

Intergenerational Interviews for Building Jewish Pride

Background:

In order to promote Jewish pride that resonates across the ages, we aim to create spaces for intergenerational and peer-to-peer dialogue. We suggest organizing opportunities that provide a platform for the older generation to impart wisdom and lived experience and for the younger generation to share their unique perspectives and voices.

We often speak to our students about resilience and about the pride we can have as Jews who have survived so much. In our communities, and sometimes even in our own families we have portraits of Jews who have lived experiences they can share to drive this point home. These are the stories of the everyday Jew from whom we can draw inspiration. These stories may come from grandparents, parents, aunts/uncles, siblings, fellow students, teachers, or other community members.

Instructions:

Below please find a list of questions that students can use once they have chosen someone to speak with. Ideally, the two people should ask each other questions and learn from each other. Here is a list of some potential ideas for people you can interview:

- Peers
- Teachers
- Rabbis
- Neighbors
- Aunts/Uncles
- Parents
- Grandparents
- Grandparents or parents of your friends

Sample Interview Questions:

- Tell me about your earliest Jewish memory.
- Tell me about your happiest Jewish memory.
- What do you like most about being a Jew and why?
- What, if anything, would you want to change about being a Jew and why?
- If you could choose to tell the world one thing about Jews, what would it be and why?
- What about being a Jew gives you the most pride?
- Have you ever had to hide that you were a Jew? If so, how did that experience feel?
- Tell me about a family tradition that you have that you hope will be carried on in future generations.

- Tell me about your Jewish name – do you know why your parents named you that?
- Can you remember any stories that your parents or grandparents told you about being Jewish in their time? How do those stories affect you?
- Have you ever experienced antisemitism? If so, tell me about it. If not, how do incidents of antisemitism that you hear about affect you?
- Tell me about your favorite Jewish holiday from when you were young. What did you like about it?
- Have you been to Israel before? When was your first trip and what was it like?
- If you could give one message to the Jewish youth of today, what would it be?
- If you could share one idea with other young Jews, what would it be?