third, oh actually one more individual, Miss [F]. Sorry. Just to add that, one last person. Back to Miss [A], she was my teacher from sophomore year 'til junior year. She was also my, not a mentor, well, she was a mentor to me but not a per se per se mentor in which I always, if I ever had a problem I could go and talk to her and she also wrote my college recommendations for me. Yeah, so.

JS: Oh. Okay. So you got to know her through class?

MJ: Through class and especially because of the nature of the class, sophomore year, that I took which was English and in my school I was, out of the graduating class [. . . transcript continues in this way].

Focus Group Guide

Purpose

To involve youth in leading feedback session on the *Life Stories* project. Activity may be structured for 2 hours, indicated by timing.

Opening

10 minutes

Gathering, food

Tell us your first name.

Introduce moderator, assistant, and observers

Summarize purposes of focus group

- You have been invited to participate in this focus group because you participated in the *Life Story* project.
- We'll talk about what you got out of the project, what was your biggest disappointment, and where we go from here.
- Your feedback today will help improve the *Life Stories* project and will help plan your next phase in the project as well.

Establish ground rules

- Respect others.
- Listen to others.
- Agree to respect privacy and not to report what individuals said.

Transition question – Interview teams

5 minutes

Identify Interview Teams and your role in the Team

- Which Interview Team were you on?
- What did you do as part of that Team?

Form Pairs

Pair off with someone not on your Interview Team.

Key question 1 – Adult's life story

20 minutes

Part 1

[10 minutes]

Label Newsprint #1 – Adult's Life Story

- What did you learn that you thought was valuable? Why?
- What stands out to you about his/her life story?
- Share a story your adult told, and why that seems important to you
- Describe an adult who mattered to them in their adolescence?

Pairs interview each other about what they think was important about their adult's life story.

Part 2

[10 minutes]

Report partner's points to the large group. (Others may ask follow up questions.)

Youth volunteer records reports on newsprint

Key questions 2 & 3 – Satisfaction/disappointments

45 minutes

Post-It Q & A

[15 minutes]

Label Newsprint:

#2 *What did you get out of the project?*

Satisfactions

#3 *Was there anything that disappointed you?*

Disappointments

Distribute 4" X 6" Post-It pads and pencil

You will have 15 minutes or more if needed, to write their responses to the questions, and to post their responses.

Read questions on newsprint

- Label each Post-It Satisfaction or Disappointment, write your response, and post it on appropriate newsprint.
- Use one Post-It for each response. You can have several responses for a question.
- After everyone finishes, maybe 15 minutes, we will talk about your responses

Post-It discussion

[20 minutes]

Discuss Post-It responses: Ask for meaning, clarification

Ask youth to group responses, categorize

Vote

[5 minutes]

Vote on responses that you think are most important, using circle

Summarize, discuss results

Key Question 4 – Activities

10 minutes

Label Newsprint:

#4 *Activities – Helped me prepare*

#4 *Activities – Did not help much*

Now we will focus on classroom activities that you think helped you prepare for the interviews, and activities that did not help you very much.

Write on your Post-Its, one comment per sheet

- When you think about the activities you did in class, which ones do you think helped you prepare for the interview? Activities — helped me prepare
- Were there activities that did not help very much? Activities— did not help much

Post your comments on newsprint

Discuss comments

Vote on comments you think are most important, using circles.

Key Question 5 – Next steps for new students

10 minutes

Label Newsprint #5 – Next steps for new students

Brainstorm list: write responses on newsprint

[5 minutes]

- If we do this again with other students, how could we make it better? (create?)
- What should we do that we did not do?

Clarify items on the list

[5 minutes]

Key Question 6 – Your next steps**15 minutes***Label Newsprint #6 – Your next steps*

Do you want to continue with the project in some way? If so, how?

