

History@Home
Learning Oral History through Family Stories

Facilitators: Dr Indira Chowdhury, Dr Siddhi Bhandari, Dr Srijan Sandip Mandal

Days: Mondays and Wednesdays

Aspiring Practitioners: 18

Schedule: fifteen sessions spread over eight weeks

Objective:

Through this course, aspiring practitioners will learn:

- to interview a member of their family using the oral history method;
- to record the memories and meanings attached to an object at home in their interview;
- to research the object about which they have recorded memories and meanings;
- to research those events and processes of contemporary history that can be meaningfully connected to their family member's memories;
- to draw on their art and design training to transform the research into an output of their choice.

Week 1 (Session 1): Siddhi and Srijan

Topic: Introduction to the course. Presentation on how to frame family stories through broader histories. Discussion on how objects can be used in retrieving family stories.

Procedure: Presentation and class discussion.

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners think of a member of the family that they would like to interview before the next session.

Week 2 (Session 2): Indira and Siddhi

Topic: Introduction to material culture. Aspiring practitioners share the member of their family that they would like to interview for feedback from facilitators.

Procedure: Presentation and one-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners finalise the member of the family that they will interview before the next session. Reading on oral history to be completed before coming to the next class.

Week 2 (Session 3): Indira

Topic: Introduction to the oral history method. Presentation on how to do background research for an oral history interview and use the pre-interview to come up with the object to be taken up during the interview.

Procedure: Presentation. Discussion of the reading. Sharing of a sample timeline and questions that can be asked during an oral history interview.

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners have a pre-interview with their narrator, who is a member of the family. They use this interview to identify the object for the oral history interview, to construct a timeline and do the required background research, all before the next session.

Week 3 (Session 4): Indira and Siddhi

Topic: Aspiring practitioners share the object that they have identified through the pre-interview and the timeline they have developed for feedback with facilitators.

Procedure: Class discussion and one-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners finalise the object that they will talk about during the interview and revise the timeline, if recommended, before the next session. Reading on material culture to be completed before coming to the next class.

Week 3 (Session 5): Siddhi

Topic: Presentation on material culture and how to do research in material culture.

Procedure: Presentation and class-discussion. Discussion of the reading.

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners do the required research on the object that they have chosen for the exercise before the next session.

Week 4 (Session 6): Siddhi

Topic: Aspiring practitioners share the research that they have done on the object for feedback.

Procedure: One-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners do additional research on the object, if recommended, before the next session.

Week 4 (Session 7): Indira

Topic: Presentation on how to prepare questions for and conduct the oral history interview.

Procedure: Presentation and mock interviews by pairing students.

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners prepare a set of questions thematically for the oral history interview and conduct the interview, before the next session.

Submission of Assignment 1: A detailed timeline and a set of questions based on the life of the family member they will interview.

Week 5 (Session 8): Indira, Siddhi, and Srijan

Topic: Six aspiring practitioners share the recordings of their oral history interview and their idea for the final outcome for feedback.

Procedure: One-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Six aspiring practitioners do a follow-up interview, if required, and finalise their creative outcome before the next session.

Week 5 (Session 9): Indira, Siddhi, and Srijan

Topic: Six aspiring practitioners share the recordings of their oral history interview and their idea for the final outcome for feedback.

Procedure: One-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Six aspiring practitioners do a follow-up interview, if required, and finalise their creative outcome before the next session.

Week 6 (Session 10): Indira, Siddhi, and Srijan

Topic: Six aspiring practitioners share the recordings of their oral history interview and their idea for the final outcome for feedback.

Procedure: One-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Six aspiring practitioners do a follow-up interview, if required, and finalise their creative outcome before the next session.

Submission of Assignment 2: Recording and a summary of the oral history interview

Week 6 (Session 11): Srijan

Topic: Presentation on how to situate oral history and material memory within broader histories through research.

Procedure: Presentation and class-discussion

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners conduct historical research to contextualise their oral history interview and their chosen object before the next session. Reading on objects and history to be completed before coming to the next class.

Week 7 (Session 12): Srijan

Topic: Aspiring practitioners share how they plan to historicise their narrator and the object for feedback.

Procedure: Discussion on the reading. Class-discussion.

Student Practice: Aspiring practitioners produce their final outcome before the next session.

Week 7 (Session 13): Indira, Siddhi, and Srijan

Topic: Six aspiring practitioners present their final outcome for feedback.

Procedure: One-on-one discussion.

Student Practice: Six aspiring practitioners revise their final outcome, if required.

Week 8 (Session 14): Indira, Siddhi, and Srijan

Topic: Six aspiring practitioners present their final outcome for feedback.

Procedure: One-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Six aspiring practitioners revise their final outcome, if required.

Week 8 (Session 15): Indira, Siddhi, and Srijan

Topic: Six aspiring practitioners present their final outcome for feedback.

Procedure: One-on-one discussion

Student Practice: Six aspiring practitioners revise their final outcome, if required.

Submission of Assignment 3: Final outcome