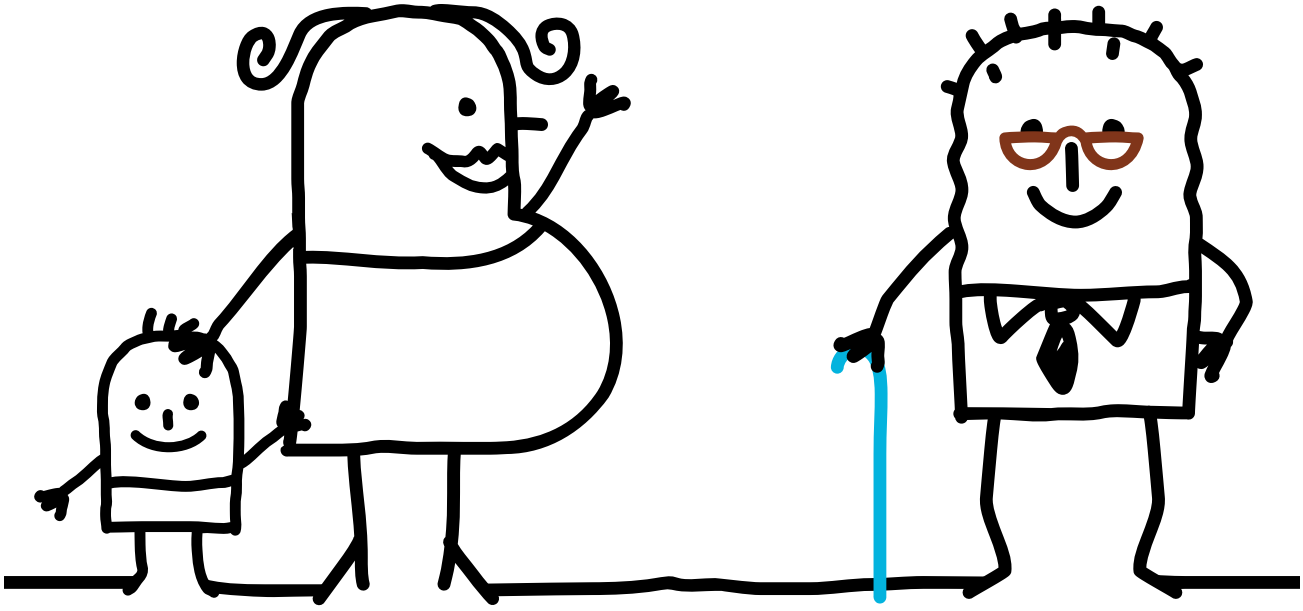

Back in the Day

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SECTION I.
Project Overview

Subjects
English Language Arts, History

Time Required
15 hours of class time

Grade Level
11-12

Project Idea
11th and 12th grade students are endlessly confronted with the question, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" They are asked, and ask each other, "Where are you going to go to college?" or, "What are you going to do after graduation?"

But long before these students thought about colleges, careers, places to live or visit — and how these choices relate to their identities — their parents, grandparents and extended families had their own hopes, dreams and aspirations; they fell in love and had their hearts broken; they seized opportunities and had their own accomplishments and many more experiences that shaped who they became.

In the ***Back in The Day*** project students publish a thoughtful collection of narrative nonfiction writing in which they tell specific family stories of growing up and coming of age. Each student produces a nonfiction piece of writing using journalistic methods of research, such as interviews and the examination of primary documents, as well as creative writing techniques such as the development of characters and setting, and the use of selected literary devices. Along the way, students address specific questions that help them understand how their family members grew up in different times or different places. The final product is showcased as a hard-copy book, published using professional methods.

Content and Standards
The ***Back in the Day*** project teaches students the following English Language Arts content and skills and how to apply them in a real world scenario.

- How to create a driving question or research question.
- How to conduct a variety of research, including the analysis of primary documents, oral histories and secondary or tertiary sources.
- How to conduct, edit, revise and publish an interview with an authoritative source.
- How to write a polished piece of biographical narrative nonfiction, including the use of relevant writing conventions such as organization and focus and the selection and use of appropriate rhetorical devices.
- How to revise original writing for voice and to enhance meaning for a public audience.
- How to use modern publication methods to showcase student writing.

Common Core Standards

The ***Back in the Day*** project addresses the following Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts. For more information see **corestandards.org**.

Part One — The Interview & Article

ID	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	STANDARD
11-12.W.2	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
11-12.W.2.a	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
11-12.W.2.b	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
11-12.W.2.c	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
11-12.W.2.d	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
11-12.W.2.e	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
11-12.W.2.f	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

The Narrative Nonfiction Story & Publication

ID	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	STANDARD
11-12.W.3	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
11-12.W.3.a	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
11-12.W.3.b	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

11-12.W.3.c	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
11-12.W.3.d	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
11-12.W.3.e	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

Across the Project

ID	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	STANDARD
11-12.W.4	Writing	Production and Distribution of Writing	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)
11-12.W.5	Writing	Production and Distribution of Writing	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
11-12.W.6	Writing	Production and Distribution of Writing	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
11-12.W.7	Writing	Research to Build and Present Knowledge	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
11-12.W.8	Writing	Research to Build and Present Knowledge	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
11-12.W.9	Writing	Research to Build and Present Knowledge	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

SECTION II.
Essential Elements of PBL

1. Significant Content

This project is focused on teaching students a variety of nonfiction writing techniques, ranging from informational to narrative, which are important Common Core State Standards. The project also addresses Common Core State Standards regarding research, such as reading informational text, generating questions, and conducting research (see the complete list of CCSS on page 3-4 above). Additionally, this project can be tailored to address a wide range of Social Science, History or Geography standards in many states.

2. 21st Century Competencies

This project builds students' competency in critical thinking, creative thinking and project management. Students are required to make decisions, ask questions, manage multiple variables and coordinate with individuals outside of the classroom. They must conduct an interview, and then transform this into narrative nonfiction. Throughout the project, they work in a variety of teams.

Students must think critically and creatively in the search for and evaluation of specific family histories. As students pursue their individual lines of inquiry, they must conduct historical research, generate research questions, analyze primary documents, generate interview questions and conduct interviews, and ultimately publish both a professionally styled interview and a creatively written narrative nonfiction story. Students collaborate in the research, processes as well as in for purposes of critique and revision.

3. In-Depth Inquiry

This project cannot be completed in an attempt to cover material; the search for, documentation of, and creative presentation of a specific chapter in a family's history is designed to reward the student who takes on the characteristics of the rigorous, in-depth researcher and writer. Students initially share a variety of family stories, but they pursue one in depth so they can communicate its factual elements accurately, and also invite readers to understand its personal truths as well. Furthermore, as students learn to identify what makes up a narrative nonfiction piece of writing, they are asked to employ these literary devices, stylistic elements and narrative structures in their own writing.

4. Driving Question

The Driving Questions for this project are created by the students with the teacher on an individualized basis, but should explore the following, in more specific format derived from their family experiences: "What was it like for this relative to be alive in a specific historical and cultural context?" For example, one student might ask, "What was it like for my father to immigrate to California from the Philippines in 1975 when he was seventeen?", while another student might ask, "How did my grandparents get married during the Great Depression?" The Driving Questions frame the students' interviews, and provide the characters, settings and plots for them to develop narrative writing techniques. No question has a simple "right answer," but all guide the students towards a variety of truths about their families that can then be shared with family members, classmates, local professional journalists or historians, and more.

5. Need to Know

After talking to family members and classmates about various oral histories that can be discovered in the class and in one's family, students will have a compelling reason to learn more about the content of the story. Once they have recorded the oral history in the form of an interview, and begin to transform it into narrative nonfiction, to be read by family members and classmates. Students develop a sense of motivation to create a well-written and thoughtfully revised piece of narrative nonfiction writing. This requires them to use a variety of research techniques and narrative writing devices.

6. Voice & Choice

Students select and drive nearly every aspect of this project — although they also learn to identify the wisdom found in the voices of others. Students decide the family stories they would like to pursue, the family members they would like to interview, and how to present the results of their research.

7. Critique & Revision

Throughout the project, students receive critical feedback from their classmates and their teacher regarding their progress in developing questions, conducting an interview and presenting it as a written product, and ultimately drafting a narrative nonfiction story. Critical feedback leads to revision at each step through guided and coached critique sessions facilitated by the teacher. The layered nature of the project encourages students to build upon their successes and strengths, and also find areas for growth.

