

Lesson Plan: Oral History 1

Oral History Project: Introduction (Part 1 of 7)

Subjects: Language Arts, CHamoru, Oral History

Time required: 45 minutes

Related links: [Guampedia Oral Histories](#), [Voices of Our Elders](#), and [Micronesia Portal](#)

Grade-level: Elementary [3-5]

Materials required: Flipchart or chalk board, markers or chalk, jar with five types of candy

Description

This lesson will serve as an overall introduction to the unit and its participants. Students will play an ice-breaker, then interview the teacher, and lastly the final project (a recorded oral history) will be introduced.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will begin to learn about this unit.
- Students will begin to think about oral history and its methods through the introduction of trainers and participants.
- Students will begin to develop ideas for interviewing and information-gathering.

Questions or Assessment

- Who is my teacher?
- How do I find out more about him/her?

Procedure

Teacher prep

Obtain five kinds of candy.

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

1. Participants draw up to five candies from the bag
2. Explain to participants that the kinds of candies they chose correspond to different categories
 - A favorite hobby
 - A favorite place on earth
 - A favorite food
 - Someone you admire or look up to
 - Tell us anything random about yourself
3. Every participant shares up to five things about themselves, depending on the types of candy they chose.

Sample transition: “Now that I’ve gotten to know all of you a little better, I’m going to give all of you some time to find out who I am.”

Know Your Teacher: Initial Interviewing (15 minutes)

Students can ask questions of the teacher. The teacher should at times try to be evasive, give very short answers, refuse to answer, or be very long-winded.

Sample transition: “What you’ve done just now is interview me. All of you are familiar with interviews—you’ve seen them on the news, read quotes in the newspaper, or perhaps heard them on the radio. You can see that sometimes it can be very difficult to do. What are some things you think will help you get answers or find out the information you want to know?”

Discussion: List ways to improve interviews, information-gathering. Save list for use in later lesson.

Project Explanation (10-15 minutes)

1. Explain to students that there are lots of ways to get information; have students name some (newspapers, books, TV, radio, internet, Guampedia!)
2. Tell students that CHamorus and other Pacific Islanders have traditionally used storytelling as a way to pass on history and knowledge. Visit [Puntan and Fu’una: Gods of Creation](#) on Guampedia for more information on the development of CHamorus on Guam). Also visit Guampedia’s [Micronesia Portal](#) to learn about our neighbors.
3. Explain to students that as Guamanians we will also learn how to share history and knowledge through storytelling.
4. Describe the final project as an opportunity to interview and record an elder.
5. Review the big schedule.
 - Every class begins with a listening exercise
 - Review lessons for the day
 - Incorporate games and activities throughout each session
 - Sometimes outside field work will be assigned, but it won’t take long too do and it will be fun
6. Solicit/brainstorm ideas for things they want to know/interview about.

Lesson Plan: Oral History 2

Oral History Project: What is an oral history? (Part 2 of 7)

Time required: 65 minutes (This can be separated into two classes.)

Related links: Guampedia [Oral Histories](#), [Arts Voices of Our Elders](#), and [StoryCorps](#)

Materials required: Flipchart or chalk board, markers or chalk, paper, CD player and speakers or internet connection and Guampedia

Description

With this lesson, students will begin to think about the term “oral history”, what it means, and how they are effective.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will be introduced to an example of oral history.
- Students will begin thinking about the significance of oral history.
- Students will arrive at personal and group definitions of “oral history”.
- Students will practice interviewing each other (work on interviewing and listening skills).

Questions or Assessment

- What is an oral history?
- Where do oral histories come from?
- Who creates oral histories?

Procedure

Teacher prep

Obtain an audio recording of an oral history. The [StoryCorps](#) link is useful, or play the audio portion of an appropriate Guampedia Arts video.

Game (6 minutes)

1. A student is chosen as leader.
2. He/she claps hands in a unique rhythm.
3. The class repeats the sounds in unison.
4. The student chooses a new leader, and the process is repeated.

Oral History Example (10 minutes)

1. Play a short example of an oral history recording to the students.
2. Ask children how the recording made them feel.
 - “What did you learn?”
 - Highlight ability of oral histories to convey history.
 - “Did it make you laugh/cry?” “Did it make you want to learn more?”
 - Emphasize emotional power of recordings.

Defining Oral History – Personal Understanding (15 minutes)

1. Ask kids to express on a piece of paper their definition/understanding of “oral history” (students will not have correct understandings of “oral history”... this is okay and welcomed... students will return to these definitions at the end of the unit in order to see how much they have learned).
2. Share a few of the personal definitions with the class.

