



# Guide to Understanding Your Olds & Youngs

PRINT-AT-HOME EDITION

Learn about  
vibes, voice-  
mail, and tea  
(the drink)!



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# How to use this guide...

## For youngs:

Hi, thanks for reading! Your old will appreciate it.

This book is meant to be FUN. It is not school—not that school can't be fun—but rather it's a fun way for you to connect with the older people in your life. Because here's the thing: they were once young like you are now. And things might've been very different back then—no computers, no internet, no blue hair, or nose piercings—but they were probably a lot more similar than you might guess.

So this book is meant to inspire you and your olds to have the kind of conversations that you have with your friends—real conversations about real stuff, with real trust. (You can even have a discussion about what stays between you.)

And yeah, maybe you'll learn from them, and they'll learn from you. But hopefully you'll just make a new and maybe unexpected friend.

## Learn more about Operation Rise:

[OPERATION-RISE.ORG](http://OPERATION-RISE.ORG)

[@OPERATIONRISE](https://twitter.com/OPERATIONRISE)

## For olds:

Hi there. Thanks for reading.

We know it can be hard sometimes to connect with kids, who not only have their own language, but also seem to live half the time in a virtual world and often answer questions with monosyllabic grunts. Yet intergenerational relationships can be vitally important for young people, giving them additional support systems beyond immediate family.

Not Nothing is a book about a life-changing friendship between a 12-year-old boy and a 107-year-old man, inspired in part by the author's own life-changing friendships with elders in her life.

We hope the book provides a bridge for deep, meaningful conversation and connection and that this guide can help encourage that. And hey, if you learn some cool new slang, that would be dope.



Don't miss  
*Not Nothing*,  
the book  
that inspired  
this guide!

★ "Powerful, heartbreaking, and hopeful."  
—KIRKUS REVIEWS

★ "Forman is a master of the slow, heart-wrenching reveal."  
—BOOKLIST

★ "Told with spellbinding grace and wrought with exquisite structuring."  
—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

"Shows how friendships can make a bleak life feel fresh with possibilities, and how a person's worst moments need not shape their future."  
—THE HORN BOOK

"Taps into the power of intergenerational friendship."  
—THE NEW YORK TIMES

# Glossary (for youngs)

Here is a glossary of some terms used by olds. Please note that these days it is often considered offensive to call anyone under the age of 102 “old.” Preferred terms are “seniors,” “mature adults,” “sexy seniors,” or “elders.”

**AOL or AOL.com:** An email address—see below for “email”—from America Online, one of the popular email hosting services from the last millennium, similar to email addresses ending in “hotmail” or “yahoo.”

**Basic:** Forming an essential foundation.

**Boomer:** Short for “baby boomer,” the generation of adults born between 1946 and 1964. Not considered an insult among this demographic.

**Cap:** A tip of something, e.g. a bottle cap or a tooth cap.

**Clean-plate club:** Not an actual club but an acknowledgment when someone finishes an entire meal. Olds take great joy in seeing youngs gain admittance to this club.

**Check:** A form of payment via paper IOU slips. See also “mail.”

**Dead:** Deceased. No longer alive.

**Email:** An electronic correspondence similar to texting that olds are comfortable with. They often send messages via this medium and can be miffed when messages are not answered.

**DVD/DVR/VHS:** Various old systems for recording TV content via cassette tape, compact disc, or digital means.

**Fire:** Combustion or burning. In verb form, to dismiss an employee.

**Giving:** The act of generosity—what grandparents do for grandchildren.

**Ghost:** A dead person come back to haunt others.

**Goat:** A hoofed mammal, domesticated or wild, similar to a sheep.

**Fit:** Of suitable size or quality, or in good physical shape.

**Karen:** A girl’s name popular from the 1950s to the 2000s, peaking at the third most popular in the U.S. in 1965.

**Landline:** A non-portable telephone without any video or texting capability. Number is determined by location.

**Left no crumbs:** See also “clean-plate club.” Ate an entire meal.

**Mail:** Also known as “snail mail.” Paper correspondence sent via the United States Postal Service. Can be used for more than receiving birthday cards and checks. See also: “check” and “email.”

