“Oral history” is being used generically. You can do an “in-depth interview,” a “life history,” an “oral history” or a “life narrative” (see www sites & readings for more information).

You need to:
1. Identify a research focus/question for this exercise;
2. Develop an interview guideline, set of questions, or a focus for the interview;
3. Clarify ethical considerations, complete a Human Subjects Review Application, including an informed consent form;
4. Identify an informant/participant/co-researcher and request her/his permission;
5. Conduct and tape record “the interview;”
6. Identify a coding system that is a “good fit” with your research question/topic and the data you have collected. Be sure to consult an article or book that outlines this methodology and include a reference to it in your paper.
7. Identify one section of the interview that you felt was particularly good or went particularly well and one section of the interview that you felt was particularly poor or went particularly poorly – in relation to your research question/topic/interest and transcribe each of these sections – and transcribe and code these sections.

WRITTEN SUMMARY (double-spaced, typed, 8-10 pp, without Appendices) includes:
1) a brief description of the research focus/question, the context in which the interview was conducted; and relevant biographical information about your participant and yourself, and a brief description of the methodology and data analytic strategy;
2) a comment on each section selected for transcription, indicating why you felt it went well or poorly
3) your interpretation of the selected texts, being sure to clarify through your analysis/interpretation what you think you learned from the interview relative to your “research focus;”
4) a description of your understanding of the contribution of oral history/narrative/life story to PAR;
5) and, a reflexive statement, that is, your reflections on your experience in this exercise. Summarize what you have learned about yourself as a researcher. What has this method taught you, how you felt in the “encounter”? What, if anything, changed in you over the time that you spent with the participant/co-researcher? What would you do differently if you were to do another “interview”? Or what might you want to learn using an alternative methodology and which one?
6) Include a copy of your interview questions/guidelines, your HSR Application, and informed consent form, and the transcripts of the sections of your interview that you transcribed in APPENDICES for the paper.

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1 REMEMBER, if you are doing a PAR project this exercise should serve as background and/or preparation for your PAR project. Consult the instructor or site supervisor to discuss any questions concerning this. MBL, 8/2005