

Personal Backgrounds

1. Where did you grow up? What was it like there?
2. What languages do you speak? Which one did you learn first?
3. Did you move a lot when you were young, or did you mostly stay in one place? What was that like?
4. What is something you remember doing as a child that was fun? Who did you do it with?
5. What kinds of food did you eat a lot when you were younger? Do you still eat them now?
6. What is a tradition or special thing your family does? How often do you do it?
7. What are three things that are special about where you come from?
8. What is one thing from your childhood that you still have or still do today?
9. Did your family have any special rules or habits when you were growing up? What were they?
10. What was the weather like where you grew up? Did you like it?
11. What was your home like when you were growing up? What do you remember about it?

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1. What is the best thing about the place where you grew up? What do you miss about it?
2. Who is someone in your family or life who has been important to you? What do you like about them?
3. Have you ever lived somewhere and then moved away? What do you miss about it, if anything?
4. What subject at school did you enjoy the most? Why?
5. What is the most interesting thing about your family's history or background? What makes it so interesting?
6. What job did you want when you were a child? Why did you want that job?
7. Is there a food or dish that reminds you of home? Why does it remind you of home?
8. What is something your family taught you that you still do today? Why do you keep doing it?
9. What is a place in your hometown or neighborhood that was special to you when you were growing up? Why was it special?
10. Did you have a favorite teacher or coach when you were younger? What did you like about them?
11. What is something about your life now that is very different from when you were a child? Why is it different?

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1. What is something about your hometown that most people from other places would find surprising? Why do you think it surprises them?
2. What is one thing from your childhood that you remember very well? Why do you think you remember it?
3. What do people from other countries or regions often misunderstand about where you are from? Why do you think that misunderstanding exists?
4. Do you think where you grew up has shaped your personality? Why or why not?
5. What do you think is the biggest difference between your generation and your parents' generation? Give me some examples.
6. If you could go back and grow up in a different place or time, would you? What would you change and what would you keep?
7. How important is it to know about your family's history? Is it common in your culture to talk about family stories?
8. What life event has had the biggest influence on who you are today? If you're comfortable sharing, what happened?
9. Do you think it is easier or harder to be a young person today compared to when your parents were young? What makes you think so?
10. Some people feel proud of their cultural background, while others don't think about it much. How do you feel about yours?

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1. Do you think people should stay close to where they grew up or move somewhere new? What are the good things about each?
2. How do you think your first language has shaped the way you see the world? Is there something you can express in your first language that is hard to say in English?
3. How does the place where someone grows up affect the kinds of opportunities they have later in life? What factors make the biggest difference?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of growing up in a family that moves around a lot compared to one that stays in the same place?
5. How has the idea of a 'normal' family changed over the past few decades? What do you think about those changes?
6. In what ways does learning about your own background or heritage help you understand other cultures? How is it different from just reading about them?
7. Some people reinvent themselves completely when they move to a new place. What are the benefits and risks of starting over?
8. How do family expectations (about career, marriage, education, or lifestyle) vary across different cultural backgrounds? How much do those expectations influence what people actually do?
9. How does social media change the way people present their background and identity to others? Is that a good or bad thing?
10. How do people's educational backgrounds affect the way they communicate, form relationships, and view the world? Do you think these differences create barriers between people?
11. People in your parents' generation and young people today often choose their career paths very differently. What has changed the most, and why?
12. People who grow up between two cultures sometimes say they don't fully belong to either one. Is that a disadvantage, or does it give them a perspective that others don't have?

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1. Do people who grow up in countries or communities that have experienced major historical trauma (war, displacement, famine) carry that history differently than those who did not? How does that shape them?
2. How does the family or community you grew up in shape the assumptions you hold about what is 'normal,' and how visible are those assumptions to you now?
3. Why do people who share the same cultural background or hometown sometimes turn out completely differently, while people from very different backgrounds sometimes feel like they understand each other deeply?
4. When people move to a new country, they often feel pressure to fit in while also wanting to hold on to their roots. How do people navigate that tension, and does it get easier or harder over generations?
5. Some people say your childhood determines who you become, while others believe you can completely redefine yourself as an adult. Where do you think the truth lies, and what makes it so hard to change?
6. Family stories are often passed down with exaggerations, missing details, or different versions depending on who tells them. How does this shape a family's identity, and does it matter if the stories are completely true?
7. How does the way a society talks about 'where you come from' (positively as heritage or negatively as limitation) affect what people allow themselves to become?
8. When cultural heritage is packaged and promoted through tourism, cuisine, festivals, or national branding, how does that process change what the heritage actually means to people who grew up with it?
9. Governments and companies increasingly use data about people's backgrounds (where they're from, where they went to school, their family income) to make decisions. Where is the line between using that information to help people and using it to limit them?
10. Why do some generations within a family or community break dramatically from the traditions and expectations of those before them, while others reproduce them almost exactly, and who usually gets the credit or the blame?