



COLLECTING STORIES CONNECTING LIVES



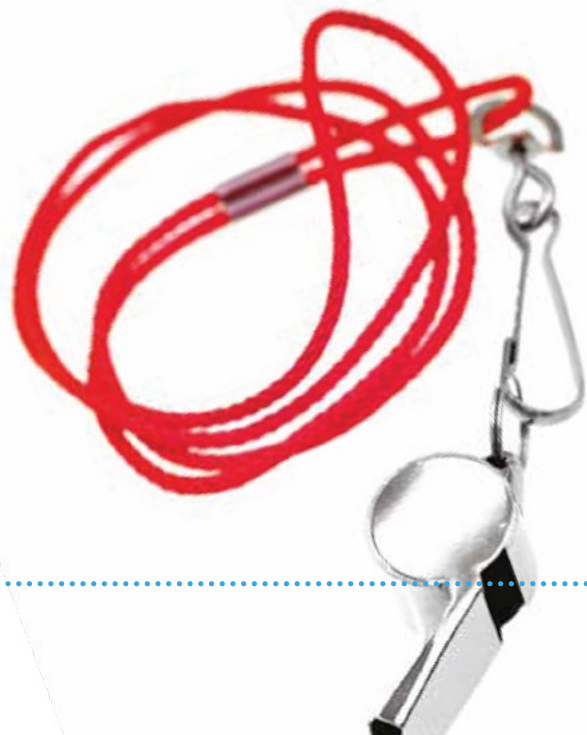
A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO SPORTS REMINISCENCE ACTIVITIES
FOR PUPILS OF ALL AGES

REPLAY™
**MEMORY
MAKERS**
SPORTING MEMORIES UNITING GENERATIONS

REMINISCENCE: WHAT IT IS, AND WHY IT MATTERS

From childhood onward, we all reminisce. It's a positive thing that helps us make sense of our lives. For older people, it can be much easier to remember and talk about things that happened in the past – and sport is an area that has a broad appeal, bringing together different age groups.

This guide will help you plan successful reminiscence activities for pupils where they can interact with older people to capture stories. Themed around sport, they could focus on anything from the Olympic Games to local sports clubs.



“A vocal or silent recall of events in a person’s life, either alone or with another person or group of people.”

(Spector et al, 2000)

HOW COLLECTING STORIES BENEFITS US ALL

Stories matter. The fact is, collecting stories is important for everyone – from the pupils involved, to the older people whose reminiscences they’re collecting, and beyond.



Preserves sports history and heritage



Benefits a wider audience with memory issues



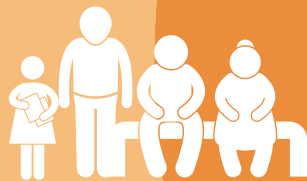
Directly helps older people



Schools engage with the wider community



Pupils of all ages develop confidence



CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

We all have stories. But not everyone gets the chance to share theirs. Through structured reminiscence activities, pupils can connect with older people – many of whom may be isolated, sometimes with memory issues.



For pupils of all ages, these activities offer a variety of benefits:

- **Increased confidence**
- **Gain interviewing skills**
- **Increase historical knowledge**
- **A better understanding of older people**
- **Reinforce learning in curriculum areas like English and History**

Reminiscence can also help improve the wellbeing of isolated older people. Being interviewed can make them feel valued for their knowledge of the past and recording their personal stories can help reinforce their identity and raise their self-esteem.

Preserving local history

A lot of sporting heritage is only held in the memories of older fans, especially where smaller sports clubs are concerned. Everything from the journey to a match to the singing on the terraces, reminiscence offers a way of preserving aspects of our sporting history that might otherwise be lost forever.

This is something that may appeal to local sports clubs. Instead of different generations of club members remaining in their own separate groups, reminiscing can help bring the generations together.



The bigger picture

All the stories captured through reminiscence can be transcribed and uploaded to the Sporting Memories website. From here, they can be downloaded and used by our groups around the UK to help trigger the memories of other older people who may have memory problems through conditions like dementia.



