**Writing Interview or Survey Questions**

Writing the copy, captions, or survey questions for your yearbook starts with writing interview questions. A yearbook staffer uses theses question to gather facts and to obtain quotations to use when writing copy. In most cases, the better the questions are, the more likely the interviewer is to get meaningful quotations for the story. Listed below are the two most common types of questions: open-ended and close-ended.

**AN OPEN-ENDED QUESTION**

* Has more than one answer
* Could have a different response from every person you ask
* Requires the respondent to describe actions and reactions
* Is asked with the intention of collecting a quote

E.g. “Describe your reaction to the principal’s announcement.”

“Why did you choose to participate in this service project?”

“What qualities do you value most in a friend?”

“What suggestions do you have for the staff on how to improve the book.”

**A CLOSED-ENDED QUESTION:**

* Can be answered with “yes” or “no” or one or two words
* Is used to obtain facts, figures, and other specifics

E.g. “What is your favourite colour?”

“What grade are you in?”

“Did you attend the homecoming dance?”

“What grade are you in?” “Did you purchase a yearbook last year?”

Closed-ended questions are often necessary to establish facts. An interviewer can also use a related follow-up question to gain more information from the source. E.g. “What is your favourite subject? What do you like about it?

**Practice Identifying Open and Close-ended Questions:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Were you disappointed when your team lost in the playoffs?
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Describe your responsibilities as secretary of the student council.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ How did you react when you were named homecoming queen?
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Do you usually bring your lunch from home or buy it at school?
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ How many hours a night do you devote to homework?
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ If you could, how would you change the dress code at school?
7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Describe your perfect date.
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have any pets at home?
9. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_What grade would you give the sports section of last year’s book?

**Rewriting Close-ednded Questions:**

**Directions:** Choose two of the close-ended questions above. Frist write a follow-up question to supplement each one. Then rewrite the question entirely so that it is open-ended.

Original Question #1

Follow- up Question

Open-Ended Question

Original Question #2

Follow-up Question

Open-ended Question

**Survey Question Writing Assignment**

*“Advanced statistical analysis makes surveys enormously powerful and insightful. Once, conducting a survey was so complex and time-consuming that few companies could afford to do it. But increased processing power, new technologies like computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI), affordable analytical software, and lower communications costs have put the capability to conduct meaningful surveys within the reach of the smallest company or department.”*

*“Generally, corporate surveys seek to understand markets, relationships, or transactions.”*

**Assignment:** Please come up with 5 closed-ended and 5 open-ended questions that we could include in our survey to help us improve this years’ yearbook! (10 knowledge marks for providing me with 5 of each!)