Our intent is that after transcribing the interviews, the students will create products using the *Life Story*. Products could be a video or photos for the school website, YouTube, an article for a newspaper or newsletter, a radio clip to share with other students, parents, the school staff, the community, etc. We hope that the products from the *Life Stories* will lead to a town hall type meeting with community to talk about opportunities for youth to be with adults, and your ideas about creating more.

- Do you have any next steps in mind that you would like to take?
- Can you think of any additional activities that you would like to participate in growing out of the life stories?

Write on Post-It

- Write next steps you would like to take, if any. Post your responses on Newsprint.
- Write one response per Post-It.

*Couple youth volunteer to group responses**Discuss: Clarify points as needed***Summary report****2-3 minutes**

- Summarize main points from focus group
- ** Is there anything we missed, have left out, or not talked about?

Feedback**5 minutes***Label newsprint: Feedback*

1. Anything that worked well for you?
2. Anything we should change?
3. Anything we should add, do that we did not do?

Distribute index cards

We'd like your advice about running these focus groups.

Read questions on newsprint

Could you write your responses to each question on these index cards, and number the questions?

Service Learning Guide

Purpose

To encourage youth to identify *Service Learning* projects that would interest them as the next steps of **Community Mobilization for Mentoring Youth**.

What is Service Learning?

- Youth design and carry out a *civic responsibility project*.
- Youth collaborate with adults, opening opportunities for *natural mentoring*.
- *Youth reflection* on their progress occurs throughout the project life.

So you want to do a Service Learning project?

(Key questions and guiding principles)

- **What is your project idea?**
 - What are you trying to *change*?
 - What will you and your team members *do*?
 - How will the project be *useful* to the community?
- **Who are your community partners?**
 - *With whom and how* will you partner to plan and implement the activity?
 - What *steps* do you and your partners need to take?
- **How will you and your youth team benefit?**
 - What will you *learn*?
 - What are the opportunities for developing your *leadership skills*?
 - What are the *opportunities to reflect* on what you do?
- **What supports are needed to implement your project?**
 - Who will *advise* you?
 - Who will *help you plan and implement* your project?
 - If you *need money*, how will you get it?
 - What *additional supports* will you need?

Have you heard about?

Do Something: Railroad Crossing Safety In a “town hall” meeting the city council listened to the sixth grader’s initial safety proposal. Read about how they arrived at a workable solution at www.bettertogether.org/stories

Cherokee Volunteer Society Oklahoma high school students wanted to do something about the high levels of lead and heavy metals in their local waters. Read about how they partnered with local Cherokee tribal leaders, teachers, and the Environmental Protection Agency at www.nslp.convio.net/site/DocServer/learningindeed.pdf?docID=1201

Energy Use Middle school students teamed up with school administrators to create a weeklong program on energy conservation. Read about how they planned to save the community \$260 a day at www.earthforce.org/content/article/detail/2082

History In Your Own Backyard History students interviewed senior center residents about the Great Depression, World War II, and the Holocaust. They donated their essays to their local library. www.nylc.org/rc_projectexample_detail.cfm?emoid=20:422

We'll Bring It To You Sixth graders convinced their county board to waive recycling fees for electronic equipment. Read about their strategy at www.earthforce.org/content/article/detail/2069

Testing The Waters A high school biology class developed a five-year plan to clean up a polluted local lake. Read about how they partnered with the Chamber of Commerce, the town council, and their state Department of Natural Resources at www.nylc.org/rc_projectexample_detail.cfm?emoid=20:425

Amnesty International Chapter Youth work with adults on events and letter writing campaigns about social justice issues at www.amnesty.org/en/how-you-can-help

Students Against Violence Chapter (SAVE) Youth organize violence prevention workshops, dances, and school and community beautification projects at www.nationalsave.org/main/action.php

Schoolyard Habitat Youth work with educators and volunteers to learn about the history of the land, and to plan and maintain a goal through gardening at www.nwf.org/schoolyard/getstarted.cfm

Check out more “showcase” projects at

- www.hylc.org/pages-projectexamples
- www.convio.net
- www.learnandserve.gov



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College of Human Ecology
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