8. Public Audience

The families that provide the stories provide a natural audience for the published interviews and narrative nonfiction pieces of writing. The exhibition of work online and in a bound and printed format encourages the audience to read in depth, as well as read multiple stories. Furthermore, the practice of interviewing and producing literary journalism offers rich opportunities to incorporate local journalists, writers or historians who support or evaluate the project in a variety of ways.

SECTION III.
Teaching Back in the Day

Students complete ***Back in the Day*** by following a recommended set of activities in the order below. Within these set activities, however, there will be variation in the timing and in the way students complete them.

The sequence of instructional activities is described below. This sequence is based on pilot testing in school classrooms. Although changes may be necessary to meet time constraints, address the needs of specific student populations, or include additional instructional materials and learning opportunities, we strongly encourage teachers to adhere to the sequence of activities as closely as possible — at least for the first several times the project is taught. Each step is discussed in more detail in the following section, the *Step-by-Step Teaching Guide*.

Sequence of the Project

Preparing for the Project

0 Teacher prepares for successful project implementation.

Launching the Project

1 Students discuss the types of questions they ask and are asked about their futures, and how they respond to them.

2 Students read examples of professional and student-created interviews and narrative nonfiction similar in scope and style to what will become their published *Student Journal of Family History*.

3 Teacher introduces project and Driving Question.

4 Teacher introduces *Story Starters* and students create initial "Need to Know List" and "Personal" Driving Questions.

Scaffolding & Managing the Project

Part One: The Interview

5 Students begin *Story Starters* in class.

6 Students complete *Story Starters* with their families.

7 Students share selected portions of *Story Starters* in class including photos or other primary documents they found with their families.

8 Students select a story they would like to pursue through the course of the project.

9 Collect photographs or other primary documents from students and families.

10 Collect and scan photos or other primary documents related to your students' stories.

11 Teacher and students form small groups based on the historic time and setting of their stories.

12 Students conduct preliminary research.

13 Students generate and critique 10 interview questions.

14 Students conduct and record an interview of a focused and specific oral history with a family member.

15 Students bring the edited transcript of the interview to class for peer review with the *Interview Critique Coversheet #1*.

16 Students generate key questions for introductory articles for the interviews.

17 Students draft an introductory article for the interview, based on professional models.

18 Students peer critique and revise the introductory articles using the interview critique sheet coversheet #2.

19 Students create a headline and sub-headline for the article and interview.

20 Students engage in peer review of the near-final drafts of the headline, sub-headline, introductory article and interview, using the interview critique sheet coversheet #3.

21 Students revise their work according to the feedback received in the critiques.

22 Students publish the final interview online or in print.

23 Gather feedback and reflect on the success of the interview.

Part Two: Narrative Nonfiction

24 Students read examples of narrative nonfiction written by professional authors.

25 Students and teacher examine the characteristics of narrative nonfiction.

26 Students receive *Literary Devices* resources.

27 Students identify *Literary Influences* in professional models

28 Students draft narrative nonfiction pieces

29 Students critique narrative nonfiction using *Literary Devices*, *Literary Influences* and *Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet #1*.

30 Students revise narrative nonfiction. Teachers and students may draft, critique, and revise as often as needed using *Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet #2*.

Assessing and Showcasing Student Work

31 Create groups, including editors or student managers for the different aspects of an exhibition centered around a published book.

32 Editors lay out and design the *Student Journal of Family History*

33 Students publish the Student Journal using free online, on-demand publishing software.

34 Students create displays using photos, primary documents and their written work.

35 Students exhibit their family history displays at a book release party for the *Student Journal of Family History*.

36 Teacher uses supplied short answer test.

37 Teacher uses supplied questions for student reflection.

38 Teacher reflects on the successes and areas for adjustment for the next time the project is conducted.

Step-by-Step Teaching Guide

Each of the above instructional activities is discussed in more depth below, with tips for successful classroom implementation.

Preparing for the Project

> To learn how to implement a project, take classes at **PBLU.org**, and earn certification as a PBL Teacher if you try this project with students!

0 Teacher prepares for successful project implementation.

There are a number of issues to consider before embarking on this project with students. These include, but are not limited to:

- How much time in and out of class should we devote to this project?
- What professional examples or other models should I gather in advance?
- What writing techniques content resources should I prepare in advance?
- What technological resources will be necessary in various stages of the project (i.e., can students record interviews on their personal cameras, phones, computers; can I provide recorders for student use?)?
- Is it necessary to arrange access to the library, media center, or computer lab?
- What basic skills do the students already have that can be incorporated into this project (i.e., have we already developed various literary devices, writing or research techniques, or other important skills?)? What may need review or re-teaching?
- What student-mentor relationships can be developed? What local residents can act as experts in this project? For example, can local historical societies provide access to resources, materials or experts? Can local newspapers provide journalists to guide instruction or critique in various stages of the project? What resources are available at a local university?

In addition to considering the above questions, be sure that relevant supporting materials such as student handouts and other resources are prepared.

Launching the Project

1 Students discuss the types of questions they ask and are asked about their future and how to respond to them.

One effective discussion technique is a "chalk talk," done on a white board with dry-erase markers, a blackboard with chalk, or butcher paper with pens and markers. The teacher poses a central quote or question in writing on the board and facilitates a silent discussion in which students approach the board and carry on a conversation silently through writing. Or, a teacher may give different sections of the room different questions to answer, and have each group present what they think when asked these questions.

Good prompts for a chalk talk can come in a variety of forms, but they have a few things in common: they lack simple answers; they are open ended; they embrace multiple perspectives; and, they have a tendency to get stuck in students' minds.

Some teachers prefer to start with one quote or prompt, and as a chalk talk develops, add other prompts or their own ideas to the board. You may use any of the following prompts to start a chalk talk, or create your own:

- When people ask "what do you want to be when you grow up?" what do you really want to say?
- Virginia Woolf wrote "growing up is losing some illusions, in order to acquire others." How could this apply to the people we know, and to us?
- Why are young people asked about growing up by people who have already grown up?
- When you grow up, what do you think you will wish you had known?
- How does the setting of your life — the time and place — help shape who you are?

As the chalk talk begins to draw to a natural close — students may run out of ideas or wander off topic, a class period may near its end, or you may wish to redirect the student's energy towards the next steps — it is time to consider how to effectively connect this to the next steps. Facilitate a whole class discussion covering some or all of the following, selecting and customizing what is appropriate for you and your class:

- The most salient points students feel they see in the chalk talk.
- The most intriguing questions posed on the board.
- How other people, in other generations, may have responded to the ideas posed on the board.
- How people respond to their contexts.
- How we create stories out of our lives — how we become characters, understand plots, and exist in settings.

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2 Students read examples of professional and student-created interviews and narrative nonfiction similar in scope and style to the *Student Journal of Family History*.

As you introduce the project, begin by describing the power of narrative nonfiction or literary journalism, in which writers employ the creativity of fiction to tell true stories — a genre many students view as the best of both worlds. Share examples from this genre and emphasize that student writers have much to gain by seeking good examples from professionals or their peers. Just as great musicians maintain extensive libraries of musical inspiration, and artists fill their studios and homes with art or photography, a writer should surround him- or herself with powerful examples to turn to for inspiration, to see how a character or plot is developed, or simply for a beautiful turn of phrase.

The teacher may select examples from the school's student newspaper or previous class projects that have addressed interviewing techniques, recording oral histories, literary journalism, or narrative nonfiction writing.

For professional examples, longer form publications such as *The New Yorker* are typically rich with examples of narrative nonfiction or literary journalism. Writers such as John Krakauer or journalists such

as Ira Glass have published or recorded numerous examples that can serve as models in the class. More examples are listed below.

For examples of narrative nonfiction or literary journalism, consult the following, along with your own personal favorites. Some of these are books, some are short stories or essays, others are articles, and some were published at a shorter length and then further developed into full-length books. Your students may recognize some that were also presented as movies. These examples are selected because they represent powerful pieces of narrative nonfiction, as well as being biographical in nature — each one offers a unique window into specific stories from specific people's lives.

- *Into the Wild* or *Into Thin Air*, both by John Krakauer. Both of these books began as articles in the magazine *Outside*. *Into the Wild* was published originally in 1993 as the article "Death of an Innocent: How Christopher McCandless Lost his Way in the Wilds." *Into Thin Air* was originally published in 1996 as an article under the same title.
- *The Right Stuff* or any of the short stories found in *The Kandy Kolored Tangerine Flake Streamline Baby* by Tom Wolfe.
- The opening pages of the introduction to *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick.
- *This American Life* on National Public Radio by Ira Glass. For more information, see thisamericanlife.org
- "Frank Sinatra Has a Cold," by Gay Talese in *Esquire*, April 1966
- Current events and feature writing in *The New Yorker*. This magazine is published weekly and features literary journalism. Past examples could include "Orchid Fever," by Susan Orlean (published on January 23, 1995), "The Taste Makers" by Raffi Khatchadourian (originally published on November 23, 2009), or "Painkiller Deathstreak" by Nicholson Baker (originally published on August 9, 2010).

