

# THIS IS MY LIFE

John Smith

A Memoir



THE LIFE WRITER

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## **This Is My Life**

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# Contents

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Dedication	4
Preface	5
Chapter 1: Our Family History	6
Chapter 2: My Early Childhood	10
Chapter 3: My Elementary & Middle School Years	13
Chapter 4: Our Family Back Then	16
Chapter 5: My High School Years	20
Chapter 6: The College Years	23
Chapter 7: Military Service	26
Chapter 8: Dating And Marriage	29
Chapter 9: Starting Our Family	33
Chapter 10: My Occupation & Career	36
Chapter 11: Retirement!	39
Chapter 12: My Favorite Things	41
Chapter 13: What I Have Learned In Life	43
Chapter 14: To All My Loved Ones	45

# Dedication

*This book is dedicated to my parents, Tom T. Smith  
and Sally K. Edwards, who always believed in me and  
who told me I could do whatever I wanted to do in life.*

*...They were partially right!*

# Preface

I have decided to write my life story because I wanted to share what I have learned in life with the most five important people in my life: my grandchildren. I also wanted to provide them with a short history on our family, who we are, and where we came from.

This is my story. It isn't perfect, but that's okay. I hope it helps our wonderful grandchildren to feel good about themselves, learn to live life in wonderful ways, and know just a little bit about the people - their flesh and blood family - that came before them.

Cheers!

J.J. (John Joseph) Smith  
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# 1

## Our Family History



My Father, Grandfather, and Mother - Back in The Old Country

I know that my father's family name is Johnstone and that his family came over from England. I think he said that they originally came over from the Northern area. My mother's family name is McDermott and I know that her family came from a large and well-known clan of McDermott's living in the central Scotland area. The McDermott name itself is derived from an old phrase my grandmother used to always say - - - (example answer).

**Life Story Question:** (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's answers automatically create the life story book content)

*Please describe what you know about your family history, such as where your family originated from, and what their living situation was there.*

I know that my mother came from Dundee, Scotland, and that her family were sheep herders over there. My father's family came from a small town just South of Heidelberg, Germany, and I believe most of them worked as farmers and woodcutters. Mom told me that her family decided to come over to America early in the 1920s because - - - (example answer).



Where We Are From

I had a grandfather in Bitburgh, Germany that was well known there, because he was actually the mayor of the town! Unfortunately a beer tax scandal was uncovered during his last term (which he was not involved with of course) and my grandfather became rather unpopular. I heard that he was practically run out of town. He came over to the United States himself a few years later - - - (example answer).



My Parents at Their Wedding

My mother and father are both from the same small town in India, just West of the Bangladesh border, the town of Chapra, and their marriage was arranged by both of their parents. My mother said that she did not particularly care for her new groom-to-be at first because he always looked like he was going to - - - (example answer).

My mother came to the United States in 1921 with her mother and a brother. My dad had came over in 1920 with two of his brothers. Both families settled in



Trenton New Jersey, where they met. My mom and dad got married in 1923, and then moved to Harrisburgh, Pennsylvania where he got a job with - - - (example answer).

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
OUR FAMILY Chapter:**

**What is your father and mother's family name? Do you know what the origin and meaning of those names are?**

**Please describe what you know about your family history, such as where they originated from and what their situation was there.**

**If you would like to add a map that shows where your family originated from, please do so.**

**Were your relatives married in the old-country? If so, when, where, and how did that occur?**

**Were any of your old-country relatives well-known or famous?**

**Do you have any old-country family stories of facts that you would like to share?**

**When did your family emigrate and where did they live?**

**Have you had any family genealogy research done? If yes, what was the result?**

## 2

### **My Early Childhood**



My sister and twin, Sarah

**I** was born on Wednesday May 5th, 1904, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at the St. Joseph's Hospital near downtown. The delivery time was around 4:25 in the morning, and my sister, Sarah was delivered about 4 minutes later. Our mother was in labor for over 14 hours! We were her first children, which meant she had zero experience with pregnancy and child birth. Mom told us that when she was pregnant she would often times go to the market and - - - (example answer).

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's answers automatically create the life story book content)**

***What was your birth order in your family (oldest, 2nd oldest, youngest, etc.) and did that order affect your upbringing?***

I was the first born son of our family's eventual seven children, and we did not have much when I was growing up. The oldest children in our family had it the hardest I would say, because our parents were new parents back then, and they did not really know how to raise the kids yet. The older two (my sister and I) were really the guinea pigs of the family because - - - (example answer).

