

Interview Skill-Building

Overview Students will learn interviewing skills in four parts; by 1. practice interviewing and being interviewed by a partner, 2. review 'Positive Interviewing Skills', 3. observe both effective and ineffective techniques modeled by an interview with the group leader, and 3. incorporate new skills into another practice interview.

Standards (NYS): Science: 1, ELA: 3, 4, Social Studies 5.3

Objectives To practice and become familiar with positive interviewing skills

Time 20 minutes – 1.5 hours

Materials

- pencils
- **'Practice Interview Form'** – 1 per student
- **'Rate this Variety Form'**– 2 per student
- **'3 steps to a Great Interview'**



Instructions **Part 1: Interview partners**

1. Review and modify the **Practice Interview Form**. This form has sample interview questions about a band or musical group, however it may be easily modified to reflect your students' interests.
2. Divide the group into interviewing pairs, and provide one **Practice Interview Form** and a pencil to each student.
3. Instruct students to interview their partner and record the responses on the form. Students should use the back of the form to ask follow up questions of their own, and record the answers.
4. Instruct students to switch after first partner has completed the interview.
5. After all students have had a chance to interview and be interviewed, come together as a group, and ask for volunteers to share what the experience was like. Ask questions such as: How did it feel to be interviewed? To interview someone else? What did you like about it? What was challenging? How do you think it might be different interviewing an adult/someone you don't know?

Part 2: Review Positive Interviewing Skills

1. Invite youth to take turns reading each of the skills under '3 steps to a great interview', including Positive Interviewing Skills, Gather Quality Responses, and End Positively sections.
2. Ask whether these skills were observed in their own interviews. Which skills were used and which were not?
3. How did it feel to the interviewee when a particular skill was used? Not used?

Part 3: Interview Demonstration

The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate how interviewing styles and techniques affect the quality of the interview, and to become familiar with potential obstacles and ways to overcome these obstacles in quality data collection.

1. Ask for a pair of volunteers to interview you in front of the group, using the Rate this Variety Form. Another adult may help by keeping the group focused on observing the interview. Be sure you have a vegetable variety name in mind (you can make one up), and the ratings can be fictional.
2. As the interviewee, you will give responses to the questions which cause the student to probe to get the answer needed to complete the form. For example, "How do you rate this variety of broccoli on taste? You might say, "Oh, it's pretty good." This forces the interviewer to ask a follow up question, such as "So, on a scale from 1-5, would that be a one, two, three, four, or five?" Also, ask plenty of questions that may come up in the actual gardener interviews. Do not correct any mistakes or poor interviewing techniques at this time.
3. Once the interview concludes, thank and applaud the volunteer interviewer. Ask the group to comment on positive interviewing techniques they noticed. Expand on their comments.
4. Next, ask the audience and the interviewer if they noticed anything that seemed awkward or difficult during the interview. Were questions asked in a way that preserved the quality of the data collected? Were responses gathered for all questions? Were all of the interviewee's questions answered? Did the interviewer pose any questions of his/her own? If not, does the audience have any ideas for follow-up questions that could be asked?

Part 4: Interview partners - putting new skills to work!

1. Divide group into interviewing pairs again – this time with different partners. Distribute the actual Rate this Variety forms to each student.
2. Students will practice interviewing each other as they did in the first round, but this time they will pretend to be gardeners rating a vegetable variety.
3. Assign a vegetable variety, along with crop name, to each student, and have seed catalogs available for students to look up their variety. The ratings the “gardener” interviewee provides may be of their choosing, but they should be encouraged to appropriately challenge their interviewer to collect quality data.
4. During this exercise, leader(s) should observe the interviews in progress, making notes of positive skills being employed, as well as areas that may still need clarification.
5. Finally, come together as a group and comment on any improvements that took place in these interviews. Clarify any questions, and thank the youth for their active participation.

Practice Interview Form: Rate this!

READ THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO YOUR PARTNER. THE CAPS ARE FOR YOUR USE; DO NOT READ THESE TO YOUR PARTNER.

