

VETERANS LEGACY PROGRAM CURRICULAR MATERIALS

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VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

**Department
of History**





Veterans
Oral History
Project



Objectives:

By the end of this project, you will have an understanding of the importance of Oral History of veterans and create an Oral History Presentation based on a veteran buried at a National Cemetery in Florida.



What is Oral History?

Oral History is a great way to capture personal memories of events before they are lost.

Preservation of the following:

- Dates
- Names
- Stories
- Testimonies
- Thoughts
- Feelings



How Do We Collect Oral History?



Oral History can be collected by recording the interviewee in an audio or visual format.

During the interview, the interviewer asks well prepared questions regarding a certain event or topic.



How Do We Prepare?

A successful interview relies on PREPARATION.

- Gather as much information about the person you are planning to interview
- Research the time period, place, events in history, etc.
- Create a timeline of the interviewee's life

What Types of Questions?



Open-Ended

Prompt a response that is more than just yes or no.

Biographical

Such as where they're born or what year something happened.

Stay Away From Yes or No Questions:

- Did you like it when you traveled for work?
- Did you enjoy being in the Army?
- Were you happy to be home after the war?



How Can We Adjust the Questions?

- Did you like it when you traveled for work?
- Did you enjoy being in the Army?
- Were you happy to be home after the war?
- Where did your travel to in your time in the military?
- What memory stands out from your time in the Army?
- How was your home life when you returned from the war?

Example Question Game:

A question will be placed on the screen. You will discuss with your partner if you feel it is one of the three types of questions below.

If it is a Yes or No Question, how can we adjust it to be open-ended?:

1. Yes or No Question
2. Open-Ended Questions
3. Biographical

The background features a light beige, textured surface with diagonal rays emanating from the right side. On the left and right edges, there are stylized, torn-edge representations of the American flag's red and white stripes and blue field with white stars.


Example Question Game:

**What year did you
join the US Navy?**



Example Question Game:


**Can you explain
what it was like to
be stationed on a
destroyer?**





Example Question Game:


**Did you like it when
your family moved
from Cuba to
Florida?**





Example Question Game:


**What were your
reasons for joining
the US Army?**





Example Question Game:


**Did living through
the Great
Depression affect
you?**





Example Question Game:

**Did you and your
wife get married in
1965?**




Oral History Interviews





Veteran: Celina M. Yebba

Central Florida, RICHS of, "Yebba, Celina M. interview" (2014). Veterans Oral Histories. 319. <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/veteransoralhistories/319>



Analyze the Interview:

- How did the interviewer begin the interview?
- What did you notice about the types of questions at the beginning of the interview?
- What did you notice about the interviewee's response to the different types of questions?



Veteran - Michael R. Arp

Central Florida, RICHES of, "Arp, Michael R. interview" (2016). Veterans Oral Histories. 484.

<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/veteransoralhistories/484>





Analyze the Interview

- What questions were asked?
- What period in Michael R. Arp's service was discussed based on the questions asked?
- What happened when the interviewer asked, "Tell me a little bit about medical screening, inspections, getting your uniform for the first time."?

Veteran - Richard Barber

Central Florida, RICHES of, "Barber, Richard L. interview" (2011). Veterans Oral Histories. 68.

<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/veteransoralhistories/68>



Analyze the Interview:

- Were there any questions asked? Why?
- What did the interviewer do while Richard was telling his story?




Becoming the Interviewer





Veteran: William Coles

Central Florida, RICHES of, "Coles, William T. interview" (2015). Veterans Oral Histories. 397.
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/veteransoralhistories/397>



“On the Spot” Questions:

- What question(s) could you ask William if he happened to pause here to help him continue with his story?





Veteran: Marianela Arreaza-Moreno

**Central Florida, RICHES of, "Arreaza-Moreno,
Marianela interview" (2016). Veterans Oral
Histories. 500.**

<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/veteransoralhistories/500>



“On the Spot” Questions:

- What question(s) could you ask Marianela if she happened to pause here to help her continue with her story?





Veteran: Lou Bell

Central Florida, RICHES of, "Bell, Lou E. interview" (2015). Veterans Oral Histories. 401.

<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/veteransoralhistories/401>



“On the Spot” Questions:

- What question(s) could you ask Lou if she happened to pause here to help her continue with her story?



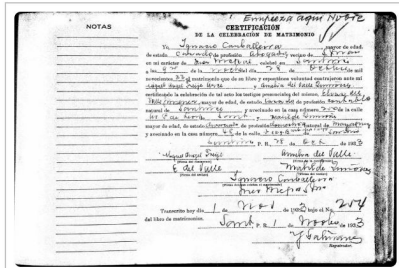
A close-up photograph of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in detail. The flag is draped and folded, creating deep shadows and bright highlights. A white rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the text "Meet Your Veteran".