Defining Oral History – Group Understanding (10 minutes)

1. Write common terms and ideas from personal definitions onto flip chart.
2. From terms and ideas, arrive at group definition for “oral history” on flip chart.

Interviewing Peers (15 minutes)

1. Separate into pairs, and one student interviews the other on a topic for 5 minutes.
2. Switch roles, and repeat interview for 5 minutes.
3. Come together as a group and have each student recount their partner’s story.

Game (6 minutes)

1. Teacher compiles a list of facts from the student’s stories in the previous activity.
2. Ask students as a group to identify the person to which the fact applies (e.g. “Who’s favorite food is pizza?”).

Recap (4 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

“We've listened to an oral history, learned that oral histories are powerful conveyors of history, come up with a group definition, practiced interviewing, and worked on our listening skills.”

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.

Lesson Plan: Oral History 3

Oral History Project: How do we make an Oral History? (Part 3 of 7)

Time required: 60-75 minutes (This can be separated among two days.)

Materials required: Flipchart or chalk board, markers or chalk

Related links: [Guampedia](#) [Baseball: History of the Sport on Guam](#), [Coral Reef Fish of Guam](#), [Fanhasso: War for Guam](#), [StoryCorps](#)

Description

With this lesson, students will begin to formulate the steps needed to undertake an oral history. They will also begin brainstorming on topics for the class final project.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will identify the steps needed to complete an oral history.
- Students will plan their oral history project.
- Students will practice questioning skills by playing a game.
- Students will practice interviewing a teacher about a specific topic.

Questions or Assessment

- How are oral histories developed?
- What specific steps can we take in order to create one?
- What should we focus upon for our class oral history?

Procedure

Teacher prep. None

Game (6 minutes)

1. Repeat the game from the previous lesson by citing unique information about a student and asking the class to identify the individual
2. Recap with students the significance of oral information, and how they have retained the information from the previous day through oral means.

How are Oral Histories Done? (15 minutes)

1. Ask students what sort of work they think goes into an oral history (ex. “recording”, “research”).
2. Ask students to help reorder the list they've made into steps.
3. Guide students until they arrive at the following outline (additions to this list are okay)
 - Background research
 - The interview (who, types of questions, what are we aiming to understand)
 - Transcribing
 - Dissemination (archiving, publishing, radio)

Plan Our Oral History Project (15 minutes)

1. Use outline from previous activity as a guideline for student project
2. Develop the guidelines into steps for project (guide students to create the following outline)
 - Pick topic (ex. [WWII](#), [Coral Reef Fish of Guam](#), [Baseball](#) on Guam)
 - Bonus: Have students first browse through [Guampedia](#) to compile a list of interesting topics to study. (*Add 15 minutes if you choose to do this.*)
 - Pick person
 - Research
 - Identify things to learn
 - Develop questions
 - Transcribe
 - Share

3. With time permitting, begin brainstorming and expanding on things (ex. Ask kids how we should share the oral histories)
4. Label the steps as a “checklist”, and refer back to this checklist in future lessons

Game – 20 Questions (10 minutes)

1. Teacher thinks of an object, and students attempt to figure it out by asking up to 20 questions. The aim is to teach students to direct their questioning from broad to focused (from “is it a living thing?” to “is it a gecko?”).
2. Recap that we’ve practiced directed/focused questioning.

Practice Interviewing (10 minutes)

1. Students practice questioning skills by interviewing teacher on a specific topic (ex. Her trip to China, Her new puppy). Remind students during interview to practice the skills learned in previous game.
2. Recap interview. Highlight areas students excelled and areas in need of improvement.

Recap (4 minutes)

Recap what we’ve done and learned in the lesson:

“We’ve determined what goes into making an oral history, what we need to do to complete our project, and practiced our interviewing skills.”

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.

Lesson Plan: Oral History 4

Oral History Project: Preparing for our oral history (Part 4 of 7)

Time required: 70 minutes (This can be separated among two days.)

Related links: Guampedia [Voices of Our Elders StoryCorps](#)

Materials required: Flipchart or chalk board, markers or chalk, recording device, CD player and speakers

Description

In this lesson, students will learn the mechanics of using a recording device, as well as begin to plan out their interview.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will learn the basics of using a digital recording device.
- Students will devise a list of topics to cover in their interview.
- Students, in pairs, will develop a list of questions on each topic.
- Students will develop a plan to research their respective topics.

Procedure

Teacher prep. None

Game (7 minutes)

1. A student picks a game from the “games bag”.
2. Play game.
3. Recap what we learned from game (dependent on type of game... refer to games list).

