



# Humans of our Household



## What is the purpose of this activity?



How can you learn something new about someone in your household – even when you think you already know them well? What would they tell you if you asked them just one question you had never asked them before?

In this activity, you will write and conduct a one-question interview with someone in your household and create a very short story based on that interview.

## 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 sit with someone in your household, have 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.**



**Close your eyes for a minute and imagine you are making friends with a new person.** What is a question you could ask them to learn more about their life and experiences? What is a question that you might hope they would ask you to learn more about yourself, your life and your experiences?



**Open your eyes and try to write down a few of the questions that you thought about. Try to think of interview questions that will encourage someone to share a story, memory or idea that is important to them, but don't ask anything too personal or difficult.** Here are a few examples, to help you think of questions – but try to come up with questions of your own!

- Who has changed your life for the better, and how did they change it?
- What is the most important lesson you ever learned, and where did you learn it?
- What makes you happy, and why does it make you happy?



**Think of someone in your household who you could ask one of the questions you wrote.** Then, ask that person if they would be willing to participate in a very short interview with you. Explain that you will use their answer to write a short, creative story. If they agree, plan a time and place when you can conduct your short interview.



**At the time and place you have agreed to, sit with that person.**

Have a piece of paper and your pen or pencil ready. Ask your one question and try to listen without interrupting as they answer. Try to write down or record what they say, using their own words whenever possible. Remember to thank them for sharing their story!



**After the interview, write down their story, trying to use their own words.**

Don't worry if their "story" is very short or if it doesn't sound like a "story" – instead, enjoy the experience of creating a very short story, and noticing what can be expressed in just a few words.



**Optional:** If they permit it, take a photo of the person you interviewed - while they are telling their story or after. You can also draw a portrait of that person, or draw or create an illustration of a moment or experience they described during the interview.



**Share the story with that person.**

It can be in writing or you can read it aloud to them and/or to others in your household.



## Create more

- Find a creative way to present your story and photo or drawing together, for example, as a poster or as if it was a page in a book.
- Repeat the activity as many times as you wish with the same or new people, creating more short stories. You can use one of the other questions that you wrote down in step 2.
- If you can connect with people outside your house via mobile phone or in any other way, interview someone who is not living in your household. This may be someone you know well, or someone new.
- Organize a story sharing event with others in your household or with friends over the phone and make an audio or video recording of your event.
- Create a fictional character and imagine how he or she would answer your questions. Write an original story about your character.



## Share

### → Online:

Send a photo of your creation or a recording of you reading the story aloud in the chat group. Look for more messages from 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 gather stories from each other, or from you, through one-question interviews. Write the stories you share and want to remember in a notebook.



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# Guide for parents and caregivers

## 1

### Before your adolescent starts this activity

- Read the activity guide for Humans of our Household 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 and after their interview.
- Once your adolescent has identified someone in your household whom they hope to interview, help them to plan with that person. Explain the purpose of the activity to the 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 others in your family with interesting stories to share, too.

#### 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 question on you before doing the actual interview.

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

- Read the guidelines in their 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 gather or write a “good” story. The purpose of the activity is to help them to relax, enjoy talking with others in your household, and practice interviewing and story-writing.
- Encourage them to try the activity again, or as many times as they wish. Help them think of new 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?
- What is a question you would be curious to ask someone in our household but never asked? (Note: Use this as a brainstorm question to encourage your adolescent to think of new ideas. Then work with your adolescent to decide whether it will be helpful or uncomfortable for them to ask this question in an interview).

## 3

### After your adolescent is done with the activity:

- Help them to find a place and time to share their story 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 their story with you. If they do, share encouraging words about what they created. Never correct them or disagree with how they wrote or told the story.
- Invite them to tell you more about their story:
  - Ask them to tell you more about why they chose to ask this question to the person.
  - Ask them to explain why the story is interesting, enjoyable or important.
- If you or other people in your household participate by gathering stories from each other, share the stories you gathered, and discuss your own experiences. You could discuss:
  - Similarities in your questions and stories.
  - What lessons you have learned from the interviews and stories.
  - How you will share and retell your stories with other people in the future.

#### 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 a one-question interview with someone in their household, then write a short, creative and true story based on that interview. They will also illustrate that story with a photo or drawing. Through this activity they will practice competencies for empathy and respect, and communication and expression.



### 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 gather a very short story from someone in their household and rewrite or retell it in a creative way. Remind them that the activity is meant to help them to listen to and connect with others in their households.
- Remind parents/caregivers that they can support their adolescents by reviewing the adolescent activity guide and their own guide.
- Explain that adolescents will need a piece of paper and a pen or pencil, and a surface to write against. They will also need a household member who is willing to participate in an interview with the adolescent and share a story.
- Inform them of the date by which they should finish the activity, and how they should share what they created.



### 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.



### After the activity:

- Remind adolescents to share a photo of their written story, and any other work they have created. Explain how they can share these with you.
- As some adolescents begin to share their stories, send encouraging reminders to others to do the same.
- Share examples of the first stories you receive with positive comments, as encouragement for other adolescents to share their stories, too.
- Invite adolescents to respond to the following questions, one at a time.
  - What did you enjoy or find interesting or important about this story? What was it like to ask someone in your household a question you had never asked before?
  - Did you share your story with anyone else in your household, besides the person you interviewed? Did you learn anything new about each other? Tell us more!
  - Whose story did you enjoy a lot from the chat group? Tell the person who made it what you liked about it!
  - Reading the stories that others have shared, did anyone gather and write a similar story to yours?
  - Get creative! How could you create another diagram, drawing, photo collage, or video to capture another person's true story? 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.