My parents named me after my great uncle, Sir Charles Brakken, who lived in Ireland. His inheritance helped pay for my parent's wedding and their trip to the United States, so I'm sure they felt grateful to him. My middle name came from my parents favorite entertainer back then, a singer named Edward Cosgray. My parents said they usually listened to Cosgray during - - - (example answer).



My very first memory was sitting inside my parent's car, at about the age of three years old. I was sitting in a child seat in the back, and it was dark outside, it was night . We had stopped near the Rochester airport for some reason and I could hear the propellers of a plane that was just landing. I grabbed hold of the front of my car seat and pretended like I

was landing the airplane myself. I thought that - - - (example answer).

We lived in the Polish Hill part of Pittsburgh, inside a duplex. The street name was Leander Avenue, and I believe the house number was 1421. That part of Pittsburgh now is not in the best condition (I have been back a few times since), but it was great back then because our house sat next - - - (example answer).

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
MY EARLY CHILDHOOD Chapter:**

**When and where were you born? Please include hospital name, day of the week, and the time if possible.**

**What is your birth order in the family? Did the birth order affect your upbringing?**

**Do you know why your parents named you what they did? Were you named after a family member, friend, or someone well known?**

**What is your earliest childhood memory, and what age did it occur?**

**Where did you family live back then? Do you remember the street name and address?**

**What did your parents do for a living? And how did your family rank financially compared to others living in the area?**

**How would you describe your parent's relationship and marriage back then?**

**Did you parents stay married, separate, or ever divorce?**

### 3

## My Elementary & Middle School Years

I went to Jefferson Elementary up on Polish Hill in Pittsburgh. It was a small school with only about 10 or 12 class rooms. The school itself was only five blocks from our house. That wasn't a long walk, but the problem was the orientation. Our school was at the very top of Polish Hill, and that hill was steep! Going up to school in the morning took - - - (example answer).



Jefferson Elementary

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's answers automatically create the life story book content)**

***Do you remember your first day of school? If yes, please describe that day, or another early education memory.***

I was very homesick the first week of school, and I cried a lot. I missed my parents. I can blame that partially on the fact that my birthday always fell about two weeks away from class age cut-off, which means I was always the youngest kid in class, and usually at least one year younger than everyone else. At that age, that meant that I was - - - (example answer).

I really enjoyed going to school, once I got over being homesick. I especially liked the fact that our school had many classes outside, especially in summer. We would often spend half the day outside! The school had a huge playground where we would go for recess. It also - - - (example answer).

My favorite teacher in school back then was Mrs. Ebert, and that was during the sixth grade. I really liked her because she always had different contests in her class, and she helped me to become a good reader. One time Mrs. Ebert ran a "Read 100 Pages" contest in class and I was able to do that in just over a week. I can still remember seeing the "Read 100 Pages" poster she made on the wall and my name being up there. That actually became a little bit embarrassing because no one else read 100 pages for a LONG time! I think the next person that did it, was like 4 weeks later. Yes, I felt like a nerd and I - - - (example answer).



My best friend, Carla

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
MY ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS Chapter:**

**What were the names and locations of your Elementary and Middle Schools? How did you get to/from school each day?**

**Did you enjoy going to school back then? Were you a good student?**

**Did you have a favorite teacher in Elementary or Middle School? Who was it and why?**

**What was your favorite subject back then? What was your least favorite subject?**

**What other activities were you involved in (Church, sports, Scouting, or 4H?) Please describe your interests and activities back then.**

**Who were some of your friends back then? Who was your best friend? Have you stayed in touch with any of them?**

**Did you have a nickname back then? If yes, what was it, who gave it to you, and why?**

**Did you have any chores to do back in those days? If yes, what were they? Did you receive any allowance for doing chores?**

## 4

### Our Family Back Then



**M**y mother's maiden name was Nancy Bronson. She was born on April 8th, 1915, in New York City. Her parents moved to Buffalo, New York when she was young and that is where she grew up. My mother really liked Buffalo. She said that city was like the - - - (example answer).

Mom was about 5' 8" tall with a slight build. She never weighed over 140 pounds, and stayed in good shape, especially for a smoker! (Her favorites were Pall Mall). Mom had red hair, and dark sparkling brown eyes. Because she was always taking care of us kids, she would usually wear - - - (example answer).



