

September 11th Interview

Instructions: Choose a family member or someone you know personally who was alive on September 11, 2001, and can clearly recall what happened that day.

Person Interviewed:

Date of Interview:

Questions: Ask each of these questions to the person you are interviewing. Remember to be respectful and supportive as the conversation flows. Don't be afraid to ask questions as you think of them.

1. Where were you when you first heard about what was happening on 9/11?
2. What do you remember thinking or feeling in that moment? Were you scared? Who did you try to contact?
3. How did the people around you react—at home, school, or work?
4. What was the rest of that day like for you? As you learned of the towers collapsing, the attack at the Pentagon, and the plane that went down in Pennsylvania, what were some questions you began to have?
5. Was there anything you saw or heard that you'll never forget? Tell me about some of the images that stand out to you from that day and the days after.
6. How did 9/11 change things in your community or in everyday life afterward?
7. Did the event affect the way you thought about safety or the world?
8. What acts of kindness or bravery do you remember hearing about after 9/11?
9. What do you think is most important for kids today to understand about that day?
10. How has 9/11 shaped the way you live, work, or think today?

Here is an outline for you to use as you write your essay.

Paragraph 1: Introduction

Briefly introduce the person you interviewed and explain the purpose of this assignment. Tell who they are, how you know them, and why you chose them. Explain why learning about 9/11 is essential.

Paragraph 2: Background on 9/11

Write one or two sentences about 9/11. Keep it simple, since the essay focuses on the interview. **Example:** On September 11, 2001, the United States experienced a series of terrorist attacks that changed the country in many ways.

Paragraph 3: Summarize questions 1 - 5. Each question can become 2-4 sentences.

1. Where were they when they heard the news
 - Describe their location
 - What were they doing at the time?
2. What they thought or felt in that moment
 - Their immediate reaction
 - Any emotions they talked about
3. How people around them reacted
 - At home, school, or work
 - Any specific reactions they remember
4. What the rest of their day was like
 - What they did next
 - How the day changed for them
5. Memorable sights, sounds, or moments
 - Anything that stood out to them
 - Why they remember it

Paragraph 4: Summarize questions 6 - 8

6. How their community changed
 - Examples: security, travel, school changes, community support
7. How 9/11 affected their sense of safety or worldview
 - What they felt in the days or weeks that followed
8. Acts of bravery they remember
 - Stories of helping, heroes, or unity

Paragraph 5: Summarize questions 9 - 10

9. What they think kids today should understand
 - Their advice or message
 - Why they think remembering is important
10. How 9/11 has influenced their life today
 - Any long-term changes in beliefs, actions, or perspectives

Paragraph 6: Reflection

- What surprised you about the interview?
- What you learned about people who experienced 9/11
- Why does hearing a personal story matter?
- How did this assignment change your understanding of history?

Paragraph 7: Conclusion

- Restate why the interview was valuable
- One final sentence about why remembering 9/11 is important

