There are several things you should do to prepare for the interview that you are doing for your History Day project. These tips will help the interview go smoothly.

**Tip 1.** Know the topic of the interview. It is important to research and clearly understand the topic of your interview. The more background information you have on your topic, the more valuable your interview will be, for you and for the person you interview.

**Tip 2.** Develop a list of open-ended questions before you go to the interview. It is important that your questions are written down and that they are the type that allow the interviewee (the person being interviewed) to give a long, in-depth answer. Try to avoid Yes/No questions. Some examples are shown below.

- *Open-ended question:* What was it like when you crossed the Mekong River?
- *Yes/No question:* Was it hard to cross the Mekong River?
- *Open-ended question:* Can you tell me what your homeland of Poland was like?
- *Yes/No question:* Did you come from Poland?

**Tip 3.** In preparing for your interview, avoid constructing questions that focus on chronology and specific dates. Memories often don’t work that way, and you will find during the interview, that as people remember, they move around in time in their responses. Your job later will be to connect the person’s life with the history you have studied about your topic.

**Tip 4.** Be certain that you have an *Interview Consent Form* to take with you to the interview. This form tells the interviewee the overall purpose of the interview. It also gets permission to make the interview open to the general public.

**Tip 5.** Make sure your tape recorder is in working order and that you know how to use it. You should have an extra set of batteries and an extra cassette tape ready for the interview. You should also remember to take some paper and a pencil in case you want to take notes. You may choose to bring a camera. A picture of the person you interview may be useful in your final presentation of your project, but you will need to ask the person’s permission to take a photograph.

**Tip 6.** Write down and double-check the address of the interviewee.