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3 Introduce the project, the general Driving Question.

Discuss with students the concept of the project: that they will discover and publish an anthology of biographical narratives. To create this book, each student contributes a specific story from one or more family members, as a piece of narrative nonfiction or literary journalism. Along the way, they will engage in the methods of professional journalists, historians, biographers, authors and more — student will conduct interviews, analyze primary documents, such as family photos or heirlooms, write and publish.

Share these broad driving questions, but let students know that everyone will create his or her own personal Driving Question that is specific to each individual and each story:

> What is it like for someone to grow up in a specific place, at a specific time?
>
> How can we publish an anthology of biographical narratives?

4 Students create initial "Need to Know Lists" and begin to brainstorm possible Personal Driving Questions.

Perhaps some of your students want to know how their families came to live in the United States or in the particular place they are in now. Perhaps others have heard about a significant adventure in a family member's life, such as travelling abroad. Others may wonder how their parents or grandparents met or what first jobs were like in previous generations. Some students will have stories that are unfolding concurrently with the project, and these can be fantastic — for example a student may have a relative in the military who can be interviewed about his or her current experiences.

The teacher should guide the students towards asking questions about coming of age stories that took place in their relatives' lives when they were roughly the same age as the students in the class. Generally, this means searching for stories in which the characters are in their teenage years or twenties.

This is also a great place for the teacher to examine or discuss with the class what their concepts of research are, and what they have in common or how they differ with a journalist's or historian's idea of research. For some students, research in the humanities could mean read web-based articles, consulting an encyclopedia (online ones or the sets of books in the school library), or similar activities. For a journalist or historian, research could include those activities, but will most likely also involve interviewing experts or witnesses, examining primary documents, and traveling to the places to see them first hand. This project offers students the opportunity to try the behaviors and activities of professionals in English, history, and other humanities-based professions.

Since we want the students to both practice the professional behaviors and honor their family stories, the project is structured with multiple layers of different types of research. Students will brainstorm possible ideas, generate possible Personal Driving Questions, write *Story Starters*, conduct research through primary and secondary sources and interview a family member in the first stages of this project.

Example of Initial Need to Know List

What do we need to know?

- What stories does my family have?
- Who can I interview?
- What do I do if the person I want to interview is unavailable?
- What should I ask in my interview?
- What kinds of pictures will work well?
- What are primary documents?

Guide students towards a variety of questions that could lead to interesting stories.

Consider the following as a sample of a likely Initial "Need to Know List" from a student who has a few possible family members to interview. Students with multiple ideas may have a longer "Need to Know List" or a series of seemingly unrelated questions, as different question refers to different stories the student is willing to explore.

Sample questions that may show up as students generate ideas for possible interviews or stories — these are the types of questions that can become Personal Driving Questions:

What did my grandfather do in the Army?

Why did my parents immigrate to America?

What was the immigration trip like?

What was life like in Mexico before my family immigrated?

What happened to the family members who did not move to America?

What did my parents do as their very first jobs? Grandparents? Aunts and uncles?

Who was the first person in my family to graduate high school?

How did my parents meet? How did my grandparents meet?

Potential Hurdle: *Some students will claim that their family does not have any good stories. Often this happens because students think stories need to be connected to wars, Presidents, assassinations or other famous events. Talk with your class about what makes a good story of any kind — a student that understands that he or she is looking for rich characters to present beautifully can find good stories everywhere he or she looks. Sometimes students need coaching to consider the stories they love — what are the elements found in these stories? Analyzing the stories students like helps them understand who they are, and they can search for similar stories — or similar elements — in the people they know.*

Potential Hurdle: *Sometimes students need to expand the definition of "family" for various reasons— perhaps they do not live with their immediate family members or are not able to communicate easily. Students who are in contact with their immediate family, or who wish to expand the definition of "family," should embrace the stories of the people who are important to them, and who are accessible. This should be reserved for students who need a quiet or sensitive solution to a potential problem in the design of the project.*

Sample questions likely to show up on the Initial "Need to Know List" of a student who wants to interview his or her father about a hitchhiking trip taken long ago.

- Why did my dad choose to hitch hike across the US?
- How long did his trip take?
- Specifically, where did he visit?
- What pictures does he have from the trip?

- Will he have any old newspapers or other primary documents?
- Did he know my mom at the time?
- If I chose this story, how long will the interview take?
- What can I do if my dad does not want me to use this story for this project?
- What does my mom know about the hitch hiking adventure?
- What will my grandparents tell me?
- What other stories are available to me?

Some students will want to immediately run with a story, while others may seem confused since they don't know what is available to them, or want to write a story that simply isn't in their family (consider the student who says, "but my family hasn't been in the Army or anything like that!") At this point, do not encourage students to identify what story they will write about, as this can stunt the discovery process. Instead, coach the students to generate a list of potential stories from a variety of relatives. Remind them that history, and good stories in general, come from a broad and deep source — true love, work, hunger, (literal or metaphorical) risks and rewards, inspirations and aspirations, and much more are parts of each person's experience, regardless of time or place. These are the ideas great story-tellers, whether in fiction, journalism, history or multimedia, reach for when they connect with an audience. If one story isn't present in a specific family, that's because another one is.

One of the keys to success in this project is to guide students towards their own Driving Questions that are variations on the basic model of "What was it like for this person to be alive in a specific historical and cultural context?" Individual students will make these more specific and personal by asking questions like "What was it like for my father to immigrate to California from the Philippines in 1975 when he was seventeen?"; or, "How did my grandparents get married during the Great Depression?" Just make sure the students' own Questions meet the criteria for a good Driving Question; it must be open-ended and require a complex answer.

At this point, students do not need their "final" Personal Driving Question. They need a list of ideas that can be refined as the project continues.

Scaffolding and Managing the Project

Part One: The Interview

5 Begin *Story Starters* in class.

This is a great step for the teacher to do in advance and share with the class as an example of what this work may look like (a completed sample is in the Teacher Materials section of this project). Simply recall a story that you have heard about in your family or are interested in learning more about, write a summary, and try your best to find a photo or other primary document. Collect this information on one *Story Starters* worksheet.

> The blank ***Story Starters*** handouts can be found in Section IV: Student Handouts, and the completed ***Story Starter*** can be found in Section V: Teacher Materials.

Story Starters should be specific summaries of family stories they have heard (or could ask about) in which family members confront similar stages of life as the current students. Great *Story Starters* going to college, joining the military, immigration, getting a first job, driving cross country, etc.).

Story Starters offer a chance to differentiate for various learning styles and previous academic experiences. Since the template offers space for both photos and written elements, encourage students to fill the spaces as best as they can. Also, students should be encouraged to bring a variety of visual documents beyond photographs — postcards, journals, drawings, maps, etc., can all be very valuable to the project.

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6 Students complete *Story Starters* with their families.

This is the first homework assignment. Students should return to school with photographs or other primary documents and the basics for multiple family stories. Please customize the total number for your students (generally five to ten provides enough material to make the students begin asking questions and engaging with family).

Students should be encouraged to bring in multiple types of imagery, such as newspaper front pages, photographs, postcards, letters or journals. Students do not need imagery for every potential story, as this may be impossible (especially on short notice), but they do need leads to follow and some material to work with. Please gauge your class for the expected about of time to allot for this initial assignment. Students can generally get the *Story Starters* done in two or three days, although tracking down good pictures or primary documents may take longer. Feel free to stagger the due dates of the pictures and the stories to suit your class.

The teachers, students and class in general should take every step to ensure that family photos or other primary documents are handled with care and safeguarded in the classroom.

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7 Students share selected portions of *Story Starters* in class including photos or other primary documents they found with their families.

Two different models for story pitches are presented here: one for classes that prefer in-depth discussions of specific pitches, and one for classes that prefer to cover many pitches quickly. Choose the one that works best for you.

Regardless of the structure chosen for a share-out or story pitch, students may be encouraged to ask questions that elicit specifics, or the need to find them. Questions may sound like:

- How much time does your story cover?
- What do you think is the most important moment in the story?
- Why would you want to learn more about this story?

For in-depth pitches, consider the following protocol for a structured "Story Pitch." Feel free to use it as is, or modify it for your needs. Similar protocols are provided throughout this project; all use a similar format.

