

Interview Guide

Grandpa Joe's Full Life Story

Prepared on February 10, 2026

Target audience: My Grandchildren, Future Generations

Captured by: I'm capturing a grandparent's story

Audience notes: Keep it warm and accessible for young readers

Tips for a Great Interview

- Find a quiet, comfortable place with minimal distractions.
- Let the storyteller speak freely. Follow the story, not just the script.
- Use follow-up prompts like: "Tell me more about that" or "How did that make you feel?"
- Silence is okay. Give them time to think and remember.
- Record the interview if possible (audio or video) in addition to taking notes.
- It's fine to skip questions or change the order. This guide is a starting point.
- If emotions come up, be patient and compassionate. Some stories need time.
- Focus on specific memories and details rather than generalities.
- Take breaks as needed. This doesn't have to happen in one sitting.

Priority Legend

[MUST ASK]	Essential questions that form the core of the legacy.
[NICE TO HAVE]	Valuable questions if time and energy allow.
[OPTIONAL]	Bonus questions -- great if the conversation goes there naturally.

Childhood & Growing Up

1. What is your earliest memory? [MUST ASK]

2. Where did you grow up, and what was your neighborhood like? [NICE TO HAVE]

3. Describe the home you grew up in -- what did it look like, smell like, sound like? [NICE TO HAVE]

4. Who were the most important people in your childhood? [NICE TO HAVE]

5. What were your favorite games, toys, or ways to spend time as a kid? [NICE TO HAVE]

6. What was school like for you? Did you have a favorite teacher? [NICE TO HAVE]

7. What got you in trouble as a kid? [NICE TO HAVE]

8. What was dinnertime like in your family? [NICE TO HAVE]

9. What holidays or traditions did your family celebrate, and how? [NICE TO HAVE]

10. Was there a moment in your childhood that changed the direction of your life? [NICE TO HAVE]

11. What was the best summer you remember as a kid? [NICE TO HAVE]

12. What did you want to be when you grew up? [NICE TO HAVE]

13. What were your parents like when you were young? [NICE TO HAVE]

14. What music, TV shows, or movies do you remember from growing up? [NICE TO HAVE]

15. What was the hardest thing about being a kid in that era? [OPTIONAL]

Family & Relationships

1. How did you meet your spouse or life partner? [MUST ASK]

2. What was your wedding day like? [NICE TO HAVE]

3. What's the secret to a lasting relationship, in your experience? [NICE TO HAVE]

4. What was it like becoming a parent for the first time? [NICE TO HAVE]

5. What's a favorite memory with each of your children? [NICE TO HAVE]

6. How would you describe your parenting style? [NICE TO HAVE]

7. What traditions have you created with your own family? [NICE TO HAVE]

8. What do you admire most about your parents? [NICE TO HAVE]

9. Tell me about a family challenge you overcame together. [NICE TO HAVE]

10. What do you most want your children or grandchildren to know about you? [NICE TO HAVE]

11. Is there a family recipe, song, or saying that's been passed down? [NICE TO HAVE]

12. What has being a grandparent meant to you? [NICE TO HAVE]

13. Describe a perfect ordinary day with your family. [NICE TO HAVE]

14. What's the funniest thing that ever happened in your family? [NICE TO HAVE]

15. Who in your extended family had the biggest impact on you? [OPTIONAL]

Career & Professional Life

1. What was your very first job? [MUST ASK]

2. How did you end up in the career or industry you spent your life in? [NICE TO HAVE]

3. Who was the most influential mentor in your professional life? [NICE TO HAVE]

4. What accomplishment are you most proud of professionally? [NICE TO HAVE]

5. Tell me about a time you failed at work and what you learned from it. [NICE TO HAVE]

6. How did your career change you as a person? [NICE TO HAVE]

7. What was the biggest risk you took professionally? [NICE TO HAVE]

8. What was the hardest decision you ever made at work? [NICE TO HAVE]

9. What leadership lesson took you the longest to learn? [NICE TO HAVE]