**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's answers automatically create the life story book content)**

***What was your mother's personality like? Did she have any special talents, abilities, habits, or quirks? Please describe those and what you thought about them.***

Mom was a kind, but very driven person, with a hot headed personality at times. She was a caring and devoted wife and mother, who took very good care of her husband, and us 4 kids. Mom tended to be a bit of a perfectionist, and she could be demanding. She was very good at reading and writing, and she was creative. One of her brothers even became a professional - - - (example answer).

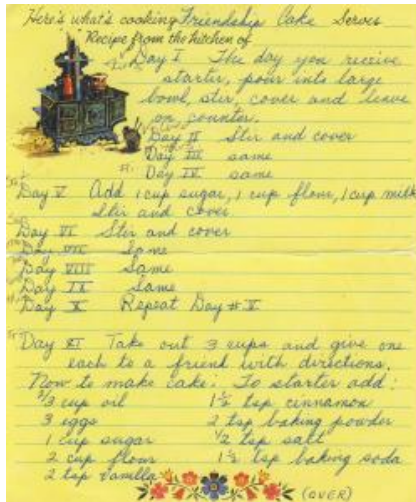
Mom went to Nursing School after High School, and she became a nurse. She had just begun to work when she met our father (while on vacation in Halifax, Nova Scotia). They fell in love, and marriage with 5 children followed soon afterward. Mom left her nursing job to take care of us kids. Her typical day as a homemaker involved getting us up and ready for school, cooking, cleaning, shopping, and - - - (example answer).



My Parents

My father was a man of few words, but when he did say something, it was usually important. He didn't bother us kids too much back then, because most of the time that he off, he was fixing things around the house that we had broken! But dad would tell me "Son, don't ever take a wooden nickel". I thought he meant I should check my change, but later I realized that he - - - (example answer).

My favorite memory of my father was when I was in high school, and I did not make weight for a wrestling match once (We had to weigh in before each match, and one week I was a few pounds over, and I could not lose that weight no matter what I did). I couldn't wrestle in the match that day, and I thought my father would be angry. But instead, he took me to a restaurant downtown and told me to get whatever I - - - (example answer).



Mom's Friendship Cake Recipe

My mother was a good cook, and her specialty was making desserts. She would make cookies, brownies, fudge, and cakes constantly, and her icing (always made from scratch) was to die for. She also made a jam cake that was awesome. She called it the "Friendship Cake" (see recipe above). As far as the things she made I did not like, that would be her roast lamb, which was *her favorite!* I think she liked that because it reminded her of the - - - (example answer).

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
OUR FAMILY BACK THEN Chapter:**

**What physical or personality traits did you inherit from your mother or father? Which parent are you more like?**

**Was your mother a good cook? What was her specialty dish? Would she make something you really liked, or did not like?**

**Did your mother pass on any family recipes, traditions, or heirlooms to you? If yes, what? (please include digitized memorabilia).**

**Did you mother ever give you life advice, or have a favorite saying she would repeat? Was her advice accurate?**

**What was your mother's strongest personality trait? Did she have any personaility traits she would struggle with?**

**What is your favorite memory of your mother?**

**What was your father's occupation and his profession? Did he receive any formal education?**

**What were your father's outside interests and hobbies? What did he like to do in his free time?**

**Did your father ever offer you advice on dating and marriage? Was that advice accurate?**

## 5

### My High School Years



My First Car - A Firebird

I went to Andrew Jackson high school in St. Louis, during the years 1957-1961. Our school was of average size back then, with about 400 total students. Our mascot was the Cougar, and our school colors were gold and red. We were actually able to borrow a real cougar from time-to-time for special school events (along with his handler from the St. Louis Zoo). One time the cougar - - - (example answer).

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's answers automatically create the life story book content)**

***Do you remember your first days (or weeks) of High School? What was it like, and what did you think about it?***

I remember my first few days of high school very well, mainly because I was terrified. I was always a bit small for my age, and the high school students I saw during those first few days worried me; they were big, tall, older, and some even had beards! I used to walk to school, and I had to come in the door that the smokers always used in the morning before class. I thought that I would never - - - (example answer).

Our house was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from my high school, so I walked to and from school every day. That walk wasn't bad, except when it was cold! In the winter the walk seemed to take three times as long, especially when it was below 20 degrees. The best thing about the walk though, was there was a small grocery store half way there and we used to stop in on the way going and coming and get - - - (example answer).

