

Interview Training

A resource based on the Young People at a
Crossroads project

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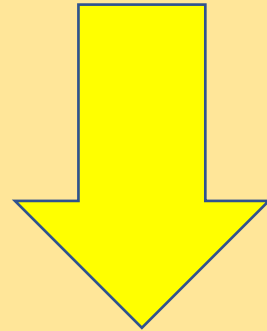
Structure and timings

- Part 1: Getting started: Why do interviews relating to climate change, who would you interview and what would you ask? (15 minutes)
- Part 2: How to do an interview (15 minutes)
- Part 3: Getting creative with your interviewing (8 minutes)
- Part 4: Interview practice (12 minutes)
- Part 5: Tips, tricks and techniques (5 minutes)



Part 1: Getting started

In the face of something as big as climate change, how can interviewing make a positive difference?



It might help to think about interviews as 'conversations with a purpose'.

Some previous responses

“Opportunity for exposure to a diversity of opinions, perspectives and experiences; inspiration and connections, broadening perspective past Australia to the global community”

“Interviewing people puts a real, human spin on what is, at this point, a mostly theoretical issue – therefore encouraging action”

“Can lead us to alternative views to solve a problem in relation to climate change”

If you could interview anyone about climate change, who would it be and what would you ask them?

Some previous responses

“My grandparents and great grandparents – I want to know more about their migration stories”

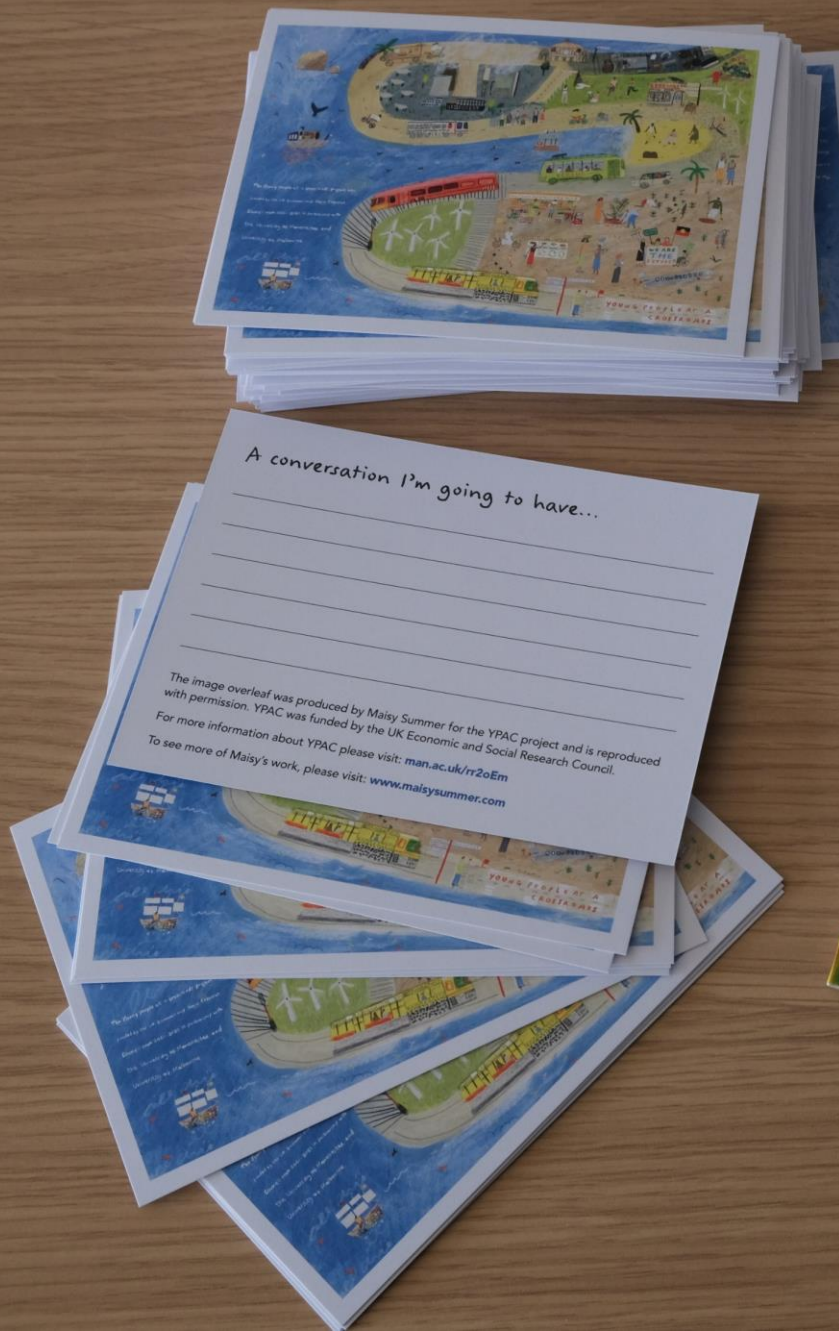
“Leonardo di Caprio: what has influenced his passion? Why isn't he doing more?”

