



Make Your Own TESTIMONIES Kit

What is TESTIMONIES?

TESTIMONIES is a community art venture created by Lorenzo Belenguer and launched by Brent Artists' Resource in response to London residents looking to have a more active role in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and to compare it with the 1948 Olympic Games. It is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and supported by the London Borough of Brent.

What is Oral History?

Oral history consists of information which we all gather as we pass through our lives. It is a spoken rendition of our past, our culture and our experiences. These soundbites are recorded to be preserved, to take their place as pieces of historical information and essentially, as stories.

How to find a story that is relevant to your community/ school

You'll probably find that everyone has their own individual view of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and with these views stories to tell. Within your community, be it your family, neighbours, friends, colleagues or classmates, everyone will have something to say about the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and some will even have something to say about the 1948 Olympic Games too. Talk to these people and ask them what they think the Olympics and Paralympic Games will bring to London and where relevant, what the 1948 event brought too. Perhaps ask them how they think it will affect your community and what their hopes are for it. Try to talk to as many people that you can, as it is important to find a range of stories within your community circle.

How to do it

There are different ways that you could go about gathering people's testimonies. One could be to organise a meetup circle, where everyone gives their oral history, another way could be to schedule a one-to-one meeting with each person who you want to record; the choice is yours! Your recording device could be a dictaphone, a laptop or even a mobile phone. The way in which you go about this is essentially up to you. Choose a method that suits you best, and use equipment which is most accessible to you.

How to present it

The way in which you present people's testimonies can be any way that you like. You may favour the idea of people in your community all meeting up and giving their oral history one by one; as well as this being a chance to record what people have to say, it is also a chance for them to perform and tell their story. Another way may be to record each person's testimony separately, and then present them in an intimate or social setting. Again, the way you go about this is up to you!

What did you learn out of it?

By recording people reciting their testimonies you will learn something. Whether it is finding out about people's past experiences of the 1948 Olympic Games, their hopes and ambitions about the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games or how perhaps these could affect your community. This project will also teach you about communicating and reaching out to people who you know, some well and some not so well, and how to arrange community interaction and engagement. Whatever you learn from this project we hope that you enjoy the experience, and have the opportunity to record your own testimony on what the 1948 Olympic Games and London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games mean to you.

For more information

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Thinkingaboutoralhistory.aspx>