

A FREE GUIDE FROM ALBUM

Fifty questions to ask your grandparents

Most families lose the stories first and the photographs second. Nobody means for it to happen. The person who knew the answers is simply not there one morning, and the names under the old faces go with them.

Ask one of these a day. In under two months you will have something no money can buy back.

How to use it

- One question a day. Do not sit anyone down for fifty.
- Record the answer on your phone. A voice note is enough, and the voice matters more than the words later on.
- Write three lines yourself, the same day, while you still remember the detail they did not say out loud.
- Ask for the photograph that goes with the story, then and there.
- Keep all of it in one place the whole family can reach. A phone is not that place.

Names and beginnings

1. What is your full name, and who chose it?
2. Who were you named after, and why?
3. Where were you born, and who was in the room?
4. What is the earliest thing you can remember?
5. What did your home look like when you were a child?
6. What were you called at home that nobody calls you now?
7. Which year of your life do you remember best, and what happened in it?

The family line

8. What were your parents' full names?
9. What work did your father do? And your mother?
10. What do you remember about your own grandparents?
11. Where did our family come from before here?
12. How many brothers and sisters did you have, and where are they now?
13. Which relative do people say I take after?
14. Is there a name that keeps coming back in every generation?
15. Who else should I ask about the parts you do not know?

Childhood and school

16. How did you get to school, and how far was it?
17. Who was your best friend then, and what became of them?
18. What did you get in trouble for?
19. What did you want to be?
20. What did you play when there was nothing to play with?
21. What was the first money you ever earned, and how?
22. What food did you eat then that nobody cooks now?

Love and marriage

- 23. How did you meet?
- 24. What do you remember about the day you married?
- 25. Who objected, and who was happy?
- 26. What was your first home together like?
- 27. What is the hardest part of staying together?
- 28. What do you wish somebody had told you before you married?
- 29. What song takes you straight back?

Work, land and money

- 30. What was your first job, and what did it pay?
- 31. What work are you proudest of?
- 32. Has the family ever owned land, and where is it?
- 33. What did you save for, and did you get it?
- 34. What did you lose that still bothers you?
- 35. Who helped you when nobody else would?
- 36. What would you do differently with money?

Faith, hard times and country

- 37. What do you believe, and who taught you?
- 38. What was the hardest year you lived through?
- 39. What do you remember about independence?
- 40. Was anyone in the family caught up in it?
- 41. What were you afraid of then that nobody fears now?
- 42. When were you closest to giving up, and what stopped you?
- 43. What has changed most in your lifetime?

What you want kept

- 44. Which photograph of yours matters most, and what is happening in it?
- 45. Who is in the old photographs that nobody can name any more?
- 46. What object in this house should stay in the family?
- 47. What story do you want told at your funeral?
- 48. What do you want your great-grandchildren to know about you?
- 49. What should this family never forget?
- 50. What have I never asked you that I should have?

Where to keep the answers. Album gives your family its own private website for the photographs, the stories and the family tree, on your own address, seen only by the people you invite. Try a working one, no sign-up, at **demo.album.ke**. The product is at **album.ke**, and at **album.africa** for family living abroad. Built and run by WPfoss.