

Stock Interview Questions

Good interview questions make for good stories. Some interviews will be with people about other people or about events and happenings. Other interviews will be biographical, where you are interviewing the person about himself or herself.

You should spend time researching your story and writing questions before ever going out on an interview. If you really get stuck for a beginning, use the following ideas to help get you started. These questions are for biographical interviews.

- Who influenced you the most?
- When were you the happiest, saddest?
- If you could start over, how would you change things?
- How would others describe you?
- For what do you want to be remembered?
- What do you hope to be doing 10 years from now?
- How would you change things about this school?
- What would you like readers to know about you?
- What advice would you like to give?
- What has been the hardest obstacle you've had to overcome to get to where you are today?
- If you could thank one person right now for helping you out of some tough situation, who would it be?

Interviewing Checklist

Before going on your interview, make sure you have completed the following items. You might want to make copies of this page for each interview, or just make a mental check before heading out the door.

- _____ Interview scheduled
- _____ Questions written (at least 10 *good* questions)
- _____ Arrangements have been made to get you to your interview
- _____ Camera loaded and you know how to use it, or
- _____ Photographer arrangements made

To Take With You—

- _____ Reporter's Notebook (and possibly a recorder)
- _____ Pens/pencils & press badge and other credentials
- _____ Camera (or photographer)

During & After the Interview —

- _____ Read back all quotes for accuracy
- _____ Ask for exact spelling of all names
- _____ Send a copy of the rough draft if asked
- _____ Send a copy of the published story along with a note of thanks