The following protocol works for students in groups of approximately four. Consider the grouping needs of your class here — some teachers prefer that students pitch to random groups, while others prefer to strategically team students based on past academic experiences, language-related needs, etc.

- **The Pitch:** One student shares his or her story from the *Story Starters* to the small group, including the characters, the setting and the conflict. Students may also include primary documents, a possible title, or other sources of information.
- **Clarifying Questions:** The group asks the students simple questions that have short answers to better understand the basics of the story. These questions sound like, "How long did the trip take?" or "How old was your dad when this happened?"
- **Probing Questions:** The group asks questions to encourage the student to think more deeply about the story. These questions sound like this: "What interests you most about your mother's immigration story?" or "Why do you think your grandfather likes to tell your family that story?" Probing Questions should not be advice, in disguise, which sounds like this: "Don't you think you should...?"
- **Discussion:** The student who presented sits quietly while the group discusses his or her work. It is important for the presenter to only listen during this stage! The group should begin by discussing the powerful parts of the story, and the parts that could engage audiences or offer rich opportunities for the student-researcher/writer. The discussion should then move to potential hurdles or areas of concern. Students should feel empowered to discuss possible solutions here. For example, one student might raise a concern that the story centers on a relative who is no longer alive, and thus cannot be interviewed. Others should propose solutions like interviewing surviving relatives, using primary documents, consulting an expert like a local historian (or history teacher!), etc.
- **Debrief:** The student who presented shares what he or she got from the discussion and where his or her thoughts are going. The other students do the same.

If the teacher allots approximately three minutes for each step, the protocol takes 15 minutes. In groups of four, this means each student presents once per hour. Students do not need to present or pitch every story in their *Story Starters*. They do need to share in some manner, and they do need to consider what story to pursue and why.

For teachers who do not want extensive pitches, but would prefer students share often and hear many other ideas, consider using "Story Speed Dating," which follows the following steps:

- Have every student gather his or her *Story Starters* materials and stand up.
- Students form two circles: an inner circle and an outer circle. The inner circle faces out, towards the outer circle. The outer circle of students faces in, towards the inner circle. Each student should have a partner.
- Check that every student in the inner circle is facing a partner in the outer circle, and vice versa.
- Announce that each student will have one minute to pitch his or her story to the person facing them. If he or she runs out of things to say in the pitch, the partner can only say, "Yes," in a way that leads the student to keep talking (students say, "yes?" or yessss....").
- Announce that the outer circle goes first, pitching any story from their *Story Starters* that they like." After one minute, the inner circle does the same to their partner in the outer circle.
- After both partners have pitched stories, the outer circle rotates one person, clockwise.

- Repeat the same process, with a different story from the *Story Starters*.
- After the students have pitched their stories to many partners, ask them to return to their seats and consider how the experience might inform their next steps.

Regardless of the format, at this point, the teacher's prime concern is fostering a vibrant, active discussion in which every student shares ideas. The teacher should facilitate an open discussion addressing the students' feelings presenting their stories to others and listening to others. What struck them? What ideas stood out? What new ideas do the students have now? What next steps should the students take as they prepare for their interviews?

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8 Students select a story they would like to pursue through the course of the project.

Students should record the feedback they receive from the pitch process. Were the other students in the group able to identify and understand the characters, setting and plot in a potential story? What sorts of questions did the other students ask? What sorts of information could be gleaned from the primary documents? What stories naturally interest the students?

The teacher may decide how long to spend on this step — some students will know immediately what story to pursue, while others will only narrow it down to a few. Listen to your students, consider the next steps in the project, and set an appropriate deadline. Typically, most students can select a story to pursue within a day of the pitch process, as most questions that emerge from the pitches can be answered at home after school or with a phone call to a relative. Each table or small group should be encouraged to share positive feedback about at least one story from each student. Each student should be encouraged to share which stories seem to offer the most potential for an interview.

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9 Collect photographs or other primary documents from students and families.

Once the stories are selected, the teacher should collect photographs or other primary documents that the families have made available. Store these in a safe place.

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10 Collect and scan photos or other primary documents related to your students' selected stories.

Scan the photos or primary documents at a high resolution. Most modern photocopy machines offer digital scanning capabilities, as do many desktop ink-jet printers. Check at your school — there is most likely a scanner attached to some other commonly used piece of equipment, either in a staff workroom, an office, an art room or the media center.

Scan the photos, label the files according to the student's names, and save these files on a hard drive or flash drive for later use. Then return the photos or primary documents to the students or families as soon as possible.

Some students are particularly tech-savvy and can help scan, organize, save and share these files.

11 Teacher and students form small groups based on the setting of their stories. Students should be in groups of two to four based on the time and/or place in which the family story takes place.

Once each student identifies which story to pursue, the teacher should create groups of two to four students based on common settings (the time and place in which the family story exists). The students in each group do not need to have everything in common in the their stories, they simply need to have enough in common regarding settings to work together in their preliminarily research.

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12 Students conduct preliminary research.

Students should use a variety of sources including the primary documents they are able to discover through their families to conduct preliminary research into the time and place in which their stories took place. Students should be attempting to get an idea of historical and cultural context that influenced their families at key points.

This preliminary research has multiple goals:

- To help the students develop thoughtful questions for the interview.
- To help the students understand some of the external factors that may have influenced the characters in the family story.
- To help the students begin to develop ideas about the setting in which the story takes place—ideas that are beyond or otherwise different than what they may learn from their interviews.

You can be as formal or structured as your class needs. Some teachers prefer that their students collect a set amount of notes (i.e., notes from three types of sources) for use in crafting interview questions or for guidance in how to tell the story.

Students should share their work with the small group that has the setting of the story in common — for our purposes, we will call this the students' Setting Groups.

This can be a good informal formative assessment that you can structure according to the needs of your class. You should see that each student has at least a few pages of notes that cover the basics of the time period with some relevant details (for example, a student writing about a family member's experience protesting the Vietnam War should have notes on the antiwar movement, key political figures, etc.). Students who lack basic notes or access to informative resources may struggle to create an in-depth interview.

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13 Students generate and critique 10 interview questions.

In the attached student materials, please find important classroom activities to guide the creation of a finished interview, including critiques. Students should be coached to create a series of open-ended questions that will encourage their interview subject to open up and tell their story. Students should also be coached to be able to uncover a specific story and uncover salient details within a story. They should seek to understand the story, but also find each character's motivations, fears, hopes, dreams, and deeper emotions.

Students who have never conducted an interview should role-play their questions in class prior to the real experience.

The creation and critique of interview questions offers a perfect chance for the teacher to invite local journalists or other teachers who may offer expert perspectives.

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14 Students conduct and record an interview of a focused & specific oral history with a family member.

Before conducting the interview, the teacher should ensure that every student schedules time with the specific family member, secures a quiet, comfortable location for the interview, and has the necessary technology to record the conversation. Technology such as cell phones, digital cameras or video cameras or most modern computers can all be used to record an interview. Should a student need access to technology, please attempt to have the student use what may be available through your school's media center.

Students should be discouraged from attempting to conduct an interview over email. By emailing the questions to a family member, the student will lose the chance to ask follow questions, or pursue an aspect of the story that is confusing or particularly interesting. Furthermore, students who email their questions to their family members also lose the chance to observe the person, to hear his or her tone of voice, and to absorb the emotional, nonverbal content of the story. Email is acceptable, however, for students who wish to follow up later to sort out specifics or ask a small number of clarifying questions as the project progresses.

Potential Hurdle: *Some students will want to interview relatives who are hard to access. For students who wish to interview family members who are far away, or work on a schedule that is inconvenient for the student, there are numerous free applications that can record a cell phone call, as well as common software, such as QuickTime, which allow students to record a video chat, which can be held for free through Google applications or software such as Skype. Encourage your students to employ the solution that works best for them, and if necessary, to conduct the interview over the phone or computer while at school. A staff office can be a great workroom for students conducting interviews.*

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15 Students bring the edited transcript of the interview to class for peer review with the *Interview Critique Coversheet #1*.

Once students have completed the interview they should be coached in transcribing an interview. Students most likely do not need to transcribe the entire interview. Rather, they need to listen carefully and consider which sections are most important for the creation of a print interview intended for online or print publication. At this point, have the class return to professional examples of interviews published either online or in print. Students should select key portions to transcribe as well as consider the need for any follow up questions.

You may choose to group the students for the first critique according to their Setting Groups, who may help fill in missing information. Or, you may choose to encourage students to seek a fresh perspective — customize this step according to your students' needs.

