

Life History Questions

You can cut the questions into individual strips and put in a jar and draw one out each day or week to write about, or you can do it by categories.

QUESTIONS BY CATEGORY

Family History

- * Tell about any ancestors you know about . . . Dates? Names? Any stories you know about them?
- * Do you remember any of your four grandparents? What were their names? What memories do you have of them? Did you have an especially close relationship with any of them?
- * What did your grandfathers do for a living? Did your grandmothers work too? Tell about it.
- * Where did your grandparents live? What was their home like? Did it have a certain smell, or look or feel?
- * Do you remember any of your great-grandparents? What were their names? What memories do you have of them? What did they do for a living?
- * Tell a courtship story about your parents, how they met, etc.
- * How old were your parents when they married? Describe them, their plans, hopes and dreams at that time.
- * What do you know about their wedding?
- * Where did your parents live when they were first married? Tell about other places they lived as well.
- * Tell about your father. Personality, characteristics, stature, coloring, talents, temperament, family stories about him, his role in your home, etc. What were your father's best traits? His worst? Traits you share? Write a want-ad that describes your father. Did you and your father share an interest in any special activity? What was it?
- * Tell about your mother. Personality, characteristics, stature, coloring, talents, temperament, family stories about her, her role in your home, etc. What were your mother's best traits? Her worst? The ones you share? Write a want-ad that describes your mother. Did you and your mother share an interest in any special activity? What was it?
- * Tell about any conditions surrounding your birth that you are aware of. Tell any interesting stories about your beginnings (how your name was chosen, close calls, etc.)
- * List each of your uncles and aunts and tell something about each of them. Do/did you have a favorite uncle? A favorite aunt? What made them your favorite?
- * Are there any family heirlooms in your possession? Tell about them and how you came to acquire them.

Childhood

- * What did you used to do as a child that got you into the most trouble with your parents? How did they handle it?
- * What do you remember about the day you were baptized?
- * Tell about a favorite vacation from your childhood.
- * Tell about your favorite games as a child. What games did you play in your house or neighborhood?
- * Describe your yard as a child . . . did you help with yard work? What are your memories? Draw a diagram if you can.
- * Describe getting a Christmas tree with your family as a child . . . how did you decorate it? When did you put it up?
- * Describe the downtown of your childhood at Christmas time.
- * Thinking back, was there a teacher(s) or class that had a great influence on you?
- * Describe a typical school day as a child in elementary school. Did you have favorite subject in school? One you dreaded?
- * Tell about your family traditions . . . Christmas, birthdays, graduations, 4th of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving, hunting, funerals, Memorial Day, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, weddings.
- * Tell about home cures or old wives' tales . . . hiccups, warts, toothaches, colds, earaches, birth control, arthritis, etc.
- * How did you like being the youngest/oldest/middle child? Did it have any particular advantages or disadvantages?
- * Tell about school. Schools attended, special teachers, friends, classes, activities, humorous situations, achievements, etc.
- * Do you have a special elementary school memory?
- * Tell about any pets you had as a child.
- * Describe a trip downtown as a youngster.
- * What was your favorite Saturday activity as a child?
- * What lessons did you take as a child that have carried over into your adult life? What lessons haven't? (i.e. piano, violin, dance, guitar)
- * Do you recall any outstanding family trips or summer holidays you experienced as a child?
- * Where did you live as a child? (i.e. city, country, suburb)
- * Tell about the house(s) you lived in during your childhood. Do you remember the addresses or phone numbers? What color was your house, your bedroom, your living room?