In high school I looked like a nerd! I was small, scrawny, and I wore glasses with big black frames. The few friends I had suggested that I trade in my old "birth control" glasses (they were not attractive), but I didn't care. I liked them, and did not want to change. During that time I was very shy, so I don't think that a new pair of glasses would have really helped me with - - - (example answer).



**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
MY HIGH SCHOOL YEARS Chapter:**

**What did you look like in High School? What was your personality like back then? Were you shy or outgoing?**

**What kind of student were you academically? What was your favorite subject and teacher? What was your least favorite?**

**Who were your friends in High School? What did you do for fun? Where did you go and what did you eat?**

**Did you listen to music, watch television, or go to the movies back then? What were your favorites?**

**Did you have a first kiss during High School? Did you date very much? If yes, please describe a few of your dates and what dating was like back then.**

**Did you have a job during High School? What was it and how much were you paid?**

**Did you go to High School events (Homecoming, Prom, Football, Games etc.)? Please describe those activities.**

**How did you learn to drive during High School? Who taught you and how did you do? Did you pass your driving test?**

**If you could go back in time and re-live your High School years, what would you change, and how would you do things differently?**

## 6

# The College Years



My College

I went to the University of Kentucky from 1962 to 1967. It took me five years to complete my degree because I took a year off to earn some money, and do some traveling (mainly in South America). I graduated from UK in June of 1967, with a degree in Education. I chose that school because they have an excellent Education program...and because my girlfriend at the time was going there. We did not stay- - - (example answer).

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's answers automatically create the life story book content)**

***What was your college major and why did you choose it? Did anyone else influence that decision? Please explain.***

I studied Engineering in college because I was good at math, and I liked to see how mechanical things worked (I had a natural curiosity and used to take things apart at home – which my mom and dad did not appreciate!). My parents were hoping that I would go into Medicine, so I could be the first doctor in the family, but I found the life sciences to be boring. Engineering was a great choice for me because it - - - (example answer).

When I first started college, Nursing was my major. I found that field to be very interesting, but I did not like seeing all the blood and guts!! I also learned that nurses have to work 3rd shift, weekends, and many holidays, so I decided to switch to studying Social Work. With that major I could still help people, make a decent living, and still have a life. The only problem was that I - - - (example answer).



In college I also loved taking the Accounting classes, because they combined math (one of my favorite subjects) and accounting, which I also liked. The classes I did **not like** were Philosophy and Logic, because they never gave a crystal clear answer. Most of the time we would just sit around and discuss various things with no set answer. It was those courses, that did not know what the "right" answer was, and us students would just debate various solutions, which I thought was - - - (example answer).



**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in  
THE COLLEGE YEARS Chapter:**

**Where did you go to college, when did you graduate (or not), and why did you choose that university? Did you attend any other educational institutions?**

**Did you change your college major? If yes, why, and was that a smart decision?**

**Where did you live during your college years? Did you ever live inside a dormitory? Please describe your living arrangements and how you felt about them.**

**If you met your spouse during your college years, please describe that situation and how you felt about it.**

**Did you attend collegiate sporting events back then? Are you still a college sports fan?**

**Did you have an opportunity to travel during your college years? If yes, where did you go and what did you do?**

**How did you pay for college? How much did your schooling cost back then?**

**What did you do during the summer back then? Please describe those activities.**

**What is your favorite memory of college? Why? What is your least favorite?**

# 7

## Military Service



Rob, Tom, And Me

**I** served in the U.S. Army from 1965 to 1972, with the 82nd Airborne Division (the 1st 504th unit). My rank going into the Army was PV1/Private (as low as it gets), and coming out I was a Staff Sergeant. It took me four years to attain that rank, and part of the reason was because of my service in Vietnam. I spent two tours there beginning in 1966, in an area known as - - - (example answer).

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's *answers* automatically create the life story book content)**

***Why did you decide to serve? Please explain.***

After high school I went to the University of Tulsa for a semester and studied Phys Ed. I liked the school and that major, but I felt bored and not ready yet to spend the next 4+ years sitting in class. I wanted some action and adventure, and a chance to travel, so I decided to join the Marines! That decision stunned my parents and many of my friends, but I knew it was best for me because - - - (example answer).

My MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) in the Army was 15 Quebec (Q) – Air Traffic Control Operator. I had always had an interest in aviation, and that Army occupation was in high demand back then, because of Vietnam, so I signed up for it. The training for Controller was much more difficult than I thought! I had no idea that I would have to actually monitor and manage so many - - - (example answer).



A P-51 Fighter

When I joined the Marines I was sent to Parris Island for basic training, and unfortunately that happened to be in the middle of the summer – which is the hottest and most humid time of the year there! I had never been to South Carolina before, but it never seemed to cool off, the entire 13 weeks I was there. The training itself was extremely intense, both physically and mentally. I thought that I had made a - - - (example answer).

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
MILITARY SERVICE Chapter:**

**What was your job or occupation in the service? Was that the occupation you signed up for before joining?**

**Please describe your basic (or boot camp) training. Where was it, how long did it last, and what did you learn?**

**Please describe some of your friends in the service. Where did you go and what did you do with those friends?**

**Please describe the advanced training you received in the service. Which part of that training did you like the best / least?**

**Were you involved in any military campaigns or missions during your service? Please describe those.**

**How was the food quality in the service? Did you ever eat rations in the field? What were your favorite rations or military bases?**

**Did you have an opportunity to travel while you were in the service? Where did you go and what did you see?**

**Were you awarded any medals, service awards, or citations during your time in service? Please explain those.**

**Did your military service help you understand yourself better? If yes, what did you learn from that valuable experience?**

**If you could go back in time and re-live your service career, what would you change and how would it be different?**

## 8

# Dating And Marriage

I first saw my husband Robert at work, inside the NCR cafeteria. I had just gotten hired, and he was there eating with a half dozen of his friends. Robert seemed to be the life of the party and the center of attention. He was handsome, well dressed, and very obviously outgoing. I liked the fact that he seemed to be charming and well-liked, but not really arrogant. I asked a co-worker (Cindy Weiss) if she would - - - (example answer).



My Engagement Ring

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's *answers* automatically create the life story book content)**

***What were your dates like back then? Where would you go and typically what would you do on dates?***

I didn't date a whole lot back then, but when I did go out we would often go to dinner and then go see a movie. Although I really enjoyed going to the movies, I also found it awkward to do on the first or second date, because I usually did not know the guy well, and we would sit closely in the dark together without speaking! I liked the dates best that involved going to dinner, and going for a walk so that we could talk and - - - (example answer).



Where We Would Walk - Charlie's Bunion

My very first kiss with Don came as a surprise! He picked me up for dinner and we went to a great Italian restaurant (Domichi's on Front Street). After we ordered, he moved close, and told me that I was the most beautiful girl in Illinois. I blushed, and before I knew it, he was kissing me – in the restaurant! I was a bit surprised by that, but not totally put off. In fact, I even decided to - - - (example answer).



Us On Our Wedding Day

Don and I were getting serious about marriage, and because 1954 was a leap year, technically, I could ask him to marry me (and I was tempted). But he beat me to the punch. He was home on leave, and we went to our favorite place (Café Du Monde) where we ordered coffee and beignets. When the beignets came, there were 4 on the plate instead of 3. I thought that was strange, but then saw that he had - - - (example answer).

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
DATING AND MARRIAGE Chapter:**

**What was your job or occupation in the service? Was that the occupation you signed up for before joining?**

**Please describe your basic (or boot camp) training. Where was it, how long did it last, and what did you learn?**

**Please describe some of your friends in the service. Where did you go and what did you do with those friends?**

**Please describe the advanced training you received in the service. Which part of that training did you like the best / least?**

**Were you involved in any military campaigns or missions during your service? Please describe those.**

**How was the food quality in the service? Did you ever eat rations in the field? What were your favorite rations or military bases?**

**Did you have an opportunity to travel while you were in the service? Where did you go and what did you see?**

**Were you awarded any medals, service awards, or citations during your time in service? Please explain those.**

**Did your military service help you understand yourself better? If yes, what did you learn from that valuable experience?**

**If you could go back in time and re-live your service career, what would you change and how would it be different?**



## 9

# Starting Our Family



Us In 2008

**W**hen Billy and I married we were in our early 20s, and neither of us wanted children, at least at first. But after about a few years we began thinking about having a family, and decided to try. Within a few months I was pregnant (!), and before you knew it, we were blessed with triplets! Having those babies was the greatest decision we ever made, because it - - - (example answer)

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's *answers* automatically create the life story book content)**

