

Generation
to
Generation

TELL YOUR FAMILY'S STORY

A GENEALOGY GUIDE FOR KIDS

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Every family has a story....

You can tell your family's story in order to:

- Learn where you came from.
- Grow closer to family members.
- Preserve memories for future generations.
 - Have fun!

Ways to tell your family story....

- Conduct oral history interviews.
 - Make a family tree.
- Make a poster or exhibit about your family.
- Make a website or PowerPoint about your family.
- Write a play about an interesting part of your family's history.
 - Make a scrapbook or photo album.



Getting started....

- Find out who in your family has done genealogy or history research. See what's missing or what you can add.
- Fill in a family tree with what you know. Ask older family members to help with what is missing.
- Decide whom you would like to interview for an oral history.
- Think about how to present the information you will gather and how you will save it or share it with family members.
- Read books about the time period when your parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents grew up to get historical context.

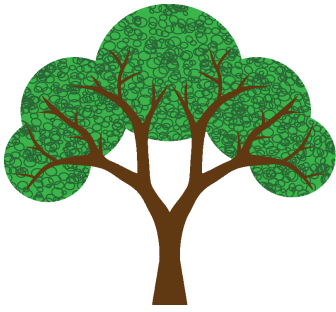


Oral History Tips



- If possible, do research ahead of time so you can spend time talking about stories rather than gathering details.
- It can be helpful to give the interviewee an outline ahead of time so they can see the topics. Don't give them a list of questions, though, it may ruin the spontaneity of the interview.
- Make sure both parties agree to the interview and to a general length of time (not to exceed 1.5 hours, for example).
- Choose a quiet place where you won't be interrupted by others. It's best to interview one person at a time to avoid confusing future listeners.
- Test your equipment beforehand to make sure you're comfortable with it and it will work.
- For an elderly relative, memory cues such as photographs might be helpful.
- The focus should be on the interviewee and they should do most of the talking. Allow your relative to tell their own story in their own words.
- Try not to interrupt your family member.
- Remember to listen to the answers to your questions, so you can ask follow-up questions.
- Consider bringing a notebook to write down topics you want to ask about more.
- Start with more general questions and work up to more specific and more sensitive questions.
- Avoid yes or no questions, unless you are clarifying a point. Use phrases like "Tell me about..." or "Can you describe..."
- Write questions in chronological order when possible, realizing that your relative may jump around in time while talking.
- For some great example questions, check out our Grandparent Book, available to download from <https://www.scottcountyiowa.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/posts/Our%20story%20my%20grandparent%20book.pdf>
- When done recording your interview, back it up in several places so it does not get lost.
- Consider donating your recording to the Scott County Community Memory Project. <https://www.scottcountyiowa.gov/library/local-history-resources/scott-county-community-memory-project>

Sources: Minnesota Historical Society Oral History Guidelines, UCLA Center for Oral History Research, Reading Rockets.



Tips for Interview Questions

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORAL HISTORY OFFICE

Attachment II

QUESTION FORMATS

The way you word a question will affect the answer you get. Ask questions that require **more** than a one-word answer.

Not-So-Good Questions

Did you go to Sunday school?

Did you sing in the choir?

Did you walk to church?

Do you remember church picnics?

Did the church have a Christmas party?

Good Questions

What do you remember about Sunday school?

How did you typically spend your Sundays?
What church activities were you involved in?

How did you get to church?

Tell me about the church picnics.
What did you like or dislike about the church picnics?

How did the church celebrate Christmas?

Start questions with:

Tell me about . . .

Describe . . .

What do you remember about . . .

Explain . . .

Expand . . .

Avoid leading questions. These are questions which suggest a particular answer, or which influence the narrator to answer in a certain way.

I understand the Rev. Smith was a wonderful preacher. What did you think?

What can you tell me about the Rev. Smith?
What did he look like?
What were his sermons like?

I guess everyone in church was one big, happy family, huh?

How often did you socialize with other church members?
What happened when someone was sick or in trouble?
Can you give an example?

Oral History Permission Forms

It is important to get permission to record an oral history and permission to share or publish it. Having permission in writing helps future generations as well. The Scott County Community Memory Project would love to have your relative's oral history if all parties are willing.

Feel free to modify our permission form to suit your own uses, or use ours and donate a digital copy of the audio!



Scott County Community Memory

Oral History Project

Scott County Library System

563-285-4794

Project Staff:

Nancy Youngbauer: informationcls@gmail.com

Christine Barth: Christine.barth@scottcountylibrary.org

Sarah Carlin: Sarah.carlin@scottcountylibrary.org

The Scott County Community Memory Project is a two-year grant initiative seeking to collect and preserve the rural history of the county and help residents preserve their own family history. Part of the project is conducting a select number of oral history interviews. A digital collection will be created so that future generations can know the stories of our past. Visit www.scottcountylibrary.org for more information.

INFORMED CONSENT AND COPYRIGHT PERMISSION FOR ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Participant's name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone and/or email: _____

I voluntarily agree to be interviewed for the Scott County Community Memory Project by representatives of the Scott County Library System. I understand that the following items may be collected from my interview:

- a digital audio recording
- a digital photograph of me
- originals or copies (paper or digital) of personal documents or images that I wish to share
- an edited transcript and summary

I understand that my interview (and other items above) may be distributed to the public for educational purposes, including formats such as print, public programming, and the Internet.

I agree to share my interview (and other items above) under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License. This means that I retain the copyright, but that the public may freely copy, modify, and share these items for noncommercial purposes under the same terms, if they include the original source information.

The Scott County Library System will provide digital copies of items collected above for your personal use if desired.

