

## **Interview Information Sheet**

Interviews are an important part of your History Day Project. They add insight and a human aspect to the topic. There are two kinds of interviews.

### *Oral History Interview*

- Oral history interviews occur with someone who experienced or witnessed an event, therefore, it is a primary source. You are asking questions and recording information about a part of their lives, adding a personal story to other information you have already found.
  - Example: Why did you decide to go to Katz Drug Store the day of Clara Luper's sit-in?

### *Interview with an Expert*

- In this type of interview, the person is an expert in your subject and can speak about their own research and how it connects to the subject. They do not necessarily experience or witness an event, so this type of interview is a secondary source. Experts include professors, historians, and authors.
  - Example: In your opinion, how did the sit-in effect the civil rights movement?

### **Now that you understand the differences in interviews, here are some tips for conducting a good interview:**

- Research the topic before the interview so that you ask meaningful questions
- Be sure to choose someone who can speak on your topic and explain why you want to interview him or her
- Prepare a list of potential questions but remember you may not ask all of them or you may have different ones during the interview, which is fine
- During the interview be sure to record their answers so that you can refer back to them at a later date
- Be sure your body language shows you are interested and engaged in the interview when the person is talking. Do not interrupt the person you are interviewing. Long pauses are going to happen, be sure to let the person think before you move on
- If you are unsure how to spell something or need an answer clarified, be sure to ask so that you do not misunderstand what they are saying
- Be aware of your surroundings; you want to be able to come back to the interview later
- Take breaks if needed
- Once the interview is over, be sure to thank the person you interviewed
- Do not change the information the person gave you to fit into your argument
- Be sure to share how you used the interview in your project with the person you interviewed

### **How to find people to interview:**

- For oral history interviews, you should be able to find people who can talk about events that occurred in the 1940s or after. Family members are typically the best people to start interviewing. If the event is not a local one, people around you could be interviewed to discuss how they felt about the event. Many community organizations may have people who would be able to help as well.
- For expert interviews, there are many people you could ask. Start with your teachers or community college professors. Many museums and libraries, including the Oklahoma History Center, have people who could assist you.