Potential questions for interviewing an immigrant …

1) What is your name? In what town or city were you born? What country? How old were you when you first arrived in the United States? What year was that?

2) Describe your homeland. What language did you speak there? How did your community differ from where you live today? What foods did you eat? Did people dress differently there than they do in the United States? What do you miss about your homeland?

3) Why did you or your family leave your native country? Describe your trip to the United States. What obstacles did you have to overcome? What experiences did you have?

4) What did you think life in the United States would be like? How did you think your life would be different in the United States as compared to your homeland?

5) Once you arrived in the United States, what did you experience? Was it different than what you expected? Explain.

6) What kinds of challenges did you experience adjusting to life and culture in the United States? Did you have to learn English? Did you change your eating habits? Did you change the way you dress? Did you change the way you related to your family and friends? Did you change the way you learn? Did you change your leisure activities?

7) What challenges has learning English created for you? Do your parents speak English? If not, has this created any communication problems? What language will your children speak? Do you think you’ll ever forget your native language? How does that make you feel?

8) Have you experienced any type of discrimination in the United States? If yes, have you ever had a similar problem in your homeland? How did the experience(s) in this country make you feel? What did you do to overcome prejudice? What advice would you give to recent immigrants from your country about this problem?

9) What do you believe in means to be “an American”? Do you feel mostly American now or something else? Do you believe a person can change his or her culture to fit into a country like the United States? Do you believe a person can be “an American” and still retain his or her native culture? Explain.

10) What laws do you think the United States should have towards immigration and immigrants? Do you think the United States should restrict immigration in the future? Do you think the United States should have an open door policy to any person who wants to immigrate? Explain.