

In Your Own Words

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Tell Your Own Picture Stories

These questions will help you explore your memories and write your story, one photograph at a time. The questions are just guidelines—you don't need to use them all—and may spur you on to think of others that I haven't included.

Tip: Write your answers in short paragraphs of no more than 3 or 4 sentences.

Questions? Reach out to me at betty@iyowpublishing.com

I welcome your feedback!

Start with the easy questions:

1. Who's in the photo?

What are their names, ages, relationships to you?

2. Where was it taken?

If you don't know the exact location, tell what you do know or what you think you know.

3. When was it taken?

Was there a specific occasion or event?

4. Why was this photo taken?

Was it taken for a specific reason?

5. What about the setting is important or interesting?

These questions may help lead you into the story you want to tell:

6. Who do you think took the photo?

Was the person in the photo willing to be in it?

7. Who isn't in the photo but is nonetheless important to it?

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This may be the person who took the picture, someone else in the room, or even someone who's conspicuously absent.

8. What was your relationship with the person in the photo?

Describe in greater detail how you know this person and who they are to you.

9. What do you know about him or her?

Sometimes we know only a few facts, but have impressions that convey a lot of information.

10. Do you have a memory that is perhaps unrelated to the photo but related to the person in it?

A photo-story can be indirectly related to the image in the picture.

11. Does the photo bring to mind a person or people who are not in the picture but who is/are somehow connected with that time and place?

Sometimes a photo serves as a jumping off point that leads to another memory.

12. Are there historical circumstances/events that may help give depth/context to the photo?

And, if you want to go a little deeper...

13. What do you feel about the person in the photo?

Was this an important personal relationship?

14. How did you feel when the photo was taken?

If it's a photo of you or if you took it, or if you were present when someone else took it, how were you feeling?

15. How do you feel about the picture now?

Discuss what you felt then compared with what you feel now.

16. What do you know now about the person in the photo that you didn't know then?

Time and distance offer perspectives that hold really interesting stories!