- * Were you responsible for any household chores? What were they? Which did you most enjoy? Least enjoy?
- * Describe a sound from your childhood. What was it? When did you hear it? What does it bring to mind?
- * Tell the words of a song from your childhood. What memories does it bring?
- * What did you want to be when you grew up?
- * Do you recall any special events which took place on your block or in your neighborhood while you were growing up? (i.e. death, fires, accidents, illness, quarantines)
- * What church callings did your parents have? What do you remember about their church callings?
- * Tell about your parents' philosophy of raising children; discipline, rules, etc.
- * Tell about religious practices in your home, faith-promoting stories, etc.
- * What was a favorite place to go with your family when you were young?
- * Describe a favorite childhood friend and some things you did with him or her.
- * Did you have a bicycle? What was it like?
- * Did it snow where you lived as a child? What kinds of things did you do in the snow?
- * Describe a childhood birthday.
- * How did your mother spend her time?
- * Describe a childhood Christmas. Tell about happy/sad memories connected with Christmas-time.
- * Write about some places you went with your mother. Do you remember shopping with your mother? Any particular stores? What was your favorite store?
- * What did your father do for a living? How did he get to work, what time did he go and get home, did he take lunch? Who did he work with? Did he get special training from anyone or anywhere to do his job?
- * Tell about some of your neighbors as a child.
- * Do you remember any special feelings you had as a child? (Fears, fantasies, etc.)
- * Did you have a special or favorite outfit as a youngster? Describe it and why it was memorable.
- * Did you belong to girl scouts, boy scouts, or 4-H? Tell about experiences you had there.
- * Did you go camping? Tell about your camping experiences.
- * Did you have a favorite toy as a child? Did it have a name? What memories are connected with it?
- * Who is the first Prophet you remember? What do you remember about him?
- * Did you have special relationships with any of your brothers and sisters? Tell of your memories of each of them as a child.

Teenage Years, Early Adulthood

- * Tell about how, when, where you learned to drive. Any memorable experiences?
- * Were you responsible for any household chores? What were they? Which did you most enjoy? Least enjoy?
- * Thinking back, was there a teacher(s) or class that had a great influence on you?
- * Describe a typical day during your junior high and high school years. Did you have favorite subject in school? One you dreaded?
- * Tell about school. Schools attended, special teachers, friends, classes, activities, humorous situations, achievements, etc.
- * Tell about your teenage social life: Your friends, dances, movies, dating, outings, church functions, etc.
- * Do you have a special junior high school memory? A special high school memory?
- * Describe your first "crush". What was he/she like?
- * Tell about your early romances.
- * What convinced you most in your choice of spouse?
- * What were your fears, expectations, anticipations about getting married?
- * Tell about a special date you had with a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- * What kind of school extracurricular activities did you participate in? Were you ever in a drama, speech, sports, pep, glee or other club? Tell about it.
- * What do you remember about yourself as a teenager? What was important to you? Your dreams? Goals?
- * Did you go on a mission? If so, where and when? What do you most remember about it? Did you learn a foreign language? If so, can you still speak it?
- * Tell about some of your neighbors as a youth.
- * Did you have a special or favorite outfit as a youth? Describe it and why it was memorable.
- * Did you belong to girl scouts, boy scouts, or 4-H? Tell about experiences you had there. Any especially exciting or hair-raising experiences in scouting?
- * Did you go camping? Tell about your camping experiences.
- * How did your relationships with your brothers and sisters change in adolescence and young adulthood? Were there disagreements or problems between you? Would you do anything differently if you could go back and try again?
- * Do you remember receiving the Priesthood? Do you have significant memories associated with that? Who ordained you?

Courtship, Marriage and Children

- * How did you meet? Tell a story about your courtship.
- * How did you become engaged?
- * How old were you and your spouse when you married? Describe yourselves, your plans, your hopes and dreams at that time.
- * Describe your wedding day. When, where, by whom, parties given, reception, maid of honor, best man, colors, flowers, special music, etc.
- * How did you first meet your in-laws?
- * Tell something about each of your children:
 - Name
 - Birth date and place
 - Doctor and events surrounding their birth
 - Joys, accomplishments, challenges and sorrows of raising each one
 - Personalities and talents
 - Traits that make them different and special.
- * What was the first piece of furniture you bought?
- * Tell about your family traditions . . . Christmas, birthdays, graduations, 4th of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving, hunting, funerals, Memorial Day, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, weddings.
- * Tell about anniversaries . . . Celebrations? Gifts? Trips?
- * Describe your first home or apartment as a young married couple.
- * Tell something about your bride's/your cooking skills. What was yours/your spouse's favorite dish? Any fun or funny experiences connected with cooking or food?
- * Describe a favorite or special vacation together. What is/was a favorite place to go with your spouse and children?
- * Tell about some of your neighbors and friends. What did you like to do together?
- * Any special challenges in establishing compatibility?
- * Write a want ad that describes your spouse.
- * Write a want ad that describes yourself as a spouse.

