

Recording Oral Interviews for the “First Stories” Project

Interviews can be captured using a smartphone, a digital or tape recorder, a camcorder, or a computer. Try to record using the highest quality sound file you are able to obtain on the specific device.

Make sure the audio levels are sufficiently strong to assure that the sound is captured and can be heard.

Find a quiet place. Avoid locations with traffic or background noise that will interfere with listening to the result. We assume a lot through observation, once we have only audio, the smallest sound can be a major distraction.

Make sure the microphone or recorder is close enough to the interviewee to capture the audio. Too far away will result in a weak signal, too close will result in distortion. Try a test first to make sure everything is working properly and the audio or video is recording.

The technical specifications for audio are a bit depth of 24 bits and a sample rate of 96kHz. This is the recommended standard. If you cannot control this, use what you have.

Video recordings should be recorded in standard codecs such as AVCHD, H.264 (or 265), MPEG2, or HDV.