



How to...

WOW!

Humans of New York has approximately 30 million followers across its social media platforms.



Practice your interview skills

A best-selling author shares how to ask questions that lead to interesting answers.

Interview skills are communication tools that can help you with everything from writing an article for your school newspaper to having better conversations with others. *The Week Junior* spoke with Brandon Stanton, the creator of the *Humans of New York* series, for his tips on how to conduct a successful interview. (See the box at right for more about him.) Here's how to get started.

Be prepared

First, decide who you would like to interview. It could be an older relative, a new teacher, a community leader, or a local sports legend. With an adult's help, reach out to politely request an interview, then set up a date and time. You can write down questions before the interview. Aim for detailed answers by asking open-ended questions that begin with the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why. Stanton told *The Week Junior*, "One question I have asked is: What is something that really challenged you, and what have you learned from it?" Other ideas could be: "Who is someone who has influenced you?" and "What is your proudest moment?" Bring paper and pen to write answers. If you'd like to use a recording app, such as Voice Memos or Recorder, be sure to get permission first.



Make eye contact with your interview subject.

Pay close attention

A key to conducting a strong interview is being a good listener. "Whenever I meet somebody, I try to just listen very closely to what they're saying," Stanton says. "When you show that you're listening to their answers, that encourages people to share." Make eye contact and nod at appropriate moments to show you're listening, whether you're conducting the interview in person or remotely over a computer screen. Try to avoid interrupting people while they're speaking.

Ask follow-up questions

Your interview subject may share a piece of interesting information you hadn't thought to ask. When this happens, you can depart from your list of questions and ask a follow-up question to gather more details. For instance, you could say, "Can you please tell me more about that?"

Share the story with others

Once you have finished your interview, you can use the responses to write a story. Ask a family member to read it, and make edits until you are happy with it. When it's done, share the story with your interview subject, along with a thank-you note for sharing their time with you.

Super storyteller



In 2010, Brandon Stanton (above) had a bold idea. He wanted to photograph 10,000 people across New York City. He soon began adding interviews alongside his portraits, which evolved into his successful *Humans of New York* series on social media.

Stanton next published best-selling books of his work, beginning with *Humans of New York* in 2013. His new book, *Dear New York*, is filled with portraits and stories he collected from people across the city.

Stanton, who is known for eliciting moving and personal stories, told *The Week Junior*, "I think one of the most important and valuable things you can give to somebody is your attention."