

Exploring the interview format

Starter Activity

Can you think of places where young people are interviewed?

Activity 1: Reading, Listening and Discussion

Listen to Roger Mills reading from his book The Interview.

Discuss:

- What is the interview about?
- Who is the interviewer and who is the interviewee?
- How can you tell?
- Do you think it is a positive or negative experience for Roger?

Activity 2: Reading

Now read The Interview with Roger Mills from pages 6 to 15 and answer the following questions:

- What makes the story tick?
- How many different points of view are there?
- What kind of questions does the interviewer ask?
- How would you describe the tone of The Interview?

Make a note of any unfamiliar words and use a dictionary to define them. Then put them into a new sentence to show you understand their meaning.

Activity 3: Role Play

In small groups:

- On one side of the table write what each character is saying and on the other side what you think the character really means or feels. Give reasons for your interpretation.
- Role play: Act out the scene. Two people speak the dialogue from Roger's story, others hold subtitles underneath saying what the characters really mean or feel.

Activity 4: Writing

Write a short account of a time you were interviewed. It can be real or imagined. Use these questions to help frame your writing.

- Who interviewed you?
- How did they talk to you?
- Was what you said the same as what you really felt or meant? If not, how did they differ?
- How did you sit or stand and what gestures did you use?
- How did your interviewer sit or stand and what gestures did they use?
- How did it end?
- What was fair or unfair about how things were handled?

Activity 5: Homework preparation

Do a better job than G. Jackson, the careers officer. Can you give a friend, sibling or neighbour a more positive interview experience?

- Prepare a list of 10-15 open and closed questions to discover your interviewee's ambitions, passions and any work experience.
- Pay attention to your interviewee's gestures, silences and their tone of voice. Were some things left unsaid? What do you think they were?
- Document the questions and answers in your interview and suggest some possible jobs based on the interview. Here is an example interview done by Roger Mills' friend Richard Gray.

Meet the young Roger Mills

Date of birth: 13th May, 1954.

Location: I live in Stoke Newington and go to school in Clapton. It's only a fifteen minute walk.

Nickname: 'Bouncer', due to my springy walk.

Parents: Fred and Ivy. My dad is a painter and decorator – and I have a sister called Christine.

Height: Could do with being a bit taller to be honest.

Favourite food: Mostly chips.

Favourite Film: 'Spartacus'. The slaves are revolting.

Favourite actor/actress: Sean Connery in the James Bond film Goldfinger and Shirley Eaton as his Golden Girl. Perhaps I'll be a spy when I grow up.

Favourite Groups: The first LP I bought was the Beatles 'Help', but the first single I bought was 'Get Off Of My Cloud' by The Rolling Stones. So it's draw.

Hobbies: My fingers are covered in glue from making little plastic aeroplanes.

Likes: Hammer Horror films. Anything with monsters and creepy stuff in it – although I'm too young to go the cinema to see them!

Dislikes: School homework. Maths are a mystery to me.

What makes you laugh: Old Marx Brothers films.

Personal ambition: To grow my hair long like the groups and be an artist of some sort: a painter, or a musician, or an actor. Maybe a writer!