COLLECTING STORIES

A practical guide to reminiscence

Before planning an activity, it's helpful for pupils to understand some of the ways older people may be different:

- **For many it can be much easier to remember things that happened in the long-term past**
- **Memories often stay vivid much longer, even for those with issues like dementia**
- **The details of an event many years ago, like who played for each team, may be clearer than what happened yesterday**
- **It can be a very positive experience to have conversations about the past**

Reminiscence “deliberately attempts to trigger memories of the past and use them as a vehicle for communication in the present” (Bruce and Schweitzer, 2009)



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

In the class, get pupils into pairs, or small groups, to discuss the Sports Day image and see what memories or thoughts it triggers. Get them to share their stories with the rest of the class.

ROLE PLAY:

This interview script highlights some mistakes that should be avoided. Get two pupils to play the parts then talk about what went wrong.

CLASS DISCUSSION:

- What was bad about this interview?
- What would have been a better way to go about it?



GETTING A GOOD INTERVIEW

Some principles for a successful session

What to ask, and how to ask it

The most important thing to remember when reminiscing and particularly when interviewing is to ask 'open questions'. These are the kind of questions that can't be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no'.

A useful tip for pupils who are getting one-word answers is to keep following up with open questions like 'what was it about x that you liked so much?' or 'what was so special about that game?' or 'how did you feel?' Persistence pays.

For people with dementia and other cognitive issues, direct questions like 'do you recognise this player?' can be difficult. A good approach is to show a photo and wait and see if it prompts a response, or perhaps say something about the photo to get the conversation going.

How many interviewers?

- **A one-to-one interview will create the best rapport between people**
- **Young students may benefit from at least one other for support, and the interview itself can benefit from multi-questioners.**
- **It's difficult to concentrate on recording and interviewing – try having one person responsible for the recording equipment and one or two others asking questions**
- **Any more than three students can make it difficult to build a relationship with the person**

For more information and practical tips on setting up an interview, download our detailed guide, 'Planning Interviews'

Prompts and Triggers

If you are intending to reminisce about the Olympic Games you can print out the attached Olympic Special Sporting Pinks. This is a useful set of material that can help trigger conversations.

- **Find out which Olympic Games is most familiar to the person you are interviewing**
- **If you are working with a specific sports club or around a particular theme, it's worth doing some research in advance**
- **Material from the web, memorabilia from a club or library books can all help**
- **Video clips on YouTube are useful**
- **With videos, keep them short: they should prompt conversation rather than just be something to sit and watch**



INTERVIEWING TIPS



- Remember to ask open questions
- Be friendly and polite, smile and give the person lots of time and encouragement
- Always thank them at the end of the interview and tell them what you intend to do with their stories

Don't forget

- Make sure your recorder has power, is switched on and is working
- At the beginning of any interview ask people if they are happy to share their story
- In addition you need written permission
- Remember to ask the person's name so that you have it recorded with their story
- You may need to hold the recorder close to the person if it is a noisy environment
- If it's a quieter setting, it's less intrusive to put the recorder on a table between you

The right environment

- The ideal location would be a quiet room separate from other interviews or activities
- Alternatively, try to arrange each interview group so they are as far away from noise sources as possible

- Try to avoid open windows, central heating noise, loud clocks and people bursting into the room
- It's a good idea to put a notice up to say recordings are taking place
- Tables can often create barriers: try arranging chairs in a semi-circle, with interviewers not far from the contributor
- If recording on video, it's really important to have the light source opposite the person rather than behind
- For the best results, don't hold the microphone – try putting it on a stand on a table instead
- Even a very cheap tie clip microphone can produce good results too

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Get pupils to interview each other in pairs. Observe and comment on how they're using the recorders. Encourage them to:

- Test the recorder
- Make eye contact
- Glance at questions
- Have triggers such as photographs of sports.



DISCUSSION:

What worked and what didn't work?



