

Transcript

One minute methods – interviews and focus groups

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Interviews and focus groups are a flexible form of data collection used by researchers across the social sciences. They are a great way to explore people's beliefs, opinions and attitudes towards different topics such as gender, inequality, nationalism and ethnicity. They reveal how people make sense of their lives grounded in the context of their individual experience. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face, by telephone or online, involve asking the same questions in the same order, or follow a more conversational style guided by the participants' responses. Sessions are usually recorded, transcribed and analysed later when researchers have had a chance to familiarise themselves with the data, categorise responses, and identify similarities and differences between people's answers. The data that emerges from interviews is the product of a social interaction, so researchers need to be aware of how they are creating meaning together with participants and be transparent about their role in the research.