

Writing Your Family Story

Turning Family Facts into Family Stories



Step 1: Choose a Person

Who is your story about?

Step 2: Set the Scene

Where and when does the story take place?

Step 3: Identify the Challenge

What problem, obstacle, or important event occurred?

Step 4: Describe the Journey

What happened next?



Creative Ways to Share Your Stories

- Tell Personal Stories
- Diaries & Letters
- Poetry & Art
- Cookbooks
- Family Newsletters
- Family Calendars & Books
- Quilts
- Create & Share Heritage Gifts
- Host Reunions – In person or virtually
- Hold an Ancestor Party

Interviewing Family Members

Set the stage for success by preparing the individual in advance with a list of questions you might ask. Invite a young person in your family to conduct the interview or provide the technology by serving as the videographer for the event.

- Use Interview prompts
- Set up in a quiet space
- Bring out photo albums to bring out memories
- Record when possible

Sharing formats that work

Short narratives

Photo books

Timelines and maps

Oral storytelling

Recording Suggestions

Creating Oral Histories - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Creating_Oral_Histories

Recording Oral History Interviews at home - <https://www.modernheirloombooks.com/new-blog/2022/4/4/best-practices-for-recording-family-history-interviews-at-home>

Recording Family Interviews - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQ5W3M8qDow>

Writing Family Stories

Turn an Oral History into a Compelling Story - <https://www.modernheirloombooks.com/new-blog/2025/08/04/how-to-turn-an-oral-history-into-a-compelling-story>

[FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) – [Writing Your Family and Personal History](#)

All links active as of 15 June 2026.

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Sharing Your Family Stories

This handout is designed to help you actively translate your genealogy research into formats that non-genealogists in your family can understand, appreciate, and preserve. Use it during the session and afterward to create a realistic sharing plan.

1. Identify Your Audience

Who are the non-genealogists you want to reach? (Check all that apply)

- Parents or grandparents
- Siblings or cousins
- Children or teens
- Young adults
- Distant relatives
- Not sure yet

What do they seem most interested in?

2. Choose One Story

Instead of sharing everything, choose one meaningful story.

Ancestor or family group:

Why does this story matter?

3. What Makes This Story Engaging?

Check any elements that apply:

- Migration or immigration
- Military service
- Hardship or survival
- Love or family relationships
- Community involvement
- Humor or unusual events

Notes:



4. Choose a Sharing Format

Which format best fits your audience? (Select one to start)

- Short written story (1–2 pages)
- Photo book or album
- Timeline or map
- Interactive family history outing
- Video or audio recording
- In-person storytelling
- Other _____

Why this format?

5. Your First Sharing Plan

Who will you share this with first?

When will you share it?

6. Measuring Success

Success is not measured by enthusiasm or accuracy alone. How will you define success for this effort?

7. Reflection

What is one thing you will do differently when sharing your genealogy after today?

"The most important family story may be the one that has never been told."

