

READING COMPREHENSION

B2 | Adults / Teens | Reading + Vocabulary | 45-60 minutes

Topic: Education | Skills: Reading, Vocabulary, Speaking

Read the text carefully. Then answer the questions on Page 2.

The Interview Beyond the Camera

For a class project, students at North Street College recorded interviews with older residents about changes in the town. The teacher encouraged open questions and careful listening. Most students returned with accounts of closed shops, former workplaces and childhood games. Nora returned with forty minutes of conversation and almost nothing she felt comfortable using.

Her **interviewee**, Mr Ellis, had begun with amusing stories about his first job. As the conversation continued, he mentioned a disagreement with a former colleague and named people who still lived nearby. Nora had permission to record him, but she was unsure whether he had imagined those remarks being played to a room of strangers.

Her group wanted to include the most dramatic section. Without it, they argued, the film would sound like every other account of the town. Nora suggested sending Mr Ellis a short edited version first. One student objected that allowing him to remove material would make the project less honest.

Mr Ellis approved most of the film but asked them to cut the names and one personal **accusation**. He did not deny saying it; he explained that he had been speaking casually and could not know how the other person remembered the event. The group replaced that section with a brief note explaining that part of the interview had been removed at his request.

The finished film was less dramatic but raised a more interesting question during the presentation. Did responsible editing **conceal** the past, or recognise that a recorded memory is not the same as a **settled** fact? Nora did not claim that interviewees should control every account of their lives. She concluded that permission was more useful as an ongoing conversation than as a form signed before anyone knew what would be said.

Key vocabulary

interviewee - the person answering questions in an interview

accusation - a statement that someone has done something wrong

conceal - hide something from view or knowledge

settled - accepted as decided or no longer in dispute

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

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Answer in complete sentences. Support interpretations with evidence from the text.

1. Why was Nora reluctant to use much of the interview?

2. Why did the group want the dramatic section included?

3. What concern was raised about letting Mr Ellis remove material?

4. Why did Mr Ellis request the cuts?

5. How did the group make its editing decision transparent?

6. What does Nora's final conclusion imply about permission?

Discuss with a partner

- Should interviewees be able to review an edited interview?
- How can a filmmaker acknowledge uncertainty without making a film confusing?

ANSWER KEY

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Suggested full-sentence answers. Accept other supported interpretations where appropriate.

1. Why was Nora reluctant to use much of the interview?

She was unsure whether Mr Ellis intended personal remarks about named neighbours to be shared publicly.

2. Why did the group want the dramatic section included?

They thought it would make their film more distinctive than other accounts of the town.

3. What concern was raised about letting Mr Ellis remove material?

One student argued that allowing removal would make the project less honest.

4. Why did Mr Ellis request the cuts?

He had spoken casually and recognised that the other person might remember the disagreement differently.

5. How did the group make its editing decision transparent?

The group added a note explaining that part of the interview had been removed at Mr Ellis's request.

6. What does Nora's final conclusion imply about permission?

It implies that permission should be revisited as the material and its intended use become clearer.

Teaching notes

Read once for the main idea, then reread for evidence. Compare answers before discussing the two open questions. Interpretive answers may vary; ask learners to justify their reading.

Language and reading focus: Reporting perspectives; distinguishing memory, interpretation and fact.

Text: Original commentary using a fictional scenario. Discussion questions have no fixed answers.