***Was it difficult to conceive your first child? If yes, how were you able to overcome that difficulty?***

James and I were very fortunate when it came to having, and raising our children. After we decided to try, I became pregnant quickly (within the first 3 months), and we had a beautiful baby girl (Elizabeth). We then decided to have another child, and 2 years later Ronald was born. He was conceived quickly as well. Part of the reason for our success could be due to the fact that we - - - (example answer)

My parents wanted grandchildren desperately, and since my sister Caroline and I were married the same year, their hope was that we would both begin having children quickly, and maybe even compete to have the first child! My husband Karl and I were very lukewarm to that idea...but would you believe that Caroline and I got pregnant at the very same time? We did, and because of that our babies were - - - (example answer)



These are my children (all wonderful and so completely diferent!): 1. Betty Marie, born December 14, 1947, at 5:07 am, Salt Lake City St. Mark's Hospital 2. Andrew Thomas, born April 22, 1950, at 6:19 am, Salt Lake City St. Mark's Hospital 3. Kathryn Rose, born February 7, 1952, at 7:39 am, Salt Lake City St. Mark's Hospital 4. Marilyn Anne, born June 15, 1955, at 5:57 am, San Diego St. Mary Medical Center - - - (example answer)

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
STARTING OUR FAMILY Chapter:**

**How old were you when you began your family? Was your first child a planned event or a nice surprise?**

**How did you choose the names for your children? Are they named after family, friends, or other significant individuals?**

**Did your children have different personalities? And if yes, how did that affect the way you raised them?**

**Did your children inherit any physical or personality traits from you, or your spouse? Are they like or dislike you in any way?**

**What was the best thing about having and raising your children?**

**What makes you the most proud of your children? What have you learned from your children?**

**Do you have a favorite story about your child or your children? If yes, please tell it.**

**If you could go back in time and re-live your child rearing years, what would you change and how would it be different?**

**Do you have any advice for your children on how they can become good parents themselves?**

**Do you have any grandchildren? If yes, please list their names, their birthdays, and your thoughts about them.**

## 10

### My Occupation & Career

**M**y very first job was as a golf caddy at a private golf club... and I hated it. For some reason my parents thought that it would be a great first job, but it was actually really miserable for me. I did not know a thing about golf (back then), it was extremely hard work (especially for a 12 year old kid), and the pay was totally crap! I usually only received about \$4.00 for spending 4 HOURS on the golf course, hauling around a huge, heavy bag of - - - (example answer)



My Darling: The L-1011

**Life Story Question: (questions are *not shown* inside the book. The user's *answers* automatically create the life story book content)**

***What was your favorite job? And what was your least favorite job?  
Please explain why.***

Belive it or not, I actually had no intention to ever become a nurse, and I never thought that nursing would end up being my career! I had a friend in high school (Rosemary Greene) who wanted to be a nurse, and she asked me to go with her to a Nursing School open house. I did, and once I got there, I found out that the program sounded really neat. So we both enrolled! Unfortunately, Rosemary dropped out of school to get - - - (example answer)



Me in Nursing School

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
MY OCCUPATION & CAREER Chapter:**

**What was your first job, how old were you, and what was the pay?**

**Did you ever have to relocate for your career? If yes, please describe where you moved to, and what you thought about it.**

**What occupation became your long-term career choice? And, why did you choose that occupation? Please explain.**

**Was your long-term career choice the same career that you envisioned as a child? If not, please explain what you thought you wanted to do for a career when you were younger.**

**Would you encourage your children, grandchildren, or others to pursue the same career you chose? Please explain.**

**Other than providing a monetary income, did your career help you develop any special skills, talents, or abilities?**

**Have you ever changed careers? If yes, please describe the change, why it happened, and what you thought about it.**

**What are some of your favorite carer memories?**

**Do you feel that your long-term career choice was the best career choice for you? If not, what other occupation would you have liked to work in?**

**If you could go back in time and re-live your working career, what would you change and how would that be different?**

# 11

## Retirement!



Us Living in Arizona

**I** retired at the age of 75, after working a total of 61 years! Because our family spent so many summers on vacation out west, after the kids grew up and moved away for work, we decided to move out west and be near our youngest daughter, Cindy. We moved to Prescott, Arizona in May, 2009, and it has been wonderful. Cindy and her husband, Scott, live about 35 minutes away and we often get the chance to - - - (example answer).