Meet Your Veteran

Creating Questions:

Early Life

Michael Angel Freije was born Miguel Angel Freije in the Santurce district of San Juan, Puerto Rico on July 22, 1913.¹ Santurce, located in the northern part of San Juan, experienced significant population and economic growth throughout the early twentieth century, in large part due to the American presence there.² Miguel, who spent his childhood and early adult years in Puerto Rico, grew up within this context. In March 1917, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Jones Act into law, which extended US citizenship to Puerto Ricans like Miguel, who was three years old at the time.³ On October 28, 1933, Miguel married Amelia Del Valle, as seen on their marriage certificate.⁴ By 1935, the couple lived in Santurce with Amelia's family, along with their young son Miguel Angel Frieje, Jr., born around 1934.⁵ The couple also had a daughter, Nilda, in 1937.⁶ Miguel sailed between San Juan and New York City at least twice during this time, in 1933 and 1937. He likely did not return to Puerto Rico after his arrival in New York City on March 5, 1937.⁷ Sometime before 1940, Miguel and Amelia divorced.⁸ Between his arrival in New York in 1937 and when he registered for the **draft** in 1940, Miguel settled in Jacksonville, FL.⁹



Certification of Marriage for Miguel and Amelia, 1933

- What biographical information could we use to create interview questions?
- What other information could we use to create open-ended questions?

Creating Questions Based on Your Veteran's Biography

Example:

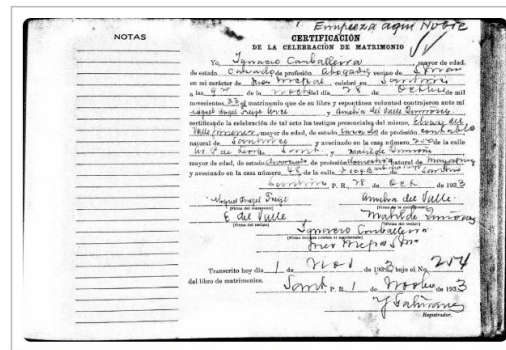
Veteran: Michael Angel Freije

Biographical	Open Ended
<ul style="list-style-type: none">When and where were you born?<ul style="list-style-type: none">July 22, 1913 in Santurce district of San Juan, PRWhen did you get married?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Married Amelia Del Valle on Oct. 28, 1933Did you and Amelia have any children?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Yes, Miguel Jr was born around 1934 and Nilda was born in 1937How did you travel back and forth to the U.S.?<ul style="list-style-type: none">By shipWhen you decided to move to the US, where did you decide to live?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jacksonville, FLDid you enlist/join the draft?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Registered for the draft (1940)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">What was life like in PR as a child/young adult?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Research needed*Why did you choose to change your name?<ul style="list-style-type: none">discussed in paragraph 2

Researching Events:

Early Life

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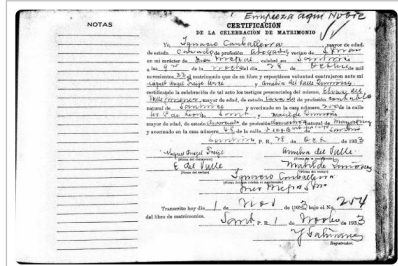


Certification of Marriage for Miguel and Amelia, 1933

What events could we research?

Early Life

Michael Angel Freije was born Miguel Angel Freije in the Santurce district of San Juan, Puerto Rico on July 22, 1913.¹ Santurce, located in the northern part of San Juan, experienced significant population and economic growth throughout the early twentieth century, in large part due to the American presence there.² Miguel, who spent his childhood and early adult years in Puerto Rico, grew up within this context. In March 1917, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Jones Act into law, which extended US citizenship to Puerto Ricans like Miguel, who was three years old at the time.³ On October 28, 1933, Miguel married Amelia Del Valle, as seen on their marriage certificate.⁴ By 1935, the couple lived in Santurce with Amelia's family, along with their young son Miguel Angel Frieje, Jr., born around 1934.⁵ The couple also had a daughter, Nilda, in 1937.⁶ Miguel sailed between San Juan and New York City at least twice during this time, in 1933 and 1937. He likely did not return to Puerto Rico after his arrival in New York City on March 5, 1937.⁷ Sometime before 1940, Miguel and Amelia divorced.⁸ Between his arrival in New York in 1937 and when he registered for the **draft** in 1940, Miguel settled in Jacksonville, FL.⁹



Certification of Marriage for Miguel and Amelia, 1933

- What life was like in San Juan, PR in the 1910s
 - America's involvement in PR in the early 1900s
- The Jones Act
- Registration for the draft in 1940

Oral History Presentation Expectations:

- Interview will be in chronological order
 - Reminder to include the introduction at the beginning of the interview
- Variety of biographical and open-ended questions
- Plan, revise, and edit your script – minimal spelling/grammar mistakes
- Presentation is clear and cohesive, under 5 minutes



Presentation Day Expectations