Create student pairs and have each student complete *Interview Critique Coversheet #1* for their partner.

Interview Critique Coversheet #1 can be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

Remind your students to save all of their critique coversheets, as they will be used in the final steps of the project for assessment.

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16 Students generate key questions for introductory articles for the interviews.

Within the telling of the story, there are undoubtedly points of great significance to the storyteller, simply because he or she holds so much contextual information — his or her words are only the surface of the story. Additionally, the student conducting the interview is related to the interview subject — he or she may have heard the story already, he or she will understand subtle nonverbal cues that do not translate to a print interview, and will certainly understand numerous patterns of speech or references that are common language within the family.

Together with the small groups of students formed in step #9 (the "Setting Groups"), students should create questions to be answered by the introductory article. These questions form the outline and help guide the writer towards fresh content that establishes significance for the reader and is not just a summary of the interview.

This can step can provide another opportunity for an informal progress check. Students with key questions that can illuminate the significance of important parts of the interview are on track to write a great introductory article.

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17 Students draft an introductory article for the interview, based on professional models.

Again, working with the student groups formed in step #9, students should draft introductory articles to precede the final interview transcript. The introductory articles should not summarize the interview; rather, the article should provide the contextual information the reader needs to fully appreciate the significance of the events described in the interview.

For professional models, major publications such as *Rolling Stone* or *Interview Magazine* regularly have examples that include an introductory article and an in-depth interview.

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18 Students peer critique and revise the introductory articles using *Interview Critique Coversheet #2*.

At this point, the teacher should mix the student groups so that they do not work with the Setting Groups formed in step #9. Now, students are seeking a fresh perspective — they want to receive critical feedback from someone who does not necessarily already know the significance of each part of the interview. This will reveal the relationship between the introductory article and the interview itself. Have students share their work with their new partners and complete *Interview Critique Coversheet #2*.

Interview Critique Coversheet #2 can be found in Section III: Student Handouts.

Remind your students to save all of their critique coversheets, as they will be used in the final steps of the project for assessment.

Potential Hurdle: *Some students feel the pressure to read quickly when they are asked to do so in front of their peers. When this happens, they may forget the requirements of the critique, miss questions on a coversheet, or miss what the author requests. Sometimes, it is best to begin a critique in class, and offer students extra time at home to carefully finish reading and critiquing. Then, the next class period can be structured around a thoughtful discussion of what the students found in each other's writing.*

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18 Students create a headline and sub-headline for the article and interview.

The teacher and class may select a format for the headline and sub-headline, as varying publications typically have different aims for these two pieces of the final product. Consultation with the teacher who sponsors the school newspaper can be helpful here.

In general, the interview headline will reveal the name of the interview subject, the fact that the reader will see an interview, and some key component of the interview or interview subject that engages the audience or reveals a significant detail. The sub-headline should read somewhat in the format of a thesis statement for the entire final printed piece, which includes both the article and interview.

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20 Students engage in peer-review of the near-final drafts of the headline, sub-headline, introductory article and interview, using the *Interview Critique Coversheet #3*.

At this point, classmates are looking for their greatest strengths and areas to celebrate as well as any final changes that can be made in order to show their work in the best light possible. Use *Interview Critique Coversheet #3* with students to fine-tune the interview before sharing it with the public.

Interview Critique Coversheet #3 can be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

Remind your students to save all of their critique coversheets, as they will be used in the final steps of the project for assessment.

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21 Students revise their work according to the feedback received in the critiques.

Students make final revisions and prepare their work for publication. The teacher may choose to require the students to include a picture with the final headline, sub-headline, article and interview.

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22 Students publish the final interviews online or in print.

It is important to share the final product with the family member who provided the interview.

Should the students or teacher wish to present their work online, there are numerous options available for free through companies such as Google (Google sites can be developed by anyone with a gmail address; blogger.com allows anyone to publish a free web-log), or other similar applications.

Should the students or teacher wish to present the work in a printed format, please follow the process described in step #32.

Regardless of how the interview is published, it should be shared with other students in the class, the teacher and family members likely to be interested in this particular story. One effective way to ensure that students share this work is provide them with a matrix or list of potential audiences and require that they share the work with a specific number.

For online publication, the interview could be shared as follows:

> *Email the link to your finished interview online, complete with a headline, sub-headline, introductory article and formatted interview to at least four of the following people. Remember to cc me on your email, so that I can give you credit for this assignment!*
>
> *Suggested audiences for your interview. (Please don't count the same person in multiple categories!):*
>
> - 👉 The person who is featured in this interview.
> - 👉 Additional family members likely to be interested in this interview.
> - 👉 A parent or guardian.
> - 👉 Students who helped critique or revise this interview.
> - 👉 Another teacher whose opinion you respect.
> - 👉 Another adult whose opinion you respect.
>
> *When you send your email, be sure to invite them to read your work. Include a brief sentence or two describing the project and share the link to your work.*

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23 Gather feedback and reflect on the successes of the interviews.

Ask your students to reflect on what went well about the interview process. You may choose to modify the end-of-project reflective questions to guide individual reflections and a whole class discussion at this stage.

Students should be encouraged to identify and analyze their successes, and plan for success in the next stage of the project. Students will have questions and anxieties about the next stage and it is important to guide them to repeat successful behaviors and make improvements where necessary. Framing this positively encourages students to take creative risks, write more, open themselves to critical feedback and make necessary revisions.

Scaffolding and Managing the Project

Part Two: Narrative Nonfiction

24 Students revisit examples of narrative nonfiction writing.

While the interview is a significant product in and of itself, it is an important milestone in the creation of the narrative nonfiction story. The interview establishes an individual's perspective and their personal truths. The preliminary research process helps illuminate more factual accounts (such as who important leaders were, what was written in newspapers of the time, what the economy was like, etc.), or even other individual perspectives. The narrative nonfiction piece of writing invites the reader into a more holistic truth in which the student adopts the role of an historian or journalist, but not just any one — one who is particularly concerned about using the craft of writing to create a rewarding experience for the reader.

Remind your students that ultimately their narrative nonfiction pieces will be published in a student-created book. If some students are excited about layout or design, now is a good time to allow them to freely brainstorm and draft ideas for page layouts or cover concepts.

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25 Students and teacher examine the characteristics of narrative nonfiction.

Careful selection of examples of literary journalism or narrative nonfiction — even short excerpts — should help students see that this genre encourages the journalist or historian to employ any of the techniques of the creative writer. Good narrative nonfiction reads with the feel and atmosphere of the best fiction, but does so in order to engross the reader in the world of a true story.

The following are examples of narrative nonfiction (or literary journalism, which is the same genre, but a name that may help some students understand what the style of writing requires):

- *Into The Wild* or *Into Thin Air*, both by John Krakauer. Both of these books began as articles in the magazine *Outside*. *Into the Wild* was published originally in 1993 as the article "Death of an Innocent: How Christopher McCandless Lost his Way in the Wilds." *Into This Air* was originally published in 1996 as an article under the same title.
- *The Right Stuff* or any of the short stories found in *The Kandy Kolored Tangerine Flake Streamline Baby* by Tom Wolfe.
- The opening pages of the introduction to *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick.
- *This American Life* on National Public Radio by Ira Glass. For more information, please see thisamericanlife.org
- "Frank Sinatra Has a Cold," by Gay Talese in *Esquire*, April 1966

Current events and feature writing in *The New Yorker*. This magazine is published weekly and features literary journalism. Past examples could include "Orchid Fever," by Susan Orlean (published on January 23, 1995), "the Taste Makers" by Raffi Khatchadourian (originally published on November 23, 2009), or "Painkiller Deathstreak" by Nicholson Baker (originally published on August 9, 2010).

Students should note two important distinctions: narrative nonfiction maintains the journalist's quest for accuracy and truth, but rejects their fact-heavy, inverted pyramid format (in which the bottom of an article may be cut without significantly altering the article's ability to communicate the important facts); and, narrative nonfiction maintains the historical fiction or creative writer's desire to bring a reader deep into another time or place, but rejects their willingness to create characters, setting, or other narrative elements out of whole cloth.

Often, students will notice that great narrative nonfiction sounds like any good story. Look for students who respond with ideas such as:

- "He's using similes and metaphors."
- "There is a lot of sensory detail."
- "Wait, is this a true story?"

Students who are accustomed to associating history or "true stories" with history textbooks or news articles are often ready and willing to be coached into embracing the freedom and creativity of narrative nonfiction to engage in journalistic, historical or otherwise documentary writing.

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26 Students receive *Literary Devices* resources.