Introduction to Recording Equipment (20 minutes)

1. Show students the recording equipment to be used. (Anything from a cassette tape recorder, to a digital recorder on a phone, to a laptop with a mic can be used).
2. Demonstrate to the students how the equipment is used to record and playback.
3. Play sound samples (off speakers) of different recorder positions:
 - Too close to one person, uneven sound.
 - Too far, no sound.
 - Too close to mouth, pops.
4. With teacher seated in a new location, ask students to position recorder in the correct place.

Introduction to Research (10 minutes)

1. Ask students to come up with topic areas for the interview. (e.g. food, fashion, family life).
2. List them on board, and have students consolidate them in order of importance/interest.
3. Assign each topic to a pair of students.

Developing Topic Ideas (20 minutes)

1. In pairs, students determine what they want to learn about their topic. 10 minutes.
2. Each pair shares their ideas with the group for feedback. 10 minutes.

Overview of Research Resources (10 minutes)

1. Have students develop a list of research resources.
2. Outline basic steps students should do at home:
 - Ask parents
 - Check internet and Guampedia (Demonstrate Guampedia to the class)
 - Check books, library (if possible)
3. Come up with basic questions each pair should answer for their topic, due by the next class.
4. Have students write down the outline and their questions into notebooks.

Recap (3 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

“We've learned how to use a recording device and position it correctly, we've developed a list of interview topics and questions, and determined a plan to do the necessary background research.”

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.

Lesson Plan: Oral History 5

Oral History Project: Preparing for our oral history (Part 5 of 7)

Time required: 45 minutes

Related links: Guampedia [Voices of Our Elders](#)
[StoryCorps](#)

Materials required: Flipchart or chalk board,
markers or chalk

Description

In this lesson students will develop an understanding of how their subject will likely guide the interview and practice their interview skills.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will understand how oral history interviewees themselves largely guide the interview.
- Students will develop a list of guidelines and goals for an interview.
- Student will practice interviewing for an extended period of time.

Procedure

Teacher prep

Teacher reviews list previously developed by students of potential topics for interviewing.

Listening Game: Round Robin Follow-ups (10 minutes)

1. One student agrees to tell one story.
2. Sitting in a circle, the second student has to ask a question related to the story.
3. Students go around the circle and ask questions related to the response given to the previously asked question.
4. During this time, the teacher notes the questions, their directions, and summarizes at the end where the questioning went by the end.
 - “What we did today was focus very carefully on what the person before said. Today, we will have to do that as we practice our interviewing because oral history interviewing is a special kind of interviewing.”

Lesson Recap/Oral History Mini-Lesson (10 minutes)

1. Review that in the previous lessons students discussed the meaning of oral history:
 - “Last week we talked about what an oral history is. What did we decide an oral history was? . . . Last week we also practiced interviewing, like you see on television. Well, those are great ways to get information from people. But oral history is a little different, and requires different kinds of interviewing skills.”
2. Review oral history components:
 - Journalism = Seeking information (telling what happened).
 - Oral history = Seeking information (searching for information).
 - Oral history is about discovery! It's about letting your interviewee guide you to information!
 - “Think of an oral history guest speaker as a big frog. This frog starts out on one lily pad. You ask a question, and the frog can jump to many different lily pads (or topics). For the frog to move, you have to ask a question about that lily pad (topic). In other words, you let the frog's jumping show you how to ask the question.”

Interview Goal Setting (10 minutes)

1. As a group, students develop a list of guidelines for their interview of the teacher. (e.g. Sit upright, don't talk over one another, ask follow-up questions).
2. As a group, the students list goals for the interview (e.g. We want to learn about fashion in China).

Practice Interviewing (15 minutes)

1. Students practice questioning skills by interviewing teacher on a specific topic (ex. His/her trip to China, his/her new puppy).
2. Encourage pairs of students to cover their topic areas.

Pause and Reflect (5 minutes)

1. Pausing the interview, ask students to reflect on what went well, and what needs improvement.
2. If needed, students can suggest how to improve the direction of the interview.

Continue Practice Interview (15 minutes)

1. Students continue the interview.
2. Recap interview. Highlight areas students excelled and areas in need of improvement.

Analyzing Interview (10 minutes)

1. Using the previously created "guidelines" and "goals" lists, the students determine whether they met their objectives.
2. Ideas and suggestions are made in preparation for the upcoming interview with a CHamoru elder.

Recap (3 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

"We've developed a list of interview topics and questions, and determined a plan to do the necessary background research."

