

# Grandparent Interview

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Year You Were You Born: \_\_\_\_\_

## Family

1. How big was your family of origin?
2. Describe your brothers and sisters:
3. In what sort of city did you live?
4. Was your family lower, middle, or upper class?
5. What were your aunts and uncles like?
6. Did they live close?
7. Did they play an important role in your growing up?
8. Did the whole family have “get-togethers”? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, describe one of them:
9. Describe your parents’ religion:
10. What do you remember about church when you were a child?
11. Do you remember any special stories told by your parents?

12. What is a special family memory?

13. Did your family have anyone famous or *infamous* in it?

14. Did your mom or dad have a favorite saying or philosophy?

## **The House in Which You Grew Up**

1. Did you share a bedroom?
2. Describe your bedroom:

## **Holidays & Celebrations**

1. What did your family do for your birthday?
2. Describe the Christmas rituals in your family as a child or teenager:
3. What was another favorite holiday?

## **Grade School Years**

1. Describe the effects that the “depression” had on your family, if you were alive at the time and remember:
2. What kind of toys did you have or make?
3. What was your favorite doll / toy / pet?
4. Did you collect anything? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what did you collect?
5. What were your favorite board games?

6. What were your chores?
7. What did you eat for a typical evening meal?
8. What was your favorite meal?
9. What was your favorite dessert?
10. Did you lock your house and your car?
11. Did your family read together at all? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what books do you remember reading as a family?
12. What were your favorite books?
13. Did your family listen to the radio a lot? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what were your favorite radio shows?
14. Do you remember the first TV you saw? \_\_\_\_\_ When did you see your first TV?
15. What television shows do you remember from your childhood?
16. What commercials do you remember?
17. How did your family get news?
18. Did you have a garden?
19. Did you have running water or indoor facilities?
20. Did you have a phone? \_\_\_\_\_ Was it a “party line”?
21. How big was your school?
22. How big was your class?
23. What did people your age wear to school?

24. What was lunch like?
25. What was your desk at school like?
26. Did they say the pledge, pray, or read the Bible in school?
27. How did they punish the “bad kids”?

## **High School Years / Teen-Age Years**

1. As a teenager, describe your relationship with your parents:
2. Describe your biggest trial or burden in your family as a teenager:
3. As a teenager, what are some of the things you did for fun?
4. What was the cost of the activities you did for fun?
5. What sort of school did you attend for High School (public or private, small or large...)?
6. What year did you graduate from High School?
7. What was your team name?
8. What was your Mascot?
9. What were your school colors?
10. In what extra-curricular activities were you involved in high school?
11. What teachers do you most remember?
12. Why do you remember them? In what ways were they special or memorable?

13. What were your favorite subjects?
  
14. Did you get a class ring? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, do you still have it?
15. Did you have a job during high school? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what was your job?
  
16. Did you date in high school?
17. Did you ever go out on double dates?
18. If you dated, who was one of your high school boyfriends/girlfriends?
  
19. What did you look for in a person to date?
  
20. Describe a typical first date activity:
  
  
21. Did the boy have to get your dad's permission first?
22. What advice did you receive before you started dating?
  
  
23. What advice would you give a teenager about dating?

## **Cars**

1. What was your first car?
2. Color?
3. Top speed?
4. Gas prices?
5. How did you get it?

6. How old were you when you started driving?

7. Did you ever get a speeding ticket?

## **World War II – 1940 to 1945**

1. Did anyone in your family serve in the military during WW2? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, who?

*Were you alive during World War II?*

*Were you old enough to remember much about it?*

*If so, answer the following... :-D*

2. Where were you when you first heard about Pearl Harbor?

3. On the Homefront, describe the changes in everyday life during the war:

4. What effect did rationing have on you?

5. What are some things you could not buy during the war that you missed?

6. Did your town have air raids drills or blackouts?

7. Did you have an understanding of Hitler and what was going on in Germany at the time?

8. What did you or your parents think of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan?

9. Did your family have any deaths because of the war?

10. Do you remember anything in particular about the day the war ended? Were there celebrations? Did your family do anything special?

## **1950's**

1. What did you do in your free time in the 1950's?

2. What were your favorite movies in the 1950's?

3. What were a couple of your favorite songs from the 1950's?

4. Do you remember any fear about a nuclear threat during the 50's?
5. Did your school have "Duck and Cover Drills"?
6. How did the Korean War affect you?
7. Did anyone in your family serve in this war? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, who?

## **1960's**

1. What did you do in your free time in the 1960's?
2. What were your favorite movies in the 1960's?
3. What were a couple of your favorite songs from the 1960's?
4. Do you remember the construction of the Berlin Wall? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what did you - or your parents - think about it?
5. Did the events of the Cold War have much of a personal impact on you? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how was your life different?
6. Where were you when you heard the news of John F. Kennedy's assassination?
7. Did you have any involvement in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how were you involved?
8. What do you remember about John Glenn's earth orbit in 1962?
9. Did you watch television coverage of the first moon landing in 1969? \_\_\_\_\_ How did you feel about this event?

## **1960's-1970's & the U.S. Involvement in the Vietnam War**

10. How did the Vietnam War affect you?
11. Did YOU or anyone in your family serve in this war? If so, who?

12. What was your attitude toward the Vietnam War?

## **The 1970's**

1. What did you do in your free time in the 1970's?
2. How about favorite movies?
3. What were a couple of your favorite songs from the 1970's?
4. What did you think of the 1960's & 70's peace activists?
5. What do you remember about the feminism of the 1970's?
6. What were your attitudes toward feminists such as Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan?
7. What do you remember about the Roe vs. Wade decision of 1973?
8. What do you remember about Watergate? What was your attitude toward this scandal?

## **Career & Jobs**

1. What was your first job?
2. How much were you paid?
3. What were your hours?
4. What career did you choose as an adult?
5. What sort of career training did you receive?
6. Did you have any college training? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, where did you go to college?
7. Did you go on to graduate school after college?



## **Politics**

1. Do you have a favorite president? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, who?
2. In what year or election did you first vote?
3. Did you ever work for an election campaign?
4. Did you ever run for office? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, did you win?
5. Were you a Republican or a Democrat?
6. Did you ever switch parties?

## **Philosophies & Attitudes**

1. In your view, what is the most important character trait to have?
2. How did you develop character?
3. Who have been your heroes?
4. Why were they your heroes?
5. Do you think it is a good idea to buy on credit? Why or why not?
6. Did you achieve the goals you set for yourself when you were younger?
7. What advice would you give a young person today?