Let's begin rating.																																																							
<p>Please tell me one [band or musical group you have listened to]. ENTER NAME</p>	<p>CHECK SPELLING WITH PARTNER</p> <input type="text"/>																																																						
<p>What [kind of music does this band/musician play]? ENTER MUSIC TYPE</p>	<input type="text"/>																																																						
<p>On a scale of one to five, with five being the best:</p> <table><thead><tr><th></th><th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3</th><th>4</th><th>5</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1. How would you rate [this band] overall?</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td></tr><tr><td>2. How would you rate [this band] on [rhythm]?</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td></tr><tr><td>3. How would you rate [this band] on [vocals]?</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td></tr><tr><td>4. How would you rate [this band] on [danceability]?</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td></tr><tr><td>5. How would you rate [this band] on [energy]?</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td></tr><tr><td>6. How would you rate [this band] on [instrumentals]?</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td></tr><tr><td>7. How would you rate [this band] on [solos]?</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td><td>☆</td></tr><tr><td>8. What additional thoughts would you like to share about [this band]?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>			1	2	3	4	5	1. How would you rate [this band] overall ?	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	2. How would you rate [this band] on [rhythm] ?	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	3. How would you rate [this band] on [vocals] ?	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	4. How would you rate [this band] on [danceability] ?	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	5. How would you rate [this band] on [energy] ?	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	6. How would you rate [this band] on [instrumentals] ?	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	7. How would you rate [this band] on [solos] ?	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	8. What additional thoughts would you like to share about [this band]?					
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<input type="text"/> Interviewee's Name	<input type="text"/> Interviewer's Name																																																						

Interview Form: Rate this Variety

READ THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO YOUR GARDENER. THE CAPS ARE FOR YOUR USE;
DO NOT READ THESE TO THE GARDENER.

Let's begin rating.

Please tell me one vegetable variety you have grown and eaten.

ENTER VARIETY NAME

CHECK SPELLING WITH GARDENER

What crop is this?

ENTER VEGETABLE CROP NAME



IF THE CROP IS BEAN, CABBAGE, LETTUCE, MELON, PEA, PEPPER, OR TOMATO,
CHECK THE **MISTAKEN IDENTITIES** PAGE BEFORE CONTINUING.

On a scale of one to five, with five being the best:

1 2 3 4 5

1. How would you rate this variety, overall?



2. How would you rate this variety on taste?



3. How would you rate this variety on yield?



4. How would you rate this variety on ease and reliability?



5. What **additional thoughts** would you like to share about this variety?

Gardener's User Name (email used in Gardener Profile)

Interviewer's Team Name

Great Interviews in 3 Steps

1. Practice Positive Interviewing Skills

- Smile and introduce yourself.
- Maintain good eye contact and speak clearly.
- Use good listening skills. When the person you are interviewing is talking, pay attention to what that person is saying.
- Read questions exactly as they are written.
- Do not skip any questions.
- Do not fill in missed questions yourself. If questions are accidentally skipped, leave them blank.

2. Gather Quality Responses

- Your voice is an important communication tool; use it to help the person you are interviewing understand the questions and responses without suggesting one choice over another.
- Repeat question and response options if the person does not give an answer among those options or gives more than one answer.
- Don't guess which category is closest to an unclear response. Repeat the response options (for example; one, two, three, four, or five stars) and ask the person to choose by saying something like, "So would that be one, two, three, four, or five stars?"
- Use a probe question, such as: "What did you mean by that answer?" or "Could you be more specific about that?" if you find the person's response confusing or off topic. If the person is silent try "Anything Else?"
- If the person you are interviewing asks for an interpretation, say something like, "Whatever that means to you," or "I'm sorry, I really don't know the answer to that," or "Let me repeat the question for you."
- When recording an open-ended question without specific response options, read the words back to the person. This gives the person a chance to make sure the response accurately reflects his or her opinion.
- If you have questions or concerns, ask an adult supervisor for help.

3. End Positively

- Thank the gardener for his/her time.
- Fill out the Gardener Card and give to the gardener.
- Ask the gardener if he or she has any questions for you.