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.

Lesson Plan: Oral History 6

Oral History Project: Preparing for our oral history (Part 6 of 7)

Time required: 45 minutes (This can be separated into two days.)

Related documents: Recording release

Related links: Guampedia [Voices of Our Elders](#)

[StoryCorps](#)

Materials required: Flipchart or chalk board, markers or chalk, recording device, CD player and speakers

Description

In this lesson students will become familiar with the recording device and prepare for their interview.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will learn the basics of using a digital recording device.
- Students will devise a list of topics to cover in their interview.
- Students, in pairs, will develop a list of questions on each topic.
- Students will develop a plan to research their respective topics.

Procedure

Teacher prep

1. Schedule speaker
2. Have speaker sign recording release
3. Set up recording equipment

Pre-Interview Prep (10 minutes)

1. Remind students to ask broad questions at first, followed by possible focused questions (like game of 20 questions played in previous lesson).
2. Ask students to be mindful of the time, and to allow for everyone to get a chance to ask questions.
3. Ask students to relax and be polite.

Conducting the Oral History (35 minutes)

1. Demonstrate to the students how the equipment is used to record and playback.
2. Play sound samples (off speakers) of different recorder positions:
 - Too close to one person, uneven sound
 - Too close to mouth, pops
 - Too far, no sound
3. With teacher seated in a new location, ask students to position recorder in the correct place.

Introduction to Research (10 minutes)

1. Ask students to come up with topic areas for the interview (e.g. food, fashion, family life).
2. List them on board, and have students consolidate them in order of importance/interest.
3. Assign each topic to a pair of students.

Developing Topic Ideas (20 minutes)

1. In pairs, students determine what they want to learn about their topic. 10 minutes.
2. Each pair shares their ideas with the group for feedback. 10 minutes.

Overview of Research Resources (10 minutes)

1. Have students develop a list of research resources.
2. Outline basic steps students should do at home:
 - Ask parents
 - Check Internet and Guampedia (if possible, demonstrate Guampedia to the class)
 - Check books, library (if possible)
3. Come up with basic questions each pair should answer for their topic, due by the next class.
4. Have students write down the outline and their questions into notebooks.

Recap (3 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

“We've learned how to use a recording device and position it correctly, we've developed a list of interview topics and questions, and determined at a plan to do the necessary background research.”

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.

Lesson Plan: Oral History 7

Oral History Project: Preparing for our oral history (Part 7 of 7)

Time required: 70 minutes (This can be separated into two days.)

Related links: Guampedia [Voices of Our Elders Story Corps](#)

Materials required: Flipchart or chalk board, markers or chalk, recording device, CD player and speakers

Description

In this lesson students will continue to become familiar with a recording device and prepare for their interview.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will learn the basics of using a digital recording device.
- Students will devise a list of topics to cover in their interview.
- Students, in pairs, will develop a list of questions on each topic.
- Students will develop a plan to research their respective topics.

Procedure

Teacher prep. None

Game (7 minutes)

1. A student picks a game from the “games bag.”
2. Play game.
3. Recap what we learned from game (dependent on type of game... refer to games list).

Introduction to Recording Equipment (20 minutes)

1. Show students the recording equipment to be used (anything from a cassette tape recorder, to a digital recorder on a phone, to a laptop with a mic can be used).
2. Demonstrate to the students how the equipment is used to record and playback.
3. Play sound samples of different recorder positions:

- Too close to one person, uneven sound.
 - Too far, no sound.
 - Too close to mouth, pops.
4. With teacher seated in a new location, ask students to position recorder in the correct place.

Introduction to Research (10 minutes)

1. Ask students to write thank you letters to the interviewee:
 - Come up with topic areas for the interview (ex. food, fashion, family life).
2. List them on board, and have students consolidate them in order of importance/interest.
3. Assign each topic to a pair of students.

Developing Topic Ideas (20 minutes)

1. In pairs, students determine what they want to learn about their topic. 10 minutes.
2. Each pair shares their ideas with the group for feedback. 10 minutes.

Overview of Research Resources (10 minutes)

1. Have students develop a list of research resources.
2. Outline basic steps students should do at home:
 - Ask parents.
 - Check Internet and Guampedia (Demonstrate Guampedia to the class).
 - Check books, library (if possible).
3. Come up with basic questions each pair should answer for their topic, due by the next class.
4. Have students write down the outline and their questions into notebooks.

Recap (3 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

“We've learned how to use a recording device and position it correctly, we've developed a list of interview topics and questions, and determined at a plan to do the necessary background research.”

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.