

Suggested Interview Questions:

General

1. What is your full name, date and place of birth?
2. Were you born at home or at a hospital?
3. How was your name chosen?
4. What are your parents full names, dates and places of birth, dates of death and cemetery?

(F)	(M)
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5. When and where did your parents meet and marry?
6. What are your grandparents (all 4) full names, places of birth, dates of death and cemetery?

(PGF)	(PGM)
(MGF)	(MGM)

7. What can you tell about where your grandparents met or married?
8. What are your great-grandparents (all 8) full names, places of birth, dates of death and cemetery? And continue as far back as you know. (Use a chart or genealogy program to stay organized.)
Father's Grandparents:

(PGF)	(PGM)
(MGF)	(MGM)

Mother's Grandparents:

(PGF)	(PGM)
(MGF)	(MGM)

9. If any were born in a different county, did they describe their travel here? What was their reason for immigrating? Was it difficult to get used to a new way of life?
10. How did your parents, grandparents, and other relatives meet and marry? Are there family stories of lost love, jilted brides, unusual courtships, arranged marriages, or elopements?
11. What stories have come down to you about your parents? Grandparents? More distant ancestors? How have these relatives described their lives to you? What have you learned from them about their childhood, adolescence, schooling, marriage, work, religion, political activity, recreation?
12. Who is the oldest family person you personally knew? Tell me about this person.
13. Does your family have any heirlooms, objects of sentimental or monetary value, that have been handed down? What are they? Are there stories connected with them? (Take photos; use artifact record sheet.)
14. Who is the family historian? Do they have photographs, movies, slides?

Today

15. Describe your house in detail.
16. How have things changed since you were a child?
17. Describe the happiest time in your life.
18. Describe the saddest time in your life.
19. Describe the biggest accomplishment in your life.
20. If you had the opportunity to change anything in your life, what would it be?
21. What are your favorite things to do with your children? Your grandchildren?

22. What would you like to share with descendants? Philosophy of life? Religious beliefs? Encouragement and counsel?
23. What is the most important thing you would like your children to learn from you?

Growing Up

24. Describe your childhood house in detail. Draw layout.
25. Did you have your own room?
26. When was running water added? Electricity? Toilet? Telephone? Radio? Television? What was it like when these were installed? What did you use before?
27. How was your house heated?
28. Describe the city / town in which you grew up.
29. What was the first radio show you heard?
30. What was the first TV show you saw?
31. Did you have a refrigerator? Icebox?
32. Was there a vegetable garden? Fruit trees? Were the fruits and vegetables canned?
33. Did you store food in the cellar? What foods?
34. What kinds of chores did you have as a child? Before school? After school?
35. Did you help earn money to support your family?
36. What was your favorite toy?
37. What was your favorite thing to do?
38. Describe a typical day.
39. Describe a typical Sunday.
40. What was Hanukah morning like? What was a typical gift?
41. How did you celebrate birthdays?
42. How did you celebrate July 4th?
43. How did you celebrate Thanksgiving?
44. What is your favorite holiday memory?
45. Who were your best friends?

46. What games did you play? Jump Rope? Ball?
47. What schools did you attend?
48. How did you get to school?
49. What was your hardest subject in school? Easiest?
50. Who was your favorite teacher? Favorite subject?
51. How many were in a classroom?
52. When did you first drive a car? Officially and unofficially?
53. How much did gasoline cost then?
54. What gasoline brand did you buy?
55. Describe the cars the family owned? Year, color?
56. Did you have any pets?
57. Did you go to the movies? How much was admission?
58. Who were your favorite actor, actress, movie, recording artist?
59. Did you ever attend a play?
60. Did your family go on vacations?
61. When was the first time you were away from home?
62. What did you get caught doing after you were told not to do it?
63. What cemeteries did your family visit and who was buried there?
64. What synagogue did your family attend? What is different about it today?
65. How did you get to your church?
66. Do you remember any hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, or floods?
67. What were some memorable moments with your parents?
68. What were the best times spent with your grandparents?
69. Do you have any special memories of other relatives?
70. Did you attend family reunions? Who would attend? Are the reunions still being held?
71. What is your first memory as a child?
72. What is your favorite memory as a child?

73. Are there any funny family stories?
74. What did you want to be when you grew up?

Family

75. What was the happiest time for your family?
76. What was the saddest time for your family?
77. Was English the first language for everyone in you family?
78. Did anyone in the family speak with accents?
79. How many languages were spoken?
80. Did anyone in the family play musical instruments?
81. Who was the first in the family to attend college? What was the degree?
82. Who in the family knows how to sew, knit, crochet, or do needlework?
83. How did they learn?
84. Do you own any of the pieces? Tell me the details. (Take photo) .
85. Did anyone have professional portraits taken? On what occasion? Where are the portraits now? (Take picture of portrait if it is available)
86. Was there favorite family recipes? How were they passed down--by word of mouth, by observation, in writing? Are they still in use today? (Make copies of the recipes)
87. What does your family like to do together?
88. What traditions did your family have? Are they still practiced?
89. What makes your family special?

Growing up on a farm

90. Sketch a layout of the farm.
91. Sketch the outline of the barn.
92. Sketch the silo and the shape of the dome area. What was the silo made of?
93. What color were the buildings?
94. What kind of chores did you do before school?

95. What kind of chores did you do after school?
96. Was there a windmill?
97. What was the most dangerous thing you did on the farm?
98. What kinds of tractors did you have? How old were you when you first drove it?
99. Did you ever drive a team of horses and for what purpose?
100. What were your jobs during threshing?
101. Where did you purchase your groceries?
102. What was your cash crop?
103. Did you have a vegetable stand?
104. What were your responsibilities at the stand?
105. Did you have cows? What kind?
106. What dairy processed your milk?
107. What other animals were on the farm?
108. What happened when animals on the farm were sick.?
109. Did you grow your family meals? How about the Thanksgiving dinner?

Dating / Wedding

110. Where did you go on dates?
111. What were the best dates?
112. Did you often double date?
113. How did you first meet your spouse?
114. How soon before your first date?
115. Describe a typical date.
116. How soon before you married?
117. Describe your marriage proposal. What were the words? Where did it take place?
118. What did your parents say when you told them?
119. Describe your wedding clothes.

- 120. Where did you purchase them?
- 121. Describe your wedding ring.
- 122. Did you jointly decide on wedding rings?
- 123. What was your wedding day like? Temperature, kind of day? What were the festivities like?
- 124. Did you go on a honeymoon?
- 125. Where did you first live as a couple? And then where?
- 126. What are your children's names, dates and places of birth?
- 127. What do you most remember most about the day they were born?
- 128. How did you pick their names?

Occupation

- 129. Describe your work.
- 130. Describe how you arrived at that occupation.
- 131. What was a daily activity like at work?
- 132. Were the working conditions safe?
- 133. If you had an opportunity to have a different occupation, what would it have been?

Military

- 134. Were you ever in a war or serve in the military?
- 135. What do you remember most?
- 136. Where did you enlist? Why did you enlist?
- 137. Where did you serve?
- 138. What were your responsibilities?
- 139. What was your rank?
- 140. Were you awarded any medals? (Take photos)