

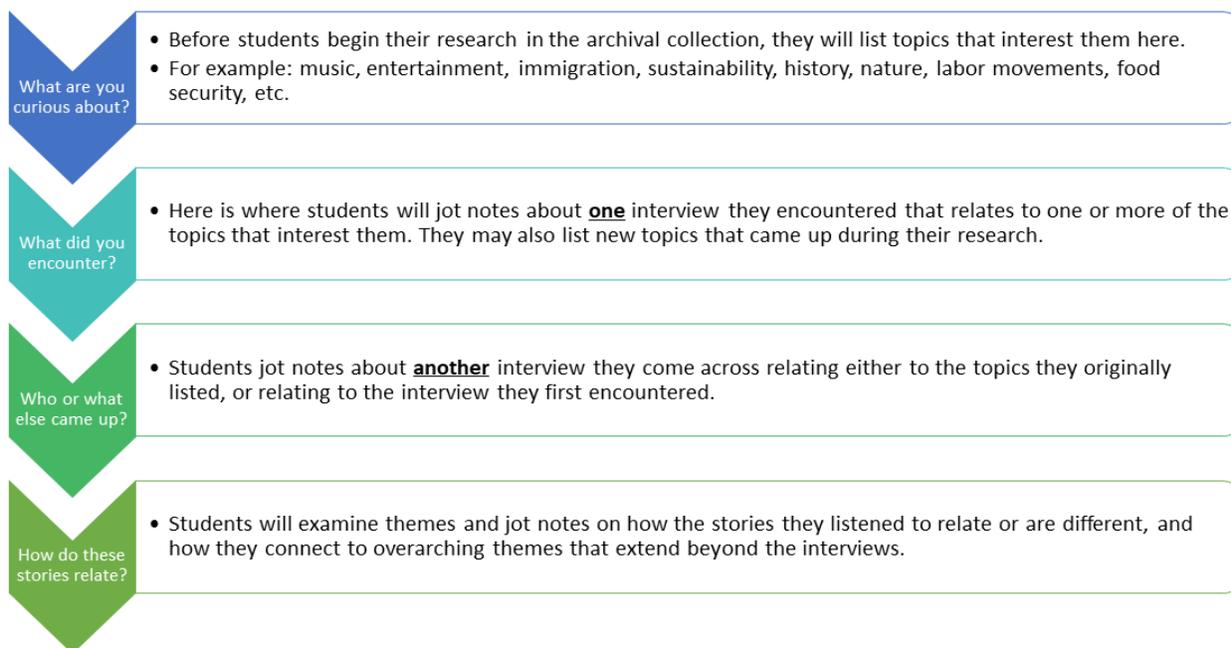
## Classroom Connections: Theme Analysis of Interviews

When conducting primary source research, folklorists understand that one person’s account during an interview is not representative of everyone’s experience. That said, we connect with each other through personal stories, and individual stories are necessary for a nuanced understanding of a person’s lived experience. As outlined in the articles featured in the *Journal of Folklore and Education*’s 2019 issue [Art of the Interview](#), “Folk arts interviews teach important details about cultural context, artistic expression as communication, and the ways stories can help us better understand our communities.”\* The following activity is designed to help students engage with the interviews and related themes in the West Virginia Folklife Collection.

### Activity Goals

1. Students will connect topics and themes that interest them to stories archived in the West Virginia Folklife Collection.
2. Students will identify how personal accounts and experiences archived in the collection relate to themes that exist beyond West Virginia.

This chart is designed for classroom use or as homework for students in middle or high school. It is a “first step” in analyzing themes and allows for engagement with varying levels of detail. The activity could be as simple as jotting down ideas better shared through classroom discussion or as an organizer for longer essay writing. For further engagement, students can consider what they have learned in listening to the collection’s interviews and connect their own experiences and interests to the stories they may hear in the collection.



\*Bonnie Stone Sunstein, 2019. Of Art and the Interview: Woven Performance. *Journal of Folklore and Education*. 6:1–3.

How do these stories relate?	Who or what else came up?	What did you encounter?	What are you curious about?

Student name \_\_\_\_\_