English teachers may have already spent time working with a variety of literary devices. If this is the case, please supplement the provided resources with your own materials.

Consider what your students may already know about literary devices or narrative techniques. Since this project requires students to make their own choices about the selection and application of various narrative techniques, it is a good idea to encourage everyone to maintain an archive of notes they can freely reference, as well as a public list on your whiteboard, blackboard or classroom walls.

The following websites have proven to be helpful in the past:

- **http://literary-devices.com/**
- **http://www.uncp.edu/home/canada/work/allam/general/glossary.htm**

You may choose to facilitate a whole class discussion regarding what literary devices your students know from previous readings and what they would like to learn more about. A simple homework assignment, or a good warm up for class, is to have students identify specific passages in any text they have read that provide examples of student-selected literary devices. For example, your class might recall that in *The Great Gatsby,* F. Scott Fitzgerald uses different settings to both amplify elements of conflict and to communicate deeper themes. Within an example of narrative nonfiction, students who have read *Into the Wild* will likely notice many specific steps that John Krakauer takes to carefully develop contrasts within his characterization of Christopher McCandless. A worksheet is provided for your use.

Literary Devices can be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

27 Students identify *Literary Influences* in professional models

Using the *Literary Devices* resources and professional models listed in Step #2, students identify key elements of style that they would like to use to their own writing. Students record this information as their *Literary Influences.* Students should think of themselves as artists or musicians who are identifying key points of inspiration to bring to their own work.

Students may use teacher-supplied models or any written material that inspires them. The most important goal to accomplish in this step is for students to identify the elements of an author's style, and develop personal goals for incorporating it into his or her own narrative nonfiction.

This step offers a unique opportunity for differentiation. For example, students may identify the inclusion of sensory detail as a desirable stylistic element to mimic. Some students should transcribe sensory detail-laden sentences and use them as sentence starters for their own work. Other students should identify patterns in an author's use of sensory detail and seek to employ similar patterns in their own writing. This can be done using the same text as a model.

Students should keep their *Literary Influences* handy throughout the writing and editing process.

> ***Literary Influences*** can be found in Section IV Student Handouts.

28 Students draft narrative nonfiction pieces

At this point, students should be coached into drafting full-length narrative nonfiction writing that brings together the information found through the interview, the preliminary research, photos or other primary documents and related study of the setting or characters in the story.

Before students begin writing, they should revisit their "Need to Know Lists" for the second stage of the project. They have likely answered numerous questions about both the content of the family story and the basics of narrative nonfiction, but likely will generate more questions when the time comes to write.

Lead students in creating another "Need to Know List" for the second stage of the project, which may include questions such as:

- How much time should my story cover?
- How much can I make up?
- How many characters should I include?
- How do I write dialogue if I don't know what the characters actually said to each other?
- How can I write about.... if they did not tell me about it in the interview?
- How do I structure my story?
- How "creative" can I be?

On a practical level, students will want to know if they can become creative with smaller elements of the story that might be impossible to discover through research such as small details about the setting

or internal monologues of other characters. On a larger scale, students are interested in and testing the boundaries between narrative nonfiction and historical fiction, which are two distinctly different genres of writing.

One important practical consideration is to encourage students to zoom in on the most important settings and characters in their stories. For example, a student may write about their grandmother's immigration experience, which could have taken months or even years. However, that time frame is impractical for this project and will result in the student skipping over much of the story to simply cover the long journey. Instead, that student should focus on the most important single day, such as the day she landed in the United States, and use literary techniques or narrative devices to reference how other aspects of the larger story made that day so important. Zooming in limits settings and characters to a smaller, more manageable number, and sets up the student for success. This is a very typical consideration that will likely come up often in your class. War stories, immigration stories, love stories, adventure stories — they all typically cover too much time for the final writing assignment, and the student-author must make choices to focus on the most important piece of the story.

Students may require guidance in making literary choices regarding format and perspective. For better or worse, the professional models that they see may guide them towards particular literary choices; for example, if all of the models that they read are in third person, many students may assume that narrative nonfiction is supposed to be written in the third person. So provide a variety of examples. The important part is to guide students towards telling a true story well.

As a teacher, you should customize the requirements for length and format to meet the needs of your students.

Potential Hurdle: *Consider your upcoming publication for exhibition. Most online, on-demand publishers have a slight increase in cost approximately every 20 pages. Also, the number of pages determines the width of the "spine," which is the section of the cover that connects the front and back covers (this is the part you see when the book is on a bookshelf). The more pages you include, the thicker the spine. Most online, on-demand publishers provide a calculator to show the detailed specifications of your book, according to page size, number of pages, paper type, etc.*

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29 Students critique narrative nonfiction using *Literary Devices, Literary Influences* and *Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet* #1.

Armed with their *Literary Devices* resources, student-created *Literary Influences*, and professional models, students will use *Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet #1* to collaborate in the analysis of the strengths and areas to improve within their drafts. The mark of a good critique is that every single student walks away with specific ideas for how to improve his or her work.

Break your class into small groups or pairs. At this point, some students may prefer to share their writing with someone who has not read it yet while others will want to stay with their Setting Group or their partner who read their interview. You and your class should decide — should critiques be done now by fresh eyes or by those who already know the basics of the work?

Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet #1 can be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

At this point, it is important to coach students to focus on certain elements of writing, even at the expense of others. Start the critique by reviewing the critique sheet aloud. Then, record a "Now vs. Not Now" list on the board to focus the students' attention on the most important elements of writing to address at this stage in the process.

A "Now vs. Not Now" list should be generated by students and recorded by the teacher, although a little coaching can be helpful. It is important for students to articulate these concepts and for their peers to hear them say them aloud — this is their writing being critiqued, after all!

A first-critique "Now vs. Not Now" list might look like this (although this should be customized to the needs of your class):

Now:

- How much time does the story cover? One year? One month? One day?
- Is the story focused around understandable characters in a specific setting?
- Literary devices — which ones were used? What other choices could be made?
- Basic elements of a story: characters, setting, conflict?
- Overall organization — is this a story or an essay?
- Do I get an idea of what these characters experienced? Do I feel their emotions through their dialogue, thoughts or actions?

Not now:

- Spelling
- Grammar — unless it interferes with understanding.
- Not too much red ink — if I made the same mistake a bunch of times, show me one or two and how to fix them.
- Line editing or copy editing.

Remind students to keep their *Literary Influences* handy throughout the writing and editing process. Artists' studios typically have lots of art on the walls, musicians usually maintain a library of recorded music and writers surround themselves with great writing. A great editor can point their writer towards specific inspiring examples to incorporate into his or her drafts.

Typically a section of writing that falls short of the student's goals or elicits a less-than-positive response from a critic does so because the student-writer has failed to employ the basic literary devices and influences they identified in the model texts. For example, students who are used to writing essays may use quotes to prove a point in their draft, rather than using dialogue to show the characters' thoughts. These distinctions will help the students employ specific narrative devices.

Two different critique sheets are provided for your use through this and the following steps. However, throughout this project, we have discussed different forms of critique, and we acknowledge that different classes, different students and different teachers may prefer to use more or less time on these steps. Please use the critique sheets, protocols and suggestions in the way that works best for your class.

Potential Hurdle: *Remember that students may feel the pressure to read quickly when they are asked to do so in front of their peers. Pressure to read quickly can lead students to miss the requirements of*

the critique, skim over questions on a coversheet, or miss what was discussed in the "Now vs. Not Now" list. Remember that it may be helpful to begin a critique in class, and offer students extra time at home to carefully finish reading and critiquing. Then, the next class period can be structured around a thoughtful discussion of what the students found in each other's writing.

30 Students revise narrative nonfiction. Teachers and students may draft, critique, and revise as often as needed using *Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet #2*.

Now that students have a revised draft of their narrative nonfiction writing, *Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet #2* can be very useful. Some teachers prefer to have students find new partners at this stage while others prefer to use a consistent writing critique group.

Narrative Nonfiction Critique Coversheet #2 can be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

Every class — and every writer — is different. At this point, consider what works best for you and your class. Do you want to try the pair-share critique? Does your class work well in small groups through structured critiques? Should they do read-alouds? Peer-edits? As your classes get closer to turning in the writing for lay out and design, students should be coached to make choices about the most effective forms of peer review.

Effective critiques are a powerful form of collaboration, and it is worth investing time and energy in guiding your students towards the development of positive and productive work habits. They will pay off not only on this project but many others in the future.

Remember to focus your class with a "Now vs. Not Now" list before the critique, or a similar exercise. Do not allow students to simply exchange papers and critique without a sense of focus or goals.

