



At-Home History

Keeping a Quarantine Journal

Historians love diaries and journals. Reading first-hand accounts of historical events brings the past sharply into the present, and allows researchers a glimpse into what daily life was like for individuals who lived through history. In the future, historians will likely use journals, music, art, essays, and poetry to better understand how people experienced the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Imagine a future history student using your art or writing to interpret the events we're living through right now!

The COVID-19 pandemic is new territory for everyone. Every day new information is being presented to us by scientists, politicians, and healthcare workers. The Spanish Influenza pandemic of 1918 is the most similar health crisis, and that occurred over a century ago!

Writing is considered therapeutic. It's healthy to write out our thoughts and concerns in order to better understand exactly what we're thinking. Writing helps you organize your ideas and work through different emotions you may be experiencing. A pandemic is a highly emotional event, and everyone reacts to trying times in different ways. These tips for writing or keeping your ideas can not only preserve the way life is

www.historiccabarrus.com
historiccabarrus@gmail.com

being lived in the time of COVID-19, it can help you work through your own experiences and better understand how you cope during a crisis.

Here are some questions to consider when writing or creating your own personal narrative during quarantine:

1. How has the coronavirus disrupted your life? Are you missing school, extracurricular activities, friends and teachers, vacations, social plans, work? How has your daily life changed during social distancing?
2. Mental health check in. How are you feeling today? How have your emotions changed during the quarantine? How has social distancing affected the way you approach each day?
3. Are you noticing changes in the world around you? How are your friends and family coping with quarantine? How has social media changed? How have things changed for your work or school? How are you dealing with these changes?
4. How are others dealing with quarantine? What are you seeing on the news or on social media that gives you ideas on how people in other cities, states, or countries are handling the COVID-19 pandemic?

Some ways to document your experiences with COVID-19:

1. Journal your thoughts and emotions.
2. Draw or paint or create a comic to express your feelings and emotions.
3. Photograph your daily experiences.
4. Video yourself and your family daily. This is a great way to keep an oral/visual history of your day to day life in quarantine.

5. Write poetry (it doesn't have to rhyme!) about your own experiences, and your hopes and concerns for the future.
6. Pen a letter to a friend or relative. In 1918 there were no cell phones, so most people communicated by letter. Get out your stationary and a stamp and write to a classmate, friend, co-worker, or family member. Encourage them to write back, this way you'll also learn how other people are experiencing this pandemic. Plus, people love getting snail-mail!
7. Be creative! You can do one, some, all of the above, or something completely different to document your daily life and routine. Have fun with it!
8. **Share your experiences with us (if you want to!) Museums and archives house personal documents going back centuries. Historic Cabarrus Association keeps the journals and papers of Cabarrus County people going back to the 1700s! Your stories, thoughts, and daily lives are JUST as important to us as ones from 150 years ago!**

Here are some resources on the Spanish Influenza of 1918 and more ideas on how to keep a journal during a pandemic:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/what-we-can-learn-1918-influenza-diaries-180974614/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6477554/>

https://www.journalnow.com/news/local/a-look-back-at-the-1918-flu-pandemics-effects-on-winston-salem/article_a8cdf187-4c60-5ddb-850f-380faa5fdb77.html

<http://www.masshist.org/beehiveblog/2018/08/100-years-after-the-influenza-pandemic/>