



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Arranging the Interview

There are several ways to arrange an interview. Choose from the options below, or contact Aleah Vinick (aleah.vinick@mnhs.org) for assistance in locating an interested and appropriate senior interviewee.

Option #1: Class or small group brainstorm: ask each oral history group or the class as a whole to brainstorm about possible senior contacts. Remember, the subject must have been born between 1910 and 1929, and must have lived in Minnesota at some point during his/her life. A small incentive, such as extra credit points, can be the reward for a student who finds a willing subject, and/or sets up an interview.

Option #2: Contact your local senior center to find a willing participant, try <http://www.minnesotahelp.info>, or try doing a search through Meals on Wheels, at <http://www.mealcall.org>.

Conducting the Interview

Ideally, the students would all be able to interview a subject one-on-one, but the goal of this lesson is to rehearse oral history skills. The following options may be used when conducting the interview(s):

Option #1: Invite a member of the “Greatest Generation” into your classroom, and choose students to ask pre-approved questions on behalf of the class. Leave time for students to ask follow-up questions as needed. Tape or film the interview for students to refer to in future lessons.

Option #2: Appoint a student to represent each topic group and arrange for a PTA volunteer or paraprofessional to facilitate and film or record the small group interview while you teach the content lesson (or another activity) to the rest of the class.

Option #3: Create a written questionnaire from students’ questions and have a senior respond in writing (like a pen pal). Students can follow up with a second round of questions, if needed.