“An ordinary person from the Maldives – I have taught so much about Sea Level rise in the Maldives, but I have never been there. I'd like to know what they think about climate change ”

“I would interview someone my age from another country to get an idea of what they are doing in their day-to-day life to tackle climate change. ”

“My younger cousin – I'd like to know if she is hearing more about climate change in primary school than I did”

“A factory owner – do they know how much pollution they are producing?”



How about a family member: who would you interview and what would you ask them?

Questions that YPX young researchers asked in interviews

1. What do you remember doing in your everyday life as a family to look after the environment when you were growing up, and how do you think these things were shaped by your environment and by cultural norms/ideas?
2. How did you learn about UK/Australian cultural norms/ideas about looking after the environment when you first moved to UK/Australia?
Follow up questions: Was there anything you found confusing? How do you feel about this now?
3. When you were growing up, were there any environmental challenges or difficulties you faced as a family (e.g. to do with the weather, accessing everyday resources, environmental hazards) and how did you adapt to these?
4. Have these experiences of adapting to environmental challenges growing up made a difference to how you have brought up your children?
5. What do you think people in UK/Australia can learn from people living in the country you grew up to look after the environment better? And is there anything that people in the country where you grew up could learn from people in UK/Australia?



How about a family member: who would you interview and what would you ask them?

(Tip: it doesn't have to be only questions that are directly about climate change!)

Write down your question.



Part 2: How to do an interview

Open and closed questions



Image: <https://www.dreamstime.com/photos-images/door-closed-open.html>

Semi-structured interviewing: the foundation that you can build on



Example of a semi-structured interview

Young researcher (YR): So were you able to adapt to let's say, like you mentioned that there was shortage of water?

Father: Yeah. There was a shortage of water.

YR: So is there any way you guys, your family could adapt to these challenges?

Father: Oh, we started now relying on storage containers. We started thinking of, how else can we collect water? We started having a lot of big containers. So that whenever it rains, we can store water. So we started thinking about such ways, because where I lived there was not much rain. So we used to rely on water from the well, but suddenly the water wasn't that much. And then we started thinking how else can we.. so we started thinking of other resources.

YR: Like rainwater?

Father: Yes, like rainwater... yeah.

YR: So these experiences that we just talked about, did they make a difference on how you brought up for children?

Father: Yeah, absolutely yes. So, I'm quite conscious about saving water, because I've seen water shortage [*father then gives more examples*].

Tips for semi-structured interviews

1. Make sure to have some OPEN questions prepared, but not so many questions that there is no time for follow up questions.
2. Look over your questions in advance and anticipate where you might ask follow-up questions.
3. Ask quite open questions initially, and then follow up questions that allow you to get to more detail such as 'When was that? What did you do? How did people respond?'

Your turn!

Spend 3 minutes in pairs doing the following activity:

- Ask the person next to you the following question:
 - How do you think your life growing up was different to your parents'/grandparents'/cousins' lives growing up?
- Come up with a second question based on the response to the first question – something you found interesting and want to know more about.
- **After 1.5 minutes**, swap over and the person who was interviewed does the interviewing, answering the same question.
- Discuss : *How did you find interviewing one another? How did you decide what to ask for the follow up question? Did you learn anything new?*



Part 3: Getting creative with your interview



Image: <https://www.ecohomes.uk/>

Other ways of interviewing

1. Oral history interviewing

Oral history interviewing involves looking back and getting people to think about the big moments that shaped their life, e.g. **‘looking back over your life have there been any key events that have changed how you think about the environment?’**

Other ways of interviewing

2. 'A day in the life'

'A day in the life' interviewing involves asking participants to tell you about a typical day and using that as a starting point to ask follow on questions. It is good for picking up on routines and practices that people might take for granted – e.g. **'talk me through a day in your life when you were my age'**. You can then ask follow up questions like **'in what ways do you think what you did was shaped by the environment?'** or **'how does this make you view other people's environmental practices?'**

Other ways of interviewing

3. Narrative interviewing

Narrative interviewing involves asking questions in a way that triggers memories and causes people to tell stories (e.g. **'tell me about a time when you experienced a shortage or an abundance of water...?'**).

In research interviewing we want to be able to really picture the stories that we are told. So ask open questions and then ask follow up questions such as: **When was that? What did you do? How did people respond? Can you give an example? Can you tell me more about that?**

Other ways of interviewing

4. Interviewing with photos

If you think it would help your interviewee to have an image to talk about in the interview, you could ask them to bring a photo to the interview that illustrates the impacts of climate change on their country of origin, or you could select a photo from the internet to show in the interview and ask how this scene connects to family members' experiences.