10. If you could give one piece of career advice to a young person, what would it be? [NICE TO HAVE]

11. How did you handle the balance between work and family? [NICE TO HAVE]

12. What do you think your colleagues would say about you? [NICE TO HAVE]

13. What industry changes did you witness during your career? [NICE TO HAVE]

14. Describe the moment you knew it was time to retire or move on. [NICE TO HAVE]

15. What legacy did you leave at the place you worked the longest? [OPTIONAL]

Values & Life Lessons

1. What values were you raised with that you still hold today? [MUST ASK]

2. What's the most important lesson life has taught you? [NICE TO HAVE]

3. What do you know now that you wish you'd known at 20? [NICE TO HAVE]

4. What does 'success' mean to you -- has that definition changed? [NICE TO HAVE]

5. What advice would you give about handling money? [NICE TO HAVE]

6. How do you define a good life? [NICE TO HAVE]

7. What's the best advice anyone ever gave you? [NICE TO HAVE]

8. What's a mistake you made that taught you something valuable? [NICE TO HAVE]

9. How do you handle disagreements or conflict? [NICE TO HAVE]

10. What does courage mean to you? When have you had to be courageous? [NICE TO HAVE]

11. How do you decide what's right when the answer isn't clear? [NICE TO HAVE]

12. What's worth fighting for? [NICE TO HAVE]

13. If you could write a letter to your younger self, what would it say? [NICE TO HAVE]

14. What keeps you going when life gets hard? [NICE TO HAVE]

15. What do you hope people learn from your life? [OPTIONAL]

Adventures & Experiences

1. What's the greatest adventure you've ever had? [MUST ASK]

2. Where is the most memorable place you've ever traveled? [NICE TO HAVE]

3. Tell me about a time you stepped completely outside your comfort zone. [NICE TO HAVE]

4. What's the most spontaneous thing you've ever done? [NICE TO HAVE]

5. Is there an experience that fundamentally changed how you see the world? [NICE TO HAVE]

6. What's a hobby or passion that has brought you the most joy? [NICE TO HAVE]

7. Describe a perfect day doing something you love. [NICE TO HAVE]

8. What's a risk you took that paid off -- or didn't? [NICE TO HAVE]

9. Tell me about a time you were truly awestruck. [NICE TO HAVE]

10. What's on your bucket list that you still hope to do? [OPTIONAL]

Reflection & Legacy

1. When you look back on your life, what are you most grateful for? [MUST ASK]

2. What are you most proud of? [NICE TO HAVE]

3. Is there anything you wish you'd done differently? [NICE TO HAVE]

4. What do you want people to remember about you? [NICE TO HAVE]

5. If you could live one day over again, which would it be and why? [NICE TO HAVE]

6. What brings you the most joy right now? [NICE TO HAVE]

7. What does the word 'legacy' mean to you? [NICE TO HAVE]

8. What message would you like to leave for future generations? [NICE TO HAVE]

9. How would you like to be remembered by those who knew you best? [NICE TO HAVE]

10. If you had one more thing to say to the people you love, what would it be? [OPTIONAL]

Faith & Spirituality

1. How would you describe your relationship with faith or spirituality? [MUST ASK]

2. Were you raised in a religious tradition? How did that shape you? [NICE TO HAVE]

3. Was there a defining moment in your spiritual life? [NICE TO HAVE]

4. How has your faith helped you through difficult times? [NICE TO HAVE]

5. Have you ever had doubts? How did you work through them? [NICE TO HAVE]

6. What spiritual practices are most meaningful to you? [NICE TO HAVE]

7. Is there a scripture, prayer, or saying that guides your life? [NICE TO HAVE]

8. Who has been a spiritual mentor or model for you? [NICE TO HAVE]

9. How has your faith changed or deepened over the years? [NICE TO HAVE]

10. What do you hope to pass down about your faith? [NICE TO HAVE]

11. Describe a moment you felt truly at peace. [NICE TO HAVE]

12. How does your faith community matter to you? [OPTIONAL]

Thank you for preserving what matters most.

Every question is a doorway into a memory. Not every door needs to be opened today. Take your time, enjoy the conversation, and let the stories come.