**Serving:** Bringing food or drink to someone.

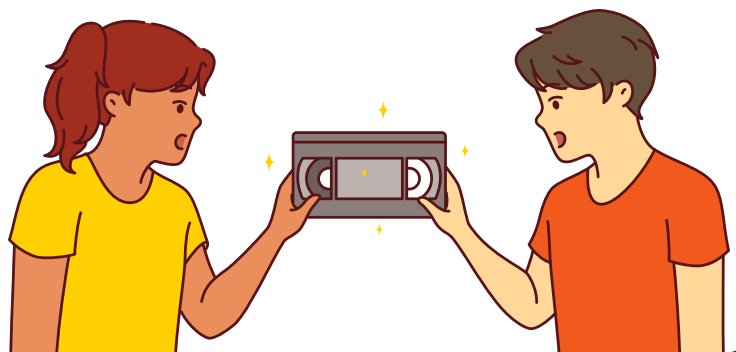
**Tea:** A drink made by infusing dried leaves in boiling water, served iced or hot, sometimes with jam and bread.

**Telephone:** A telecommunication device that allows two people to have in-person voice-to-voice conversations without video. See “landline.”

**Television:** A non-portable device that transmits images on screen at certain scheduled times, a precursor of streaming services.

**Thirsty:** In need of hydration.

**Voicemail:** A system of message delivery on a phone that records a voice message on the telephone—see above—that may be listened to later.



# Glossary (for olds)

Here is a glossary of some terms that youngs use. Please note that by the time anyone over the age of 25 knows these terms, they are already outdated.

**Ate it:** Did something perfectly, may be used interchangeably with “left no crumbs.”

**BAE:** Significant other or crush. Used interchangeably with “boo.”

**Basic:** Adjective used to describe something unoriginal or predictable, usually a person.

**Brick:** Cold.

**Bruh:** From “brother,” but used for all genders the way “dude” has typically been used for anyone.

**Cap:** A lie. “No cap” means “truth.”

**Cringe:** “Gross” or “yuck.” Used particularly about embarrassing situations, usually involving another person behaving in an embarrassing manner.

**Dead:** “I am dead” means “I am blown away”—figuratively, not literally. Generally used with humor, as with something so funny that it “killed,” but can also be generalized to any positive experience.

**Fire:** Amazing.

**Fit:** Short for “outfit.”

**Flex:** To show off.

**FOMO:** Fear of missing out.

**Ghost:** To ignore someone completely, particularly online. Often used to break up with someone.

**Giving:** To deliver a certain essence or vibe, see below.

**GOAT:** Greatest of all time.

**High Key/Low Key:** Adverbs similar to “very” and “extremely.” “I’m low-key hungry” means “I’m quite hungry.” “I’m high-key hungry” means “I’m ravenous.”

**IMO:** Text speak for “in my opinion.” Might also be abbreviated as IME for “in my experi-

ence,” though this variation tends to be used by people 30+.

**IYKYK:** Text speak for “if you know, you know.” If you have to ask, you probably don’t.

**Karen:** An entitled and annoying woman.

**Left no crumbs:** Did something perfectly. Can be used interchangeably with “ate it up.” “Ate it up and left no crumbs” suggests exemplary activity.

**OK, Boomer:** An insult suggesting age and out-of-touchness. Can be used with boomers, gen-Xers, and millennials.

**Rizz:** Charisma.

**Serving:** A complimentary adjective to indicate that something is eliciting a good feeling. An outfit may be “serving”—in other words, looking good.

