

The Digital Life  
Grade 9 ELA  
Interviewing Skills

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

Questions and ideas should, as Kafka said of literature, “be the axe that breaks open the frozen sea within us.”

You will interview one or more people about a topic we will be discussing in class. For your interview to be successful, you must prepare for it.

### GOALS

You should be able to:

- Generate and ask effective interview questions
- Arrange the questions in the best order
- Pose follow-up questions for more detailed answers
- Take notes while others respond to your questions
- Synthesize your notes to be able to share them effectively

### STEP 1

Generate a list of people you could interview for this subject. Choose the people who will give the best information and be easiest to interview.

### STEP 2

Make a list of questions to ask these people. The questions should all be related to the topic you are investigating and should yield *interesting* and relevant information.

### STEP 3

Decide which questions to ask; you should ask no more than six or seven.

### STEP 4

Arrange your questions in the order in which you will ask them.

### STEP 5

Format your note-taking page: Write your questions in the left margin, leaving room between them for answers. You can also record your interview and later transcribe it to paper.

### STEP 6

Conduct your interview(s). If interviewing more than one person, consider interviewing them separately so one person’s answers do not influence the other person’s. As you interview, take notes in short phrases, jotting down both key ideas and memorable phrases. Also, ask follow-up questions when the subject says something interesting or is not forthcoming (“What did that feel like?” or “How did you respond to that?”). After you finish, go back over your notes and add any details that you didn’t have time to write down or that you remembered after you finished.

*Remember to thank the people you interview for taking the time to answer your questions!*