**The Family Biographer**

**Preamble:**

The word ***History*** has its roots in the Greek for inquiry, knowledge through investigation, which is perfectly fitting. Historians must collect, search, question, analyze, evaluate, connect and organize various perspectives and evidence to arrive at an understanding of the past and explanation of the present.

Every family is full of history. And, whether you believe it or not, your parents and grandparents lived through important, interesting and colourful historical events.

Additionally, whether you realize it or not, **YOU** have been impacted by the decisions your parents, and their parents made long before you were born.

**It is your task to learn about the history experienced by one of your elders and reflect upon how their past has influenced your present condition.**

The assignment has **two** parts:

**Part 1-** The Interview

* Choose a parent (or even better- a grandparent) and interview him/her about his/her life by asking a series of questions that reveal moments which were “historically significant” to them, and which paint a picture for you about what life was like in that time. Do not judge, just listen. You want to understand their “historical perspective” of the time you are discussing.
* It seems simple. You ask a question, and then record the answer. However, you should put careful thought into what you will be asking, in order to “get the most” from the interview.

**Part 2-** The Narrative

* Your job is to then turn this question/ answer session into a narrative, or short life story.
* After you tell this story, I would like you to include a paragraph reflecting on how life has changed since that time (continuity and change) and make connections (at least three ways) explaining how the choices made by this earlier generation have impacted your own life (cause and consequence).

**The final product should include: the transcribed interview and responses, and a typed, double spaced narrative no more than 750 words (3 pages) in length.**

**Due date: September 29th**

***Things to keep in mind:***

1. Set up a prearranged date and time, and stick to it! (be flexible if they need to change. They are doing YOU the favour).
2. Create about 10 open-ended interview questions in addition to “the basics” (background information) \*you may deviate from your scripted questions if your interview becomes more of a conversation– that’s okay!). MAKE SURE ALL OF THE “HISTORICAL THINKING CONCEPTS” ARE COVERED THROUGH THIS ASSIGNMENT.
3. You may need to do some prior research to ask good critical questions.
4. The beginning interview questions should ask the basics (place/ date of birth, marriage, children, etc). They introduce your interviewee. Move on from them quickly in your narrative.
5. Remember to explore how key social, economic, and political events in Canadian/World history have shaped your family history. In order to establish historical perspective you must understand the historical context.
6. Post interview, organize and sequence your interview notes then consider the structure of your written work. How are you going to consolidate these answers into a “fluid narrative”?
7. Title the biography, place your name on the first page and type using 12 point font.
8. Be sure to edit carefully!

1. Submit punctually.



**The Family Biographer Rubric**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Below Level 10 – 49% | Level 150 – 59% | Level 260 – 69% | Level 370 – 79% | Level 480 – 100% |
|  **Knowledge and Understanding** |
| Almost no understanding of and respect for the subject was evident as specific experiences and events were not recounted. | A partial understanding of and respect for the subject was evident with specific experiences and events barely recounted. | An adequate understanding of and respect for the subject was evident with specific experiences and events recounted. | A good understanding of and respect for the subject was evident with specific experiences and events recounted. | A thorough understanding of and respect for the subject was evident with specific experiences and events vividly recounted. |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 5.5 6 6.5 7 7.5 8 8.5 9 9.5 10  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Below Level 10 – 49% | Level 150 – 59% | Level 260 – 69% | Level 370 – 79% | Level 480 – 100% |
| **Thinking** |
| The questions asked and the moments described show almost no depth of thought or careful consideration. They do not revealing an understanding of the period. | The questions asked were minimally insightful. The moments described show minimal depth of thought and little consideration. They do not offer much insight into the period. | The questions asked were insightful. The moments described show adequate depth of thought and consideration. They offer some insight into the period. | The questions asked were significantly insightful. The moments described show significant depth of thought and consideration. They offer a significant level of insight into the period. | The questions asked were extremely insightful. The moments described show depth of thought and a high level of consideration. They offer a high level of insight into the period. |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 5.5 6 6.5 7 7.5 8 8.5 9 9.5 10  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Below Level 10 – 49% | Level 150 – 59% | Level 260 – 69% | Level 370 – 79% | Level 480 – 100% |
| **Communication** |
| Biography inadequately communicated with many grammatical or spelling errors.  | Biography almost adequately communicated with many grammatical or spelling errors. | Biography adequately communicated with some grammatical or spelling errors. | Biography effectively communicated with minimal grammatical or spelling errors. | Biography very effectively communicated without grammatical or spelling errors. |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 5.5 6 6.5 7 7.5 8 8.5 9 9.5 10  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Below Level 10 – 49% | Level 150 – 59% | Level 260 – 69% | Level 370 – 79% | Level 480 – 100% |
| **Application** |
| An absence of historical thinking concepts (historical perspective, historical significance, cause and consequence, continuity and change).  | Some evidenceof historical thinking concepts (historical perspective, historical significance, cause and consequence, continuity and change). | Adequate evidence of historical thinking concepts (historical perspective, historical significance, cause and consequence, continuity and change). | Adequate evidence of historical thinking concepts (historical perspective, historical significance, cause and consequence, continuity and change). | Thorough evidence of historical thinking concepts (historical perspective, historical significance, cause and consequence, continuity and change). |
| 0 1 2 3 4 5 5.5 6 6.5 7 7.5 8 8.5 9 9.5 10  |

**Before submitting your assignment**

\*I will not accept it unless all boxes are checked off ☺

Checklist:

 Interview questions and responses included

 Both the narrative AND the connection

 Paragraph included

 Reading your narrative will help the reader

understand what life was like in the past

Reading your connection paragraph will show that you understand ways that times have changed, and how you have been impacted by the choices made by your subject

 **Thoroughly** proof read