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
RETIREMENT! Chapter:**

**Now that you are retired, how do you typically spend your day?  
What is a typical week in retirement like for you?**

**What do you do for fun and entertainment now that you are  
retired? Please explain.**

**Is your retirement life different from how you thought it would be?  
If yes, how?**

**Do you ever miss working? Would you like to work (or do some  
volunteering) again?**

**What is the best thing about being retired? And, what is the worst?**

**Have you developed any new interests or hobbies as a result of your  
retirement? If yes, what are they, and why do you enjoy them?**

**Have you (or do you intend to) travel during retirement? If yes,  
please explain where you have been, what you have done, and what  
you thought about those trips.**

**Is there something that you have always wanted to do in life (or  
have) that you have not done yet? If yes, please describe that and  
explain why.**

**Have your goals or aspirations changed during your life? If yes,  
please explain how those have changed, and why.**



## 12

### My Favorite Things



My Very Favorite!

**M**y very favorite food and drink is a plate of spicy (at least an 8 out of a 10 on heat) phad thai, and an ice cold beer - preferably an India Pale Ale (IPA) with strong hops. Although phad thai is truly my favorite, I've got to give credit to the original source of that craving: linguine pasta with sausage and onions. When I was younger, my mom used to make - - - (example answer)

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
MY FAVORITE THINGS Chapter:**

**My favorite type of music, artist, and album is...**

**My favorite movie and actor is...**

**My favorite television show is...**

**My favorite book, author, and subject to read about is...**

**My favorite hero / the person I admire the most is...**

**My favorite color is...**

**My favorite place is...**

**My favorite vacation spot is...**

**My favorite sport is...**

**My favorite hobby is...**

**My favorite saying is...**

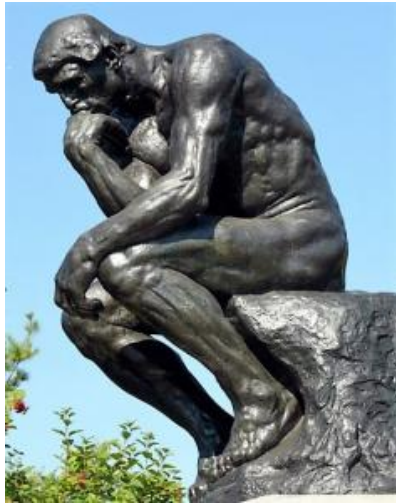
**My favorite possession is...**

**My favorite photograph is...**

**My favorite memory is...**

# 13

## What I Have Learned In Life



Hmmmmnnnn...

**T**he three things I can't live without in life are: My wife, my church and religion, and my music.

If it wasn't for my wife, Susan, I don't know where I would be. We met when we were both just 22 years old - totally by accident - and we've been together pretty much ever since. Susan has I have been though a lot together, and she has helped me to understand that the - - - (example book)

**A Few Examples of the Type of Questions Offered in the  
WHAT I HAVE LEARNED IN LIFE Chapter:**

**It may seem strange, but it is totally true that I...**

**The single quality I value the most in others is...**

**My greatest pet peeve in life is...**

**The best way for someone to find their passion) in life is to...**

**The craziest thing I've ever done in life is...**

**The smartest thing I've ever done in life is...**

**The thing that I am the most grateful for in life is...**

**The best thing about growing older is...**

**The single best piece of advice that anyone ever gave me was...**

**The one regret I have in life is that...**

**If I could go back in time and change one thing I would...**

**The secret to finding a good spouse is...**

**When I was younger I wish I would have known that...**

**The thing that matters the most in life is...**

**One thing we can do to make to make the world a better place is...**

**If I hit the lotto for \$100 million today, I would...**

# 14

## To All My Loved Ones



This Is For You, Little Jenn

**T**o Jennifer, our first child and only daughter: Honey, the moment you were born your mother and I knew that you would be a special girl - and we were right. You have been a great source of joy and pride for us, throughout our lives, and I just wanted to say to you that - - -  
(example answer)

**An Example of the Type of Content Typically Generated in the  
TO ALL MY LOVED ONES Chapter:**

**Chapter 14 allows the writer to leave a final message to their children, grandchildren, family or friends, offering advice, guidance, gratitude, or any other message the writer wishes to send.**

**(All of those messages can be combined into Chapter 14, or they can be seperated into addition chapters, added after Chapter 14. As with all Life Story Composer App answers, answer length can be as long or as short as desired).**