EXERCISE 1

Interview each other in class – play back and review



EXERCISE 2

Interview teachers/staff/parents about their sporting memories



SETTING UP INTERVIEWS

Some ideas for successful reminiscence sessions

Finding older people to interview

Firstly, it's important to target a group of older sports fans to reminisce with and interview.

For younger pupils this may be their own parents, grandparents or older family members or friends. For older pupils, reminiscing with family members can be a good practice area before talking to people in the wider community.



Think about approaching a local day centre, sheltered housing complex or care home. They may be keen to welcome a group of pupils to reminisce with their regular members or residents. They are often very welcoming, especially to younger people.

They might also be able to pinpoint individuals with a strong interest or past involvement in sport.

Alternatively, local sports clubs can be very interested in sharing their heritage and having the memories of their older or former members recorded and preserved.

Some pupils may already be members of local sports clubs but currently have little involvement with older members. Begin by making contact with a senior figure within the chosen location – for example the care home manager or the club president or secretary.



Choosing a theme

In an Olympic year especially, the theme of the Olympics and the Paralympic Games can be a strong theme for reminiscence. Not only are there lots of additional triggers and prompts in the media, but also almost all younger people have their own strong memories of the London 2012 Games.

Young people's enthusiasm about watching Mo Farah, Jessica Ennis-Hill or Chris Hoy can prompt older people to remember their earliest Olympic memories. We have also provided Olympic Sporting Pink Specials of various Olympic Games to help start conversations.

Other themes could be around a specific local sports club, sports personalities or your own village, town or area's wider sporting heritage.

PLANNING REMINISCENCE SESSIONS

If possible try and arrange a very informal first reminiscence session without any recording equipment. This will 'break the ice' so pupils can chat informally with the older person involved.



At this first meeting (or even beforehand) it would be good to discover the sporting interests of the older person involved. This allows the pupils to do some research for the recording session and use the person's particular interests to act as a trigger or prompt for the next conversations.

This might involve searching the web for particular sporting heroes or events they might have watched or taken part in in the past.

For the recording session itself, it is important to try and find a quiet comfortable spot where there are not too many distractions.

Be prepared

It may be a good idea to create a set of guide questions for pupils to ask. They may be based upon the theme you have chosen or an individual's known interests. It's also a good idea to suggest questions the older person can ask pupils about their sporting memories. Click below to see a checklist including suggestions of questions.



GETTING THE DETAILS RIGHT

Understanding cognitive issues

It's important to remember that whether someone has a memory problem, is hard of hearing or has poor eyesight, they are still just people. Like everyone, they're likely to want to have conversations about things that interest them.

While you need to consider some of the difficulties they face, it is often just as helpful to focus on their persistent strengths. For example, people with dementia often have very good long-term memories and old photographs can help to trigger stories.

Old objects and smells often help to trigger memories: an old leather football perhaps, or the smell of a pie and Bovril. The more photos and objects you have at a themed sporting reminiscence session, the better.

More than anything, remember that the desire to be sociable, to talk and to share stories is one of the most basic aspects of being a human being.

Remember:

- People with dementia and short-term memory issues might find it difficult to answer direct questions or process information quickly
- People with poor hearing may need a very quiet room and for questions to be repeated

Obtaining permissions

The copyright of anyone's story always belongs to that person. Getting permission to use people's stories allows them to assign the rights so others can publish them. The same applies to photographs of reminiscence sessions: permissions should be sought from parents and the older people involved. We have produced a simple permission form to help.

What to do with the recordings

Once recordings have been made the most important thing is to upload them.

Our Replay Sporting Memories app can be downloaded from Google Play or the Apple App Store or accessed via the web for PCs at: www.sportingmemories.uk

Of course, your school may also want to use reminiscence stories in newsletters, sporting history booklets or exhibitions.

Memories can either be transcribed and uploaded as text or uploaded as audio files. (Each audio file is limited to five minutes but can be edited on the App). Photos can also be uploaded as well as links to appropriate YouTube videos.





www.replaymemorymakers.com