

Interview Form for History Through a Child's Eyes

In order to create a set of historical pictures for this exercise, choose five pictures (total) from any history book. Use the photocopier to make copies. (You may need to reduce some pictures). In order to make the most useful set, keep the following principles in mind:

- Choose pictures from times that look widely separated.
- Choose pictures that have more than one clue in them (fashion, technology, social roles). Avoid pictures that are just headshots of famous people.
- Include pictures with women and minorities.
- When arranging pictures in a sequence, begin with a very easy choice (a picture with cars or other modern technology and one without, for example).

Explain to the students that you want to find out what they know and what they are interested in. Explain that you will show them some pictures and ask them some questions about what they know. Explain that some questions might be too easy or too hard, and if there are any questions they don't know the answer to, it's okay just to say, "I don't know." Ask if they have any questions before you start. If you use a recorder, have them say their names into the recorder and play it back to them.

- Show students two pictures from different times, and ask them to put the picture from the longest time ago on their left and the one that's closest to now on the right. Ask them to explain how they know which picture is oldest. Show them each of the other pictures one at a time, and have them put each where it belongs—before the other pictures, after them, or in between. For each picture, have them explain how they knew where it goes.
- Ask: Did you think this was easy or hard to do? What things made it easy or hard?
- Ask: Which pictures do you think are the most interesting? Why?
- Pick one picture, and ask students: How do you think your life would have been different if you had been alive at this time?
- Point to each picture and ask: About when do you think this is?

Explain that now you're going to ask some more questions that aren't just about the pictures. Emphasize again that some questions might be hard, and some might be easy, and that it's okay to say, "I don't know."

- Do we have a king in our country? (If students say "yes," ask who it is.)

Who is the president?

What do you think the president does when he goes to work?

How does someone get to be president? (If students say the president is elected, ask if they know of any other people who get elected.)

What do judges do

- Who do you think are the most famous people in history? What can you tell me about him/her?

Tell me something about George Washington.

Tell me something about Martin Luther King.

Who do you think is the most important woman you've ever heard of?

- When you buy something in a store, who decides how much the price is?

How do they decide how much to charge for it?

Where does the store get the things it sells? (If students say they buy them from somewhere else, ask, if you paid five dollars for something at the store, how much would the store have paid for it when they got it—five dollars, more than five dollars, or less than five dollars?)

What are taxes? What are they used for? Who decides how much taxes will be?

- Have you ever been to a building called a bank? What is it for?

What happens when you put your money in a bank?

If you put your money in the bank and then take it back out later, do you get the same amount you put in, less than you put in, or more than you put in? Why?

Can you borrow money from a bank? If you borrow money, when you pay it back, do you pay back the same amount you borrowed, more than you borrowed, or less than you borrowed? Why?

- What city do you live in? What are the names of some other cities?

What state do you live in? What are the names of some other states?

What country do you live in? Tell me the name of some other countries.

What things are different in other parts of the world? How are they different?

Where have you learned about other parts of the world?