

Oral History Student Analysis Worksheet

What is oral history? Oral histories are stories that living individuals tell about their past, or about the past of other people. Gathering, preserving and interpreting the voices and memories of people, communities, and participants in past events is the oldest type of historical inquiry, predating the written word, and one of the most modern, initiated with tape recorders in the 1940s and now using 21st-century digital technologies.

(Introduction to Oral History, Courtesy of Lawrence History Center)

Opener / Warm Up Activity: What can oral histories tell us about a particular time period or event?

Directions: In this activity, you will explore the experiences of Lawrence immigrants today by listening and watching four recorded interviews. While listening, complete the graphic organizer below.

Oral History Analysis Sheet

[Modified from the Library of Congress Teacher's Guide to Oral History](#)

Note: The questions on the graphic organizer do not have to be answered in a specific order.

<u>Oral History</u>	<u>Observe</u> Identify and note important details.	<u>Reflect</u> What can you learn about the experience of immigrants in Lawrence from this oral history?	<u>Question</u> What questions do you have?
#1			

Lawrence History Center: Immigrant City Unit Plan - Resource # 12

<u>Oral History</u>	<u>Observe</u> Identify and note important details	<u>Reflect</u> What can you learn about the experience of immigrants in Lawrence from this oral history?	<u>Question</u> What questions do you have?
#2			
#3			
#4			

Reflection Questions

1. How do the experiences of immigrants in the 19th and 20th centuries compare to those of immigrants today?
2. Which group of immigrants do you think had an easier time transitioning to the 'American way of life'? Why?
3. How do oral histories enhance how you learn about events or time periods?
4. Are there any limitations we should be concerned with when using oral histories?