**Suss:** Suspicious.

**Tea:** Gossip.

**TBH:** Text speak for “to be honest.” May be voiced with the individual letters—“Tee-bee-aitch”—or pronounced “tubuhuh.”

**Thirsty:** Desperate for attention.

**Vibe:** As a noun, a vibe means a general mood or interest. As a verb, means “to connect positively”—similar to how olds would use “jibe.”

**Yas or Yas Queen/King:**

A very emphatic yes. King or queen may relate to gender but not necessarily.



# Questions to ask your old

1. What was your favorite movie/record/play/book as a kid? What was so special about it?
2. Did you share a bedroom? How was it decorated? Were you tidy or messy?
3. If they have/had siblings: Who was your favorite? Did you compete? Fight?
4. Did you have pets when you were younger? What kind? What were they named?
5. Who was your best friend when you were younger? What happened to them?
6. Who was your biggest crush? Did they know?
7. What did you do when you felt sad when you were younger?
8. Tell me about a time you wronged someone. What did you do?
9. What did you and your parents fight over most often?
10. What was the biggest secret you ever kept? (If you can spill now.)
11. What did you do that you were most proud of when you were my age? Most ashamed of?
12. Did your family eat dinner together? What did you talk about/watch during dinner?
13. What's something you never told your parents but wished you had?
14. How old were you when you started dating? Do you remember your first date?
15. How did you decide to get married? Did someone propose?
16. Did you know you wanted kids? Were they all planned?
17. How did you decide what you wanted to do for a living? How did it differ from what you thought you would want to do when you were younger?
18. How long did you have to work each day at your job? Did/do you like your job?
19. When did you first start feeling like a grown-up?
20. What is your favorite thing you ever gave yourself? Your favorite thing someone gave you?
21. What was your biggest joy in life? And your biggest heartbreak?
22. What is the best advice you've ever been given? The worst?
23. What excites you about getting older? What scares you about getting older?
24. How do you think the world is different for kids now versus when you were a child?
25. Tell me about a time when you somehow rose to the occasion in your life.



# Questions to ask your young

1. What is your favorite movie/TV show/content creator/band/book? What makes them special?
2. Who's the first person you want to tell when something good happens? When something bad happens? Why?
3. What do you and your parents fight over most?
4. What do you and your siblings fight over most?
5. Have you ever wronged someone? If so, what did you do about it?
6. Has someone ever wronged you? How did you feel?
7. What's the coolest thing you've done in your life so far?
8. What's the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?
9. What excites you about the future? What scares you about the future?
10. Do you/have you ever had a best friend?
11. Do you/have you ever had a crush? Did they know?
12. What does success look like to you? What do you think are the most important qualities for success?
13. What do you think the world will look like when you are my age?
14. If you could eat only one food for a week, what would it be?
15. If you could pick one cause to fight for, what would it be and why?
16. What's one thing you wish adults understood about being a kid?
17. Do you think it's easier being a kid now or when I was your age?
18. When do you think you'll start feeling like a grown-up?
19. What would you say is the most important lesson you've learned so far in life?
20. If you could go back in time and fix one mistake, what would it be?
21. What is the best advice you've ever been given? The worst?
22. What's something you're embarrassed to admit you like, but secretly enjoy?
23. If you could meet anyone, living or dead, who would it be?
24. If you could have any superpower, what would it be?
25. What does it mean to you to "rise to the occasion"? What are ways you can do that in your life? Me in mine?



# Reflection (for youngs)

What was your favorite thing you learned about your old?

What was the most surprising thing you learned?

What was the funniest thing you learned?

List three things you and your old think similarly about.

List three things that you and your old think differently about.

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# Joint Exercises

Together, describe the things that seem the most different for young people now versus in the older person's youth.

Together, describe the things that seem the most similar.

Show photos or describe/draw your favorite outfit/style when the old was the same age as the young.

Put a printed photo—ask your old what these are—of the young person now alongside the older person at their age. Compare and contrast styles and fits.

