Questions to Ask About Your Immigrant’s or Migrant’s Experience

A. Experiences in the country/city of origin (where the person came from):

1. Why did you/your relative move from to ________________________ to ____________________? What push and pull factors were involved?

2. How did educational or economic opportunities influence your/their decision to move?

3. How did political events or violence or major world or local events affect your/their decision to move?

4. What was your/their life like in the country/city of origin? What did you/they like about their place of origin? What did you/they dislike?

5. How and why did you/they decide where to move?

6. What was it like to say goodbye to the old place?

7. What or who did you/they miss most in the old place?

B. Experiences during the trip to the new country/city:

1. What means of travel did you/your relative use in the move? Plane, boat, car, bus, train?

2. How long did the trip take?

3. Were any stops made along the way?

4. Explain any good or bad adventures you/they had along the way?

5. What things were you/they able to bring on the trip?
6. If you/they entered the United States from another country, where did you/they enter, what requirements were there for entry or what difficulties were encountered?

C. Experiences upon arrival and related to life in the new country/city:

1. How were you/your relative(s) treated by people in the new country/city?

2. What did you/they do upon arrival? Where did you/they live?

3. Did you/ your relative(s) choose to settle near family or people with a similar cultural or ethnic background?

4. How did you/they adapt to the new environment? How complete was your/their assimilation to the new environment?

5. How was life in the new place different from life in the old place and how was it the same?

6. How did your/their life change as a result of the move? How significant was the change in your/their life?

7. What did or do you/they like or dislike about life in the new place?

8. What is or was most difficult about life in the new place?

9. How were you/they able to preserve family or ethnic traditions and customs?

10. What are some important things people in the new place should know about your family's culture (things like food, music, religion, art, stories, traditions, celebrations) and past experiences?

11. How has or did living in the new place change(d) you/ them or your/their culture?

12. Was your family's ethnic identity changed by the move?