Other ways of interviewing

5. Mapping/drawing interviews

Another way to get people talking could be to ask them to draw a basic map of how much they can remember of where they grew up. This can trigger memories, and you can then use this as a base to ask about environmental problems – e.g. **‘was there anywhere in the community you didn’t like to go?’**.

You could also ask people to do a basic map of their current community and ask if there are places that are particularly exposed to climate risks or could be harmed by climate change in the future.

The map doesn’t need to be accurate or to scale!

Pause for thought

We've now looked at some different interview methods:

- Narrative interviewing
 - A day in the life
- Oral history interviewing
- Mapping/drawing interviews
 - Interviews with photos

Reflect: Could you use any of these methods in an interview with a family member? What new areas of conversation might they open up?



Part 4

Interview practice!

Practice!

Work in pairs and each write down two questions:

- One open question of your choice (you might like to use the question you wrote on the postcard earlier).
- One question that either follows 'a day in the life' technique: 'e.g. talk me through a day in your community/a day when you were my age' or a narrative interviewing technique: 'e.g. do you remember a time when...'

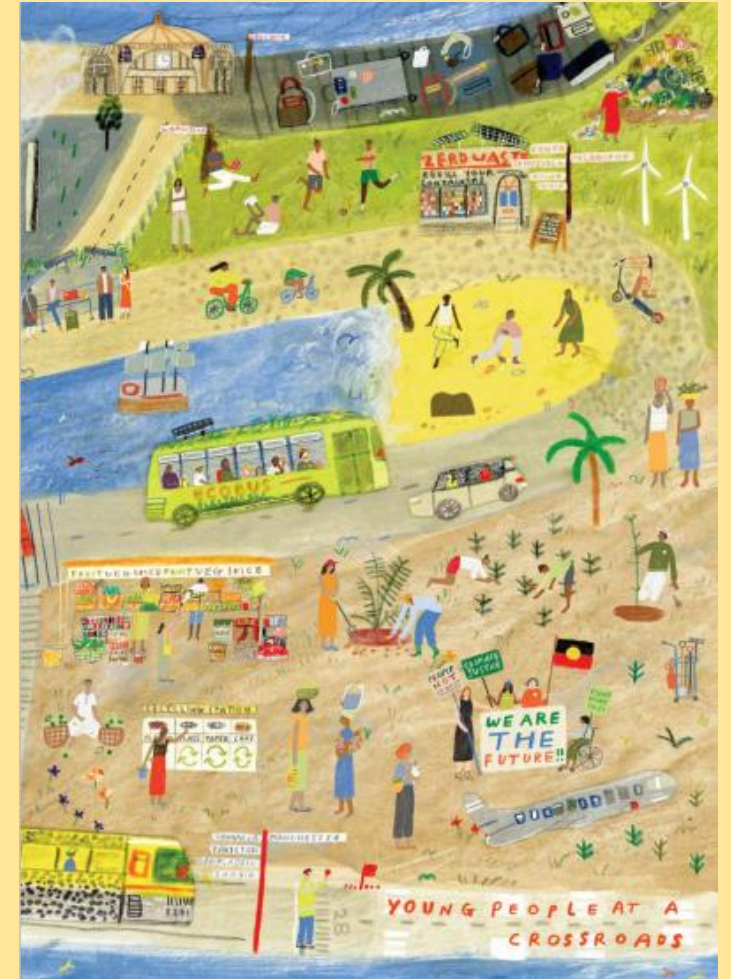
Ask the person next to you these two questions, and at least one follow up question (so a minimum of three questions).

Then swap over and the other person asks the questions.

Pause for thought

Reflect: You have just interviewed a friend, how might it be different to interview a family member? How much time would you need? How might you record their responses (e.g. on your phone, taking notes, in a video call)?

To read some of the reflections that YPX researchers wrote based on their interviews with family members, go to <https://tinyurl.com/YPXstories> and look for 'project resources' >> 'YPX creative book'.





Part 5

Tips, tricks and techniques

Tip 1: Use a mixture of open and closed questions.

Tip 2: Start with a question that is broader than climate change.

Tip 3: Be responsive to what people say.

Tip 4: Avoid leading questions (questions that lead to a particular answer, e.g. 'we've had a great time here today, haven't we...?')

Tip 5: Respond and pivot to keep an interview on track.

Responses and pivots

RESPONSES

That is so interesting.

Oh wow. I had no idea.

Thank you for that.

Yes for sure, but I think we're getting side-tracked.

PIVOTS

Can you also tell me about ...

That actually brings me to my next question

I'm actually very interested in..

Let's move to the next question.



Congratulations on completing your
interview training!

Now, who would you like to
interview...?



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Please send any comments or feedback to
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