Assessing and Showcasing Student Work

31 Create groups of editors or student managers for the different aspects of an exhibition centered around a published book.

How do professional writers exhibit their published work? Typically through book release parties, book signings and a book tour. While the tour, may be hard for a class to accomplish, most elements of this type of professional exhibition can be recreated at school or at a local library, coffee shop or other public venue.

You can ask your students what they envision for a book release, or your students can ask at a local bookstore. As your class' creates ideas, break the class into groups and have students consider how to manage marketing and distribution of the finished books — which is exactly what professional publishing company would do.

If you choose to host your exhibition off campus, be sure to reserve the venue in advance. This can be one of the jobs of one of the student groups discussed below.

When considering an exhibition centered around a published book of student writing, you may choose to

develop student committees to work on some or all of the following (these happen concurrently):

- Layout & Design — How can we compile the articles into a class anthology and ensure that the files upload correctly to the publisher's website? See below for more information on this important step.
- Publicity & Marketing — how do we get the word out about this project (posters? fliers? online?)?
- Book Sales & Distribution — how do we share the books with our community?
- Exhibition Design — what does the physical space of the exhibition look like?
- Author Talks — for a more structured book release, consider grouping students into panel discussions about their work.
- An Enduring Online Presence — can we continue to showcase this work online beyond this exhibition? Can we turn this into a website? Can we create a class-run online bookstore?

Potential Hurdle: *With the creation of multiple committees, the teacher may feel pulled in many directions. It is important to organize your students so that each group has a leader, even if the teacher is focused on another part of the project — most likely, the teacher will help with layout and design, as this is a fundamental step in producing a book. While this happens, each group should have specific goals to meet that can quickly and easily be assessed for completion. For example:*

- Layout & Design — Use software to lay out the articles into a class anthology. Work online to upload our class' files correctly to the publisher's website. See below for more information on this important step.
- Marketing goal: Draft posters & get other groups to sign off on the design.
- Distribution goal: Create budget, sales projections, and book order plans. Post these visibly in the classroom.
- Exhibition Design goal: Create a blueprint of the exhibition space and post this physically in the classroom.
- Author Talks goal: Create themed groups and a schedule and have all plans signed off on by the Exhibition Design group.
- Online Group's goal: Create a draft of website that showcases each article with each picture, and share the site with the other groups.

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32 Student editors lay out and design the *Student Journal of Family History*

Collect all of the final drafts of your class' narrative nonfiction pieces on one computer or one hard drive. Organize these in the best way for you, perhaps with folders for each class, so you can easily see if any are missing. Do the same for the scanned images and documents from step #10.

Depending on your level of comfort with desktop publishing software, you may choose to pursue differing paths at this point.

If you or your students have worked on your school's newspaper or yearbook, you may be familiar with

software such as Adobe InDesign. If so, please feel free to encourage your class to pursue a personalized vision for the layout and design of your book.

If you are unfamiliar with layout and design software, your class or your editors may consider using online applications offered through on-demand publishing companies such as Blurb or Lulu. Most on-demand publishers offer relatively simple layout applications that will help you place text on pages, create a table of contents and design a cover. Many will also offer options for the creation of both hard-copy books and e-books that can be read on popular e-readers, tablet computers or smart phones.

It is important to note that not every student needs to participate in the layout of the book. Instead, ensure that every student turns in a story that is highly revised and ready for layout in a simple digital format. From there, turn over the layout and design responsibilities to a few dedicated students, while the rest of the class considers other aspects of the project.

At this point, some students will express an interest in designing the cover. Technically speaking, be sure to follow the steps prescribed from the printer you select. Consult your class for suggestions for the title of the book. Remember, a thoughtful title and sub-title combination can help your audience engage with the book and lead to a professionally styled cover. For example, you may consider "*Back in the Day: The Student Journal of Family History,*" or your class may create new title for each new version of the book they publish.

Once your layout and design team is up and running, you can turn your attention to meeting with each group, or giving each group space in the class to share their ideas with one another while you check them off for completion.

Potential Hurdle: *Cover designs must follow specific technical requirements. Take care to understand "bleeds" (extra space on your design, past where the edges will be cut, to account for production inconsistencies), and the "spine" size (how thick the book is, determined by page count and paper quality). Most online printers provide guidance in the help sections of their websites. If you cannot find this information, do not hesitate to consult a graphic designer at your school or in your community — most likely, the yearbook teacher can help!*

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32 Students publish their *Student Journal of Family History* using free online, on-demand publishing software.

Websites that offer on-demand printing such as Blurb.com or Lulu.com make publishing easy and cost-effective. The beauty of on-demand printing is that the school, class, teacher or students do not need to commit to purchasing more than one book (typically these websites require that you do purchase one copy of your book). For a black and white book, this usually costs about eight to ten dollars, plus tax and shipping. Look online for on-demand printers that meet your needs.

Once the class has uploaded their pages to an online, on-demand printing website, the teacher should purchase one copy of the book for the class (this initial purchase is usually required to activate your on-demand book and online bookstore).

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34 Students create displays using photos, primary documents and their written work.

At this point in the project, students should be excited to see the books when they come in. Family members, neighboring classrooms and the school community should be notified that your class has a

book of narrative nonfiction published and for sale. Students should be challenged to create an effective exhibition event that invites the public to get an idea of what is in the book, what the process of creating the book was like, how to get personal copies of the book, and what the students learned in the process.

Individual students should create simple displays that showcase selections from their pictures, primary documents and a writing sample.

Offer students the choice to display the interview, the narrative nonfiction, excerpts, or more. Writing can be printed out and both writing a pictures can be mounted on black paper for a simple, elegant gallery-like display. These can be hung in and around the classroom, or the exhibition venue your class chooses, so that at a glance, a student or visitor can get an overview of the stories in the book or choose to read one in detail.

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35 Students exhibit their family history displays at a book release party for their *Student Journal of Family History*.

Advertise your book release party and email the link to your online bookstore. Since books are printed on-demand, projects such as these can be effective fundraisers for your classroom or for future versions of this project.

Depending on your school community, this sort of publicity can be done by students or by the teacher.

At the book release party, be sure to encourage students to share and discuss the process that led to the creation of your class' *Student Journal of Family History*.

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36 Teacher uses supplied *Literary Devices Test*.

The included test is a reflective assessment tool that asks students to identify various literary devices or narrative techniques they used in their writing. The students will name the technique, define it and provide either a transcribed example from their writing or a reference to its use.

> The ***Literary Devices Test*** can be found in Section V: Teacher Materials.

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37 Teacher uses supplied Reflective Questions for students' self-assessment.

Students write reflections on the quality of their final products, growth as writers, and progression towards the standards and narrative elements derived from the professional models.

> The ***Reflective Questions*** can be found in Section IV: Student Handouts.

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38 Teacher reflects on the successes and areas for adjustment for the next time the project is conducted

SECTION IV.
Student Handouts

Story Starters

Name: _____

These are the ideas that might grow into more developed pieces of writing.

Time, Place, Story	Picture

Interview Coversheet #1

Author/Interviewer: _____

Critiqued by: _____

Your partner has a rough transcript of an interview, but it needs to be edited to read smoothly, and it will need an introductory article that helps the reader understand what is really important in this story, and why it is significant.

*Please address the following, remembering that all feedback should be **kind** to the author, **specific** to the text and **helpful** for producing an improved draft.*

Feel free to continue on your own paper to answer each question as fully as possible!

1. What stands out positively about this interview?

2. What are the most interesting, intriguing or exciting parts? Why do you connect with them?

3. What questions do you have about the story that is told in this interview? Ask about anything that doesn't seem totally clear — names, places, events, conflicts, why something happened, who did it or where it was are great places to start!

4. What aspects of this story would you like to learn more about?

5. What sorts of background information would make the characters deeper & richer or help you visualize the setting?

6. What sorts of editing might help this interview read as smoothly as possible? Should the author clean up language, edit out sections, or change the order?

7. What ideas might you take from this interview to improve your own work?

Interview Coversheet #2

Author/Interviewer: _____

Critiqued by: _____

Your partner has a transcript of an interview and a draft of an introductory article to help the reader get into the story. The article should not be a summary of the interview! Instead, it should provide background information to help the reader visualize the characters and the setting. The article should help the reader figure out what is really important and why.

Read the article, then the interview. Please address the following, remembering that all feedback should be ***kind*** *to the author,* ***specific*** *to the text and* ***helpful*** *for producing an improved draft.*

Feel free to continue on your own paper to answer each question as fully as possible!