Employment

- * Describe your first paying job. What was your salary? Your duties? What was your boss like?
- * Tell about all of the places you've worked.
- * What is your principal occupation, and what circumstances led to that choice?
- * What was your most significant contribution in your employment? Did it bring you satisfaction?
- * Were there special people you met through your employment? Do you still have friendships with them?
- * What was it you most enjoyed about your employment? Least enjoyed?
- * What was it others most enjoyed or appreciated about you in your work?
- * Would you choose differently if you could choose your occupation again? Why? How? Any advice to pass on?

Retirement

- * Tell about your life as the children left home. New interests? What did you do with the extra time? New employment? Hobbies?
- * Tell about your retirement. Where from? When? What was your motivation? What did/will you do with your time?
- * What were/are your dreams, fantasies, fears and insecurities about retiring? Have any of them come true?
- * What are your most significant accomplishments during retirement? Tell about any missions, special trips, etc.

Philosophy and Testimony

- * ONE WORD on how to live successfully.
- * What is your greatest joy? Your greatest sorrow?
- * What is the most important lesson, message, or advice you've learned that you'd like to pass on for others to profit by?
- * Tell about the changes you've seen in your lifetime: society in general, technology, fashion, fads, morality, politics, etc.
- * What are your most precious and deeply embedded values?
- * What personality trait do you most admire? Why?
- * How do you feel about winning? Losing?

- * Write your testimony of life, marriage, the gospel.
- * How do you feel about schooling/education?
- * What would you like to be remembered for?
- * Share a principle you have learned, or one you have taught.
- * What is your advice to those younger than you?
- * How do you feel about death? What is your philosophy of after-life? (If this is a tough one, skip it.)
- * What is your personal secret for happiness?

Miscellaneous Memories

- * Have you met or worked with any famous people? Who, when, where, etc?
- * What do you feel has been the most significant world event that has taken place during your lifetime and why?
- * What is the most wonderful thing that ever happened to you? The worst?
- * What are your food preferences? How did they come about?
- * Tell about your grandchildren . . . How many? Names? How do you feel about being a grandparent?
- * Were there any events, world or local or personal, that changed your life?
- * Tell about any interesting or important visitors to your home.
- * What lessons did you take as a child that have carried over into your adult life? What lessons haven't? (i.e. piano, violin, dance, guitar)
- * Describe the most serious illness you have had.
- * What kind of music do you like? Any memories associated with specific music?
- * What is your favorite book? What do books mean to you? Tell about your favorite books as a child . . . youth . . . favorite author(s).
- * Describe walking down Main Street in your home town.
- * Tell about a frustrating experience you've had with a car.
- * Do you like rain storms? Why or why not? Do you have memories connected with rain?
- * How about wind?
- * What do you think about television? Do you have a favorite TV show? Describe it.
- * Do you remember a special birthday party you've had, given or been to? Describe it - people, food, games, etc.

