

## Ideas for Reminiscence Project

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**“ I can’t save him and I don’t have to keep trying  
nor do I need to be anything other than his friend.”**

Because Steve Lopez was willing to listen, he became an important part of Nathaniel’s life. Steve started out by just listening to Nathaniel’s music and soon found himself listening to his stories and sometimes incoherent ramblings.

Reminiscence is the act or process of recalling and sharing one's memories.

Reminiscence may be one-to-one sessions with another person for the specific purpose of retracing, reviewing and reflecting back over a lifetime's experience or it might involve a group of folks of a similar age and background to share memories and make new friendships and connections.

What can reminiscence work do?

- build community
- develops respect
- is the basis for friendship
- alters perspective
- empowers
- stimulates creativity
- enhances a sense of identity
- connects the past with the present
- provides a sense of history

What might a project involve?

- Gather
- Explore
- Present

In pairs students could conduct interviews of each other.

Ideas:

- Listen to Storycorps
- Research oral history or reminiscence work
- Create your own reminiscence project
- Use music to trigger memories?
- Using a film to trigger memories?

Create reminiscence boxes and consider the following:

Sight: photos, films, paintings and colours, maps, flags and symbols, diagrams, technical drawings, posters, skies, growing things

Sounds: songs, familiar and unfamiliar music, bird and animal sounds, weather (storms, wind, rain), sounds of trains and ships, machinery noise

Words: place names, famous people, stories, scandals, proverbs and poems

Tastes: food, drink, sweets, medicine, cooking and baking, unusual or foreign foods to try, old recipes remembered from childhood

Smell: medicine, perfume, make-up, cleaning agents, mothballs, herbs, spices, cooking smells, flowers, trees and countryside smells, coal and wood burning

Touch: contrasting textures, contrasting temperatures (warm and cold), different fabrics, human touch, food ingredients, animals to stroke, babies to cuddle, clothes to handle and fold

Movement: games, dance, mime, greetings, gestures, work movements such as typing, sewing, lifting, digging, religious rituals

Might someone in Psychology be an expert in this kind of work?