1. What stands out positively about this interview and article? Consider how they work together to create an experience for the reader.

2. What questions do you have about the story that is told here? Ask about anything that doesn't seem totally clear—names, places, events, conflicts, why something happened, who did it or where it was are great places to start!

3. Look at the style of writing in the introductory article. What aspects of it match well with the professional or student models that you have seen? Please try to be specific in describing the writing techniques different authors use.

4. Considering the professional models, what are specific, tangible revisions that this author could make that would better align his/her writing with professional standards? Feel free to directly reference professional examples, such as "in the first paragraph of…"

5. What ideas might you take from this interview or article to improve your own work?

Interview Coversheet #3

Author/Interviewer: _____

Critiqued by: _____

Your partner has an interview that is almost complete! You should see the following:

- A headline that introduces the subject of the interview.
- A sub-headline that reveals the basic topics discussed in the interview.
- An introductory article that helps you understand background information and why this story is important.
- A polished interview that reads smoothly.

*Read the headline, sub-head, article, and the interview. Please address the following, remembering that all feedback should be **kind** to the author, **specific** to the text and **helpful** for producing an improved draft.*

Feel free to continue on your own paper to answer each question as fully as possible!

1. What stands out positively about this work as a whole? Consider how everything works together to create an experience for the reader.

2. What questions do you have about the story that is told here? Ask about anything that doesn't seem totally clear—names, places, events, conflicts, why something happened, who did it or where it was are great places to start!

3. Your partner will send this interview to a public audience soon that could include family members, guardians, other teachers, and other community members. What last-minute edits or revisions need to be done? Please be careful, specific and thorough! We want this work to look its best when it goes out!

4. What would you like to celebrate about this work? What do you appreciate most?

5. What ideas might you take from this interview or article to improve your own work?

Literary Devices

Name: _____

Literary Devices *are the tools that an author uses to tell a story. Similar to a carpenter who uses different tools or different materials to build different things, authors make conscious choices to craft an experience for their readers. When an author uses a specific type of figurative language, or takes careful steps to develop a character, or employs any other narrative technique, he or she is using literary devices.*

In the space below, record examples of literary devices from your own reading.

1. Literary Device:
   Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Direct reference (page number, chapter, quotes, etc.):

2. Literary Device:
   Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Direct reference (page number, chapter, quotes, etc.):

3. Literary Device:
   Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Direct reference (page number, chapter, quotes, etc.):

4. Literary Device:
   Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Direct reference (page number, chapter, quotes, etc.):

In the space below, record ideas of literary devices that you would like to learn more about.

1. Literary Device:
   Definition or summary:

   What I would like to learn:

2. Literary Device:
   Definition or summary:

   What I would like to learn:

3. Literary Device:

   Definition or summary:

   What I would like to learn:

Literary Influences

Name: _____

Think of your favorite books, articles, poems or authors. Think of things that you have read that you appreciate just for the writer's style. If you look carefully at those writers and their writing, you will find specific literary devices that give each one their trademark style. Just like a musician who picks up influences from the music he or she listens to, great writers do the same, from their reading.

In the space below, record ideas for your own literary influences—look at the writing and choose literary devices to emulate, so you carefully construct your own writing style.

1. Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Literary Influences (literary devices):

   Direct references (page numbers, chapters, quotes, etc.):

2. Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Literary Influences (literary devices):

   Direct references (page numbers, chapters, quotes, etc.):

3. Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Literary Influences (literary devices):

   Direct references (page numbers, chapters, quotes, etc.):

4. Title of the Publication, book, poem or example:
   Author:
   Literary Influences (literary devices):

   Direct references (page numbers, chapters, quotes, etc.):

Narrative Nonfiction Coversheet #1

Author/Interviewer: _____

Critiqued by: _____

To be completed by the original author:

1. What narrative techniques do you hope the reader notices?

2. List examples of writing that you appreciate for their style, along with specific elements that you would like to see in your own writing.

To be completed by the literary reviewer:

Your partner has a draft of a true story, based on a family member's experience.

*Read carefully read the whole story before you begin. Please address the following, remembering that all feedback should be **kind** to the author, **specific** to the text and **helpful** for producing an improved draft.*

Feel free to continue on your own paper to answer each question as fully as possible!

1. What stands out positively about this story as a whole? Consider how everything works together to create an experience for the reader.

2. Describe the setting(s) in this story. Approximately how much time is covered? Approximately how many locations?

3. What is the most important specific setting (i.e., what is the most important day? The most important place?) Why?

4. Look closely one specific narrative technique used in this piece of writing. Explain what you appreciate about how the author used it.

   Narrative technique:

5. What specific revisions should this writer make so he or she meets the goals he or she described in #1 & 2? How can this writing be more similar to the professional examples in #2?

6. What ideas might you take from this story to improve your own work?

Narrative Nonfiction Coversheet #2

Author/Interviewer: _____

Critiqued by: _____

To be completed by the original author:

1. What narrative techniques do you hope the reader notices?

2. List examples of writing that you appreciate for their style, along with specific elements that you would like to see in your own writing.

3. What goals do you have and what sorts of feedback would you like?

To be completed by the literary reviewer:

Your partner has a draft of a true story, based on a family member's experience.

Read carefully read the whole story before you begin. Please address the following, remembering that all feedback should be ***kind*** *to the author,* ***specific*** *to the text and* ***helpful*** *for producing an improved draft.*

Feel free to continue on your own paper to answer each question as fully as possible!

1. What stands out positively about this story as a whole? Consider how everything works together to create an experience for the reader.

2. What questions do you have about this story?

3. What specific narrative techniques does the author use to show the characters' thoughts and emotions to the reader?

4. What specific revisions should this writer make so he or she meets the goals he or she described in #1, 2 & 3? How can this writing be more similar to the professional examples in #2?

5. What specific steps should this author take to prepare this work for publication?

6. What ideas might you take from this story to improve your own work?

Reflective Questions

Please answer the following questions. Before you begin, please make sure that you have the coversheets, literary influences and/or your notes from various critiques.

Reflection

1. Overall, what are you most proud of in your work in Back in the Day?
2. In a broad sense, describe what you learned in this project.
3. Specifically explain what you learned about writing through this project.

Feedback & Critiques

4. Positive feedback:
    a. Describe the types of positive feedback that you received. Copy and paste or transcribe exact quotes from others' critiques of your work.
    b. How does this positive feedback inform your future work?
5. Constructive feedback:
    a. Describe the types of constructive feedback that you received. Copy and paste or transcribe exact quotes from others' critiques of your work.
    b. How does this constructive feedback inform your future work? What do you still need to work on to grow as a writer?
6. Describe the most helpful feedback that you received in this project and tell how you responded.

Setting & Meeting Goals

7. Look back at your critique sheets and literary influences—in what ways did you meet your goals?
8. Look back at your critique sheets and literary influences—in what ways do you still have room to grow?

Assessment

9. Overall, what do you recommend for your final grade? Why? Be sure to explain this in detail!

SECTION V.
Teacher Materials

Story Starters

Name: Jordan

These are the ideas that might grow into more developed pieces of writing.

Time, Place, Story	Picture
June 1944 — England, France & Germany My father's father, known to me as Grandpa Murray, was a private in World War 2. When he joined the Army, he was placed in Company I, 113th Infantry. That was part of the Rainbow Division, which had that name because of the diversity of its members, who were mostly from metropolitan New York City. Just a few days before D-Day, he became sick with pneumonia. He was hospitalized on a British ship and missed D-Day—possibly very fortunately for me! His unit landed in the first wave on Omaha Beach and many of its members were killed. When Grandpa Murray came ashore a few days after D-Day, he was put in a group of people who needed to be reassigned for different reasons. He was an infantryman, but somehow was selected to be a Jeep driver for General Omar Bradley's headquarters company. He then spent most of the war driving military leaders back and forth from Normandy Beach in France all the way to Germany. In this role, he was able to get some leave to go to Paris to try to find other members of our family who lived in France at the time. Our family is Jewish, and no one knew if the family members in France had survived the Nazis.	

Literary Devices Short Answer Test

Name: _____

In your writing, you used selected literary devices to develop a story. You also saw many in the examples that you read.

In the spaces below, identify and describe five specific, but different, literary devices. Be sure to include examples.

1. Literary device:
   Definition:

   Example, reference or citation from my writing:

2. Literary device:
   Definition:

   Example, reference or citation from my writing:

3. Literary device:
   Definition:

   Example, reference or citation from my writing:

4. Literary device:
   Definition:

   Example, reference or citation from my writing:

5. Literary device:
   Definition:

   Example, reference or citation from my writing: