



Practicing Interview Skills



What is the purpose of this activity?



Why is it so interesting to watch, listen to or read an interview with a celebrity you admire – or even someone who is not famous? Is it because they have interesting things to say – or because of the questions the interviewer asks?

In this activity, you will practice writing interview questions. Then you will conduct an actual interview with someone, to learn more about their expertise in something they do well.

What will you need?



A place where you can sit comfortably and draw, and a table or flat surface to write against.



A piece of paper, and a pen or pencil.



A person in your household who will work with you on a creative activity.



Step by step



In this activity, you will start by sitting by yourself and thinking. Later you will interview someone by having a conversation with them, and write notes about what they say. You can do all the steps in this activity immediately after each other, or take a break between each step, depending on what works best for you and the person you interview.



Think of another person who is very good at a specific skill or activity, and who might participate in an interview with you. It can be a person from your household that you can sit with to interview, or a friend or community member that you can interview over the phone.



The skill might be in an activity most people think of as challenging, such as playing a sport or a musical instrument, or working in a challenging profession. Or, it might be a kind of skill that is part of daily life, such as cook good food, gardening, cleaning, caring for animals or pets, having a great sense of humor, or being very kind.

Imagine that person is a famous expert in this skill. Imagine you are a reporter who will interview that famous expert to learn more from them.


2**Invite that person to participate in a short interview with you.**

Explain that you will use their answer to write a report or a news article for fun for this activity. If they agree, agree on a time for when you can conduct your short interview.

3

Prepare for your interview. Continue to imagine that you are a reporter, preparing for the interview. Create an interview plan by writing down questions that you want to ask to learn more from the expert. As you write down questions, think about this:

- How will you introduce yourself to the expert?
- What questions can you ask to learn about how they first began learning this skill and how they ended up becoming so good at it?
- What questions can you ask to learn more about the importance of this skill in their lives, and how they feel about it?

Review your interview plan. Have you written your questions in the order in which you should ask them? Can you ask the questions in a way that will feel fun, comfortable and enjoyable to the expert? Revise your plan if you wish.


4**At the time you have agreed to, sit down or connect with the expert.**

Have a piece of paper and your pen or pencil ready to take notes with.

Conduct your interview, starting with the first questions in your interview plan. If you want, make the interview more fun by pretending you really are a famous reporter, conducting an interview with a famous expert!

Adapt your plan and your questions as you conduct your interview. You may find that you want to ask questions in a different order, skip some questions, or ask new questions that you think are important to learn more from the expert. Go ahead and improvise! This is how real-life interviews are!

Try to listen without interrupting as the expert answers. Try to write down what the expert says, using their own words whenever possible to create quotes. You can also record the interview if you have a recording device such as a mobile phone.

Take as much time as you want, or until you and the expert feel that you are done with your interview. Take a photo with the expert if you can and if they permit it. Remember to thank them for sharing their expertise with you.


5

After the interview, write a short summary to yourself about the interview:

- What interview questions led to very interesting answers from the expert?
 - What new questions did you ask that were not in your original plan?
 - If you conducted this interview again, what questions would you add, skip, or ask in a different way?
-





Write a short report or news article of what you learned from your interview.

You can write it in any way that feels creative and enjoyable to you. For example, you could write it in question and answer format, or you can write it as if it were a real news article about this “famous expert” you interviewed. You can include quotes from the expert and the photo if you took one.



Share your report or article with the expert or other people, if you want to. You can share it in writing or read it aloud as if you were a news reporter!



Create more

- Find a creative way to present your report or article. For example, you could invent a newspaper where it will include. You can add more articles and entries to the newspaper that you create yourself. You can also add photos or drawing to it.
- If the person you interviewed is interested, you could recreate and perform your interview together, creating an audio or video recording that looks like a report for radio or TV.
- Repeat the activity by conducting a new interview with another expert. Revise your interview plan. You can ask questions to a new person or you can ask new questions to the same person you interviewed.
- Write a set of instructions for someone else who is planning and conducting an interview for the first time. Tell them everything they need to know about how to write an interview plan with great questions! Share them with the person and help them in their journey to becoming a reporter.



Share

→ Online:

Send a photo of your interview plan and report/article, along with any other material that you have or have created to the chat group.

Look for more messages in the chat group to see what other adolescents have created. Participate in the conversation!

→ Everyone (Online and Offline):

Keep your interview material somewhere where you can read it again. You should share it with the person you interviewed, and they can give you permission to share it with other people as well if you wish to do so.

Talk with the person you interviewed or other people about what you enjoyed and learned from your interview.

Invite people from your household or friends to interview each other about things that you are good at. Share with each other what you learned from the interviews and if they inspired you to become good at it yourself.

Invite others in your household to gather stories from each other, or from you. Hold a storytelling event or save your stories in a notebook so you can collect them all over time and remember them.



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6 Write a short report or news article of what you learned from your interview.

You can write it in any way that feels creative and enjoyable to you. For example, you could write it in question and answer format, or you can write it as if it were a real news article about this “famous expert” you interviewed. You can include quotes from the expert and the photo if you took one.



7 Share your report or article with the expert or other people, if you want to.

You can share it in writing or read it aloud as if you were a news reporter!



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Guide for parents and caregivers

1

Before your adolescent starts this activity

- Read the activity guide for Practicing Interview Skills so you understand the steps and what adolescents are asked to do.
- Help your adolescent to find a quiet place where they can write without interruption or without anyone watching what they are doing before, during and after their interview.
- Once your adolescent has identified someone whom they hope to interview, help them to make a plan with that person. Explain the purpose of the activity to that person, and encourage them to support and participate in the interview.
- Offer to be the person your adolescent will interview, but do not push them to work with you. Help them to think of people with special expertise and skills, too. Support them in thinking about the kinds of skills and activities others that you know do well.

Ask your adolescent how they would like to work on this activity:

- *Would you like to work on the different steps this activity alone, or would you prefer to try it together with me, or with anyone else in our household, in addition to the person you will interview?*

Accept and support their answers to these questions. Once they have told you their preferences do not push them to try the activity another way.

2

While your adolescent is working on this activity

- Depending on what they prefer, give them time and space to work on the activity in a quiet space. You can offer them to practice their questions on you before doing the actual interview.

If they are confused about how to do the activity, and want your help:

- Read the activity guide and try to explain the directions in your own words.
- Remind them that there is not a “right” or “wrong” way to do the activity, and that they should not worry about whether they ask the right questions or write a “good” article. The purpose of the activity is to help them to enjoy talking with others, and practice interviewing and report-writing.
- Encourage them to try the activity again, or as many times as they wish. Help them think of new ideas for questions they might ask from the same person, or from other people in your household.

- Suggest a few interview questions. These might be questions you would ask others if you were conducting an interview. Or, they might be questions that you would enjoy answering if someone asked you. However, do not push your adolescent to focus on the questions you suggested as examples – and do encourage them to invent their own questions.

If they need more encouragement or inspiration, ask

- Has anyone ever asked you a question that you really appreciated or enjoyed answering? What was it? Could you ask this question in your interview?
- If I wanted to learn more about how you got good at something you enjoy doing, what should I ask you?

3

After your adolescent is done with the activity:

- Help them to share their report or article with the person they interviewed. Let them decide together if they want others to read or hear the story, and support their wishes.
- Ask if your adolescent wants to share with you. If they do, share encouraging words about what they created. Never correct them or disagree with what they created.
- Invite them to tell you more about their work:
 - Ask them to tell you more about why they chose to interview this person, and what they learned about their skills and expertise.
 - Ask them to explain what they found interesting, enjoyable or important about doing the interview.
 - Ask them to tell you what they learned about how to prepare for and conduct an interview, and what advice they would give you if you were going to conduct an interview.
- Participate by conducting interviews with each other and more people from the household or over the phone. Share the notes you gathered and discuss your own experiences. You could discuss:
 - New things you learned and how you will use it in the future.
 - What it was like to interview and be interviewed by someone

If they are participating in a discussion with a facilitator and other adolescents using their mobile device:

- Remind and encourage them to share their work with the others. However, do not force them to share if they do not wish to.
- Encourage them to participate in the conversation with the facilitator and the other adolescents.



Facilitator guide

Activity Purpose

In this activity, adolescents will conduct an interview with someone to learn about their “expertise” in a skill or activity. Then they will write a report or article based on that interview. Through this activity, they will practice competencies for empathy and respect, and communication and expression.

1

Preparing adolescents and families

- A few days in advance, announce that adolescents will receive a guide for this activity. Encourage adolescents to have fun and give it a try!
- Explain that the activity will give adolescents a chance to interview someone that they find interesting or admire. Remind them that the activity is meant to help them to listen to and connect with others.
- Remind parents/caregivers that they can support their adolescents by reviewing the activity guide and their own guide.
- Explain to that adolescents will need a piece of paper and a pen or pencil, and a surface to write against. They will also need a person who is willing to participate in an interview and share their experience.
- Inform them of the date by which they should finish the activity, and how they should share what they created.

2

When you share the activity guide:

- Repeat the information above, so adolescents (and parents/caregivers) understand how to participate in the activity, and what to do next.
- Explain to adolescents (and parents/caregivers) how they can communicate with you to ask any questions they may have.
- Send encouraging messages to remind adolescents (and parents/caregivers) that you hope they are enjoying the activity and look forward to hearing about their experiences.

3

After the activity:

- Remind adolescents to share a photo of their report or article, and anything else that they created. Explain how they can share these with you.
- As some adolescents begin to share their work, send encouraging reminders to others to do the same.
- Share examples of the first entries you receive with positive comments, as encouragement for other adolescents to share theirs, too.
- Invite adolescents to respond to the following questions, one at a time.
 - What did you enjoy, find interesting and important about what the expert shared? Did you learn anything new about them and their expertise?
 - What was it like to conduct an interview with another person? Did you share your report or article with anyone, besides the person you interviewed? Tell us more!
 - Whose interview report or article did you enjoy a lot? Tell the person who made it what you liked about what they shared!
 - Reading the reports and articles that others have shared, did anyone have a similar interview to yours? Did anyone interview the same people about the same expertise?
 - Get creative! How could you create another written story, audio recording or video to capture your interview? Share what you create!

Allow some time (possibly a day or so) between each question so adolescents have time to respond.

- Send a closing message thanking them for participating. Congratulate them on their posts and creative work. If you will be sharing their posts and creative works in another way, inform them of this and ask for their permission to do so. Let them know if they should expect another activity.