

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.