

Session idea

Personal history and reminiscence

What it is

A range of activities, discussion ideas and reading suggestions to inspire reminiscence about past times in your own and others' lives

How it works

- Look at your photos, letters, diaries and memorabilia. Sort through them, arrange them and write down any missing information. Share them with friends and family.
- Talk about the stories that each photo or object tells. Where did it come from? Where was it taken? What was happening at that time in your life?
- Read together any letters, postcards, school reports, diaries - they all tell a story! Our [Personal history and reminiscence](#) resource pack has ideas and poems to inspire conversations.
- Have fun making albums, scrap books and treasure boxes. Write your life story or record family stories.
- Think about writing down your recent life experiences. If you're currently writing a diary, consider sending it to Mass Observation at www.massobs.org.uk. They record key events as well as everyday life.

How did it go?

- Try to capture the session with a photo of you on the phone or your online get together – e.g. via Zoom or Skype – and (with permissions) share on social media.
- Get feedback about the session from participants about what they enjoyed most.
- Think about what worked well and anything you would change.
- Keep each session plan plus feedback notes, for future use and for sharing with other Reading Friends projects.



Setting

Any. With groups or one-to-ones, including online and phone conversations - especially while everyone is staying at home.

Tips

As libraries and archives are closed at the moment (June 2020) check for online resources.

Don't always try to fill silences straightaway - people may just need time to think - especially when chatting over the phone or online.

Resources

See our [Personal history and reminiscence](#) resource pack for discussion ideas and activities.

See what your local library or archive centre is offering online.

Useful websites to research your family history:

<http://www.local-history.co.uk/>

<https://www.history.org.uk/historian/resource/2364/local-history-online>

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/>