- * Do you have a favorite general authority/authorities? Who and why?
- * What are your favorites? (color, flower, food, activity, hobby, etc.)
- * What musical instrument(s) do you play, or wish you could play?
- * If you could be a tree or animal or flower, what kind would you be and why?
- * What is the most adventuresome thing you have ever done?
- * Describe the perfect spring/summer/autumn/winter day, and activities done on that day.
- * What are you frightened of? Why?
- * What are some of your favorite smells? Why?
- * How many brothers and sisters do you have? Describe them. What makes each of your brothers and sisters special? Be specific. Tell a story about you and each of them.
- * Tell about family reunions.
- * What is the one invention you could not live without and why?
- * What do you think about movies? What is your favorite movie and why?
- * What things do you enjoy doing today that you also enjoyed as a child? Describe then and now - differences and similarities.
- * Where were you and what were you doing the day President Kennedy was shot? The day the first man landed on the moon? The day Pearl Harbor was bombed? The day the wall came down in East Germany? The day of the coup of the USSR?
- * What is your favorite scripture? Why?
- * What kinds of sports did you play when you were younger? Watch? Enjoy? How about now?
- * What is your favorite animal? Tell why.
- * Where would you most like to live and why?
- * Where would you most like to vacation and why?
- * What brings you the most peace and why?
- * Tell how you feel about water, playing in it, seeing it, using it. Tell about various bodies of water you have seen and experiences or feelings about each.
- * Tell about dreams, expectations, hopes you have for each of your children.
- * What are the most exciting places you have ever been to? What made them exciting?
- * What do you fantasize about being or doing?
- * Tell about fishing or hunting experiences.

- * What kinds of foods do you consider to be "picnic food"? Where do you like to go to picnic?
- * Where do you like to go to eat out? What do you order?
- * Do you have a favorite magazine? Describe it and the kinds of things you learn from it or enjoy about it.
- * What makes you feel good? (Occasion, food, person, etc.)
- * Do you like to go to the theater? Opera? Symphony? Which do you like best? Which production did you like best and why?
- * What does the mail mean to you? Are you a good letter writer? Who do you or have you corresponded with? Do you have special memories connected with letters to or from someone special?
- * How do you feel about doctors? Why?
- * How do you feel about dentists? Why?

Military Experiences

- * Did you serve in the military? If so, what branch, where and when? What do you most remember about the experience?
- * Did you have roommates or companions? Tell about them and the things you learned from living with others (besides your immediate family).
- * How long did you serve? What rank did you attain?
- * Any life lessons you learned?
- * Any faith-promoting experiences?
- * Did you make any especially close friends? Do you still have a relationship with them?
- * Did you lose any close friends? How did you deal with that?
- * How was your life changed by the experience?
- * What would you like your posterity to remember about or learn from your military experience?
- * Did you come away with strong feelings about war? Our national leaders? Any nationalities? The flag? The National Anthem?
- * Do you still have ties with the military or any veterans' organizations?
- * Do you have any advice to our world leaders or your family or friends about peace and world relations?

Advanced Education

- * Did you go to college or take any vocational training? What and where?
- * Did you receive education somewhere other than a school/college/vocational training center?
- * Did you have roommates? Tell about them and the things you learned from living with others (besides your immediate family).
- * Do you have a special college memory?
- * What was the most significant lesson you learned at college - outside of the classroom?
- * Did you complete a degree? What was it?
- * Do you feel your college/vocational experience was valuable?
- * Do you encourage others to pursue advanced degrees or education? Why or why not?
- * What is the most valuable thing about furthering your education?

Civic/Political Activities

- * What political party comes closest to representing your own point of view? How do you feel about politics?
- * Have you held any elected or appointed offices? How did you feel about it? What was your most significant contribution there? Did you find it a rewarding experience? Challenging experience? If you had it to do over again, would you want to?
- * Were any of your ancestors politically or civically active? What positions did they hold? Do you share any of their political or civic views? Tell about them.
- * What is your philosophy of public service?

Church Activity, Service

- * Describe your conversion to the gospel.
- * Do you feel a person must be converted, even if they are born into the church? Why or why not?
- * What church callings have you had? Which did you enjoy the most? Why? Which did you enjoy the least? Why?
- * Have you made special friends in your church work? Who are they?
- * What have you learned from your church callings?

* Did you have any special spiritual or faith-promoting experiences associated with a church calling? What did you learn or feel as a result?

* Can you attribute the development or strengthening of your testimony to particular events, people or callings?

* Has your religious membership/service/activity been meaningful to you? Why or why not? Are there insights you would like to pass on to your posterity about church service?

* Have you had any spiritual or faith-promoting experiences or insights that you feel could benefit your family or others? Tell about them in detail.

* Are there aspects of your testimony you think your family or others are not aware of? Do you think it would be of value to share those things?