BIRTH STORY PROMPTS

50 questions for telling the story of a birth

For the person who gave birth, and for the partner who was there. Answer the ones that pull at you and skip the rest. Talk them into your phone, write them in a notebook, or pass the page back and forth.

TandemBirth
tandembirth.com/birth-story-prompts

Before

1. What were the last few days before the birth like? What were you doing, and what were you waiting for?
2. How did you picture the birth going? Where did that picture come from?
3. What were you most looking forward to, and what were you most afraid of?
4. How did it start? Where were you, what time was it, what did you notice first?
5. What did you think in the first minute after you realized it was happening?
6. Who did you tell first, and how did they react?
7. What did you do before leaving the house, or before calling anyone?
8. What did you bring that you never used, and what did you wish you had brought?
9. What was the drive, the walk or the wait like?
10. What was the last ordinary thing you did before everything changed?

The moment

23. What is the last thing you remember before the baby was born?
24. What did you see first? What did you hear first?
25. What were the first words anyone said?
26. What did you say, or what did you want to say and could not?
27. What did the baby look like to you, before anyone told you what to see?
28. Who held the baby first, and what did you notice about that person's face?
29. What did you feel in your body in that first minute?
30. Was there a sound, a song, a smell or a light you will always connect with that moment?

After

31. What happened in the first hour that nobody tells you about?
32. How did you choose the name, and when did it become the baby's name in your head?
33. Who did you call, and what did you say?
34. What was the first night like?
35. What did you eat, and why do you remember it?
36. What did you do first when you got home?
37. What part of the story did you only understand weeks or years later?
38. What do you wish someone had told you before the birth?
39. How did the birth change how you see the person who was with you?
40. If your child reads this one day, what is the one thing you want them to know about the day they were born?

During

11. What does your memory of labor feel like now: one long stretch, or scenes?
12. Where were you, and what did the room look, sound and smell like?
13. Who was with you, and what did each person do?
14. What helped the most? What did someone do or say that you still think about?
15. What did not help, and how did you deal with it?
16. Was there a moment you wanted to give up? What happened next?
17. What did you say out loud? What did you keep to yourself?
18. What changed from the plan, and how did you find out?
19. Was there a decision to make? Who made it, and how did it feel?
20. What surprised you about your own body, or your own mind?
21. Was there something funny, even in the middle of it?
22. What did you notice about the people caring for you?

For the partner's story

Record this separately, before you hear the other version. Two memories of one night are the point.

41. Where were you when it started, and what was the first thing you did?
42. What were you afraid of that you did not say?
43. What was your job in the room, and what did you actually end up doing?
44. When did you feel useful? When did you feel useless, and what did you do with that?
45. What did you see that they could not see?
46. What did someone on the care team say to you, specifically to you?
47. What did you notice about them during labor that you had never seen before?
48. What happened in the moments after the birth that you have not told anyone?
49. What was the first thing you did alone, after?
50. What do you want the child to know about what their other parent did that day?

Any prompt can be skipped. Not every birth is easy to remember, and this is a keepsake, not therapy; a hard birth belongs with a therapist or your care team as well. If you would rather talk than write, the Birth Story at **tandembirth.com/birth-story** asks these questions out loud and turns the answers into a finished written story that you approve word by word, with a combined version when both parents tell it. Fill-in template: **tandembirth.com/birth-story-template**.