

## Research Rich Classroom Interview Guidelines - 8 Step Process

Preparation and persistence are key in conducting a good interview. Follow these steps and learn how to interview effectively:

### Step 1: Research



- Think about why you want to interview someone as part of your research, what you hope to find out how you will share the share information you get.
- The only way to come up with effective questions is to research the topic you are going to interview the person about to understand the background and plan good questions.

### Step 2: Contact the person you wish to interview



- Identify the person you wish to interview and contact them.
- Ask the person if they are happy to be interviewed and explain what the interview will be about and how long you think it will take.
- Consider the best way of doing the interview - face to face, phone, internet (Skype).
- If you hope to record the interview ask permission.
- Be polite. Say "please" and "thank you."

### Step 3: Prepare a list of questions



- Think about what you want to find out.
- Think about the questions you want to ask to get this information.
- The more specific your questions are, the better.
- Avoid asking questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no". Encourage your interviewee to speak by asking open questions using the words who, what, where, when, how, and why?
- Be sure to write all your questions down in a notebook or device then practice asking them with a partner. Become very familiar with your questions before you attend the interview.

#### Step 4: Be prepared



- Confirm where and when the interview will take place.
- Prepare everything you will need e.g: pen /paper/ mobile device.
- If using technology for the interview make sure your device is charged.
- Make sure you will be somewhere quiet.

#### Step 5: Be on time



- Be ready to begin at the time arranged.
- Try to keep to the length of time you had arranged.

#### Step 6: With permission record the interview and/or take notes



- Think about how you will record the interview: written, recorded, illustrated.
- Don't try to write every word said. It will slow down the interview. Just take down the highlights.
- You might like to tick off your questions as you ask them.
- Make sure you have permission to record the interview if doing so.
- After the interview, while the details are still fresh in your mind, write further notes.

## Step 7: Use active listening skills



- Identify and practice active listening skills.
- Be courteous to your interviewee.
- Take your time and ask for an explanation about things you don't understand.
- Don't be afraid of uncomfortable silences and pauses, this is a normal part of the process.
- Let the interview take its natural course.
- Look the person in the eye when asking questions.
- Always listen carefully to the answers. Each answer could lead to more questions or include an answer to a question you haven't asked yet.
- Don't ask a question that has already been answered. You may realise that a question you planned to ask was already answered by the person if you are actively listening. If you have already got the answer you can skip that question.
- Don't read through your questions one right after another like you can't wait to be finished. Conduct your interview like a conversation. One question should lead naturally into another. If you are **LISTENING** to the answers this will come naturally.

## Step 8: Review your research and your interview notes



- At home, expand your notes by following up on things you learned in your interview with more research.
- Read back through your interview notes. How does it support your research area?
- Identify facts and conclusions drawn.
- Consider if you need to ask any follow up questions.
- Circle or highlight quotations that you think will be good for your research.
- Now you're ready to begin writing!
- Prepare and share your research.
- Reference your source appropriately.