

Checklist for Inquiry Interview

Content:

- Brainstorm a topic, or choose from list provided by teacher
- Brainstorm list of questions you have about the topic in general (for research)
- Research and get background information on your topic
- ****Do any of the scaffolding exercises the teacher provides to support your progress****
- Decide on a purpose for your project or choose from list provided by teacher
- Make an outline, mind map, notecards, or other tool for organizing the content you will target in your project.

I will demonstrate my understanding of (insert content, use, implications, etc here) with a (product type) for (insert purpose here).

Interview Preparation:

- Decide what type of person you want to interview re: your topic
- Find a person or two who meets your criteria
- Contact them IN ADVANCE about meeting with you for an interview. Be sure to let them know you are recording (audio, video) and if they are ok with you posting to the web if that is an option for you.
- ****Class will together go over question types and styles *****
- Create a list of questions for your subject.
- Have a peer review your questions and give you feedback.
- Practice asking the questions out loud so you are comfortable with the way they are phrased.

Technical Preparation:

- Decide on a media (audio or video) and which tool you will use (laptop, laptop with built in mic or external?, laptop video from iSight?, digital audio recorder, digital camera, digital video camera, cell phone, etc)

- Practice using the tools you have chosen at least twice, once in class with a peer, once at home or other venue similar to where you'll be doing your interview. (See individual tool checklists for skills)
- Troubleshoot as necessary; ask for help when you get stuck
- **Make sure you have all the cords, batteries, etc. necessary when you head out to your interview!

The Actual Interview

- If appropriate, provide your subject with the questions or an outline of your inquiry in advance so they can prepare if they choose to.
- Be sure the setting you choose is QUIET (close windows, avoid street noise), without lots of people around, and hopefully not echo-y. Find a place that isn't too large, and has a rug or soft furniture to absorb sound.
- Arrive 10 minutes early or set up early if the interview subject is coming to you
- Set up your gear, check cords, sound levels, settings, etc. as nec. for your tools
- If you are shooting video, be sure the lighting will be appropriate (and white balanced) for the subject (no backlighting!)
- Do a sound/video check to make SURE it's all working and recording. SAVE your file that you are recording in so it has a title, etc.
- Have a piece/pad of paper and something to write with.
- Spend a few minutes chatting with your subject: Hi, I'm so and so, thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me, are you comfortable, would you like a glass of water (as appropriate), this is my plan (brief 1 min overview), do you have any questions before we start? are you ready to begin? (Judge how loud the person speaks and where to place the mic, where to set the sound levels accordingly. IF they get significantly louder or softer when the interview starts, adjust settings/distance accordingly)
- Start the recording process - remember to give it 5+ seconds before you start talking.
- TRY not to add in audible cues while your subject answers your questions (Uhuh, Yes, Go on, etc) - you'll have to edit those out later. Instead, look engaged, make eye contact, nod as appropriate to let

them know to continue and that you are engaged and understand what they are saying. A puzzled look might get them to elaborate on something you don't understand.

- On the other hand, if they say something that is unclear or which you don't understand, make a note of it (on paper!) and then ask them to clarify when they finish their thought. Also note anything that comes up that you didn't expect that you want to ask about later.
- Always end with the opportunity for the subject to add anything that they feel is important that you may not have asked about.
- When you stop recording SAVE your file if you are working directly on the laptop.
- Take photographs of the subject (with their permission) after the interview, the setting, and any other relevant objects (equipment, historical photographs, objects, etc) that you can use for your project.
- Thank your subject for their time. Ask if you might follow up with an email or phone call (their preference) if you have additional questions.
- ****SEND a hand written thank you note! Not an email! Later you might send an email with a link to your finished product.

Now you have your raw material and can begin the editing process.

Before you jump into editing, be sure to **back up your original recordings** to CD, DVD, server space, external hard drive or other media so you can always go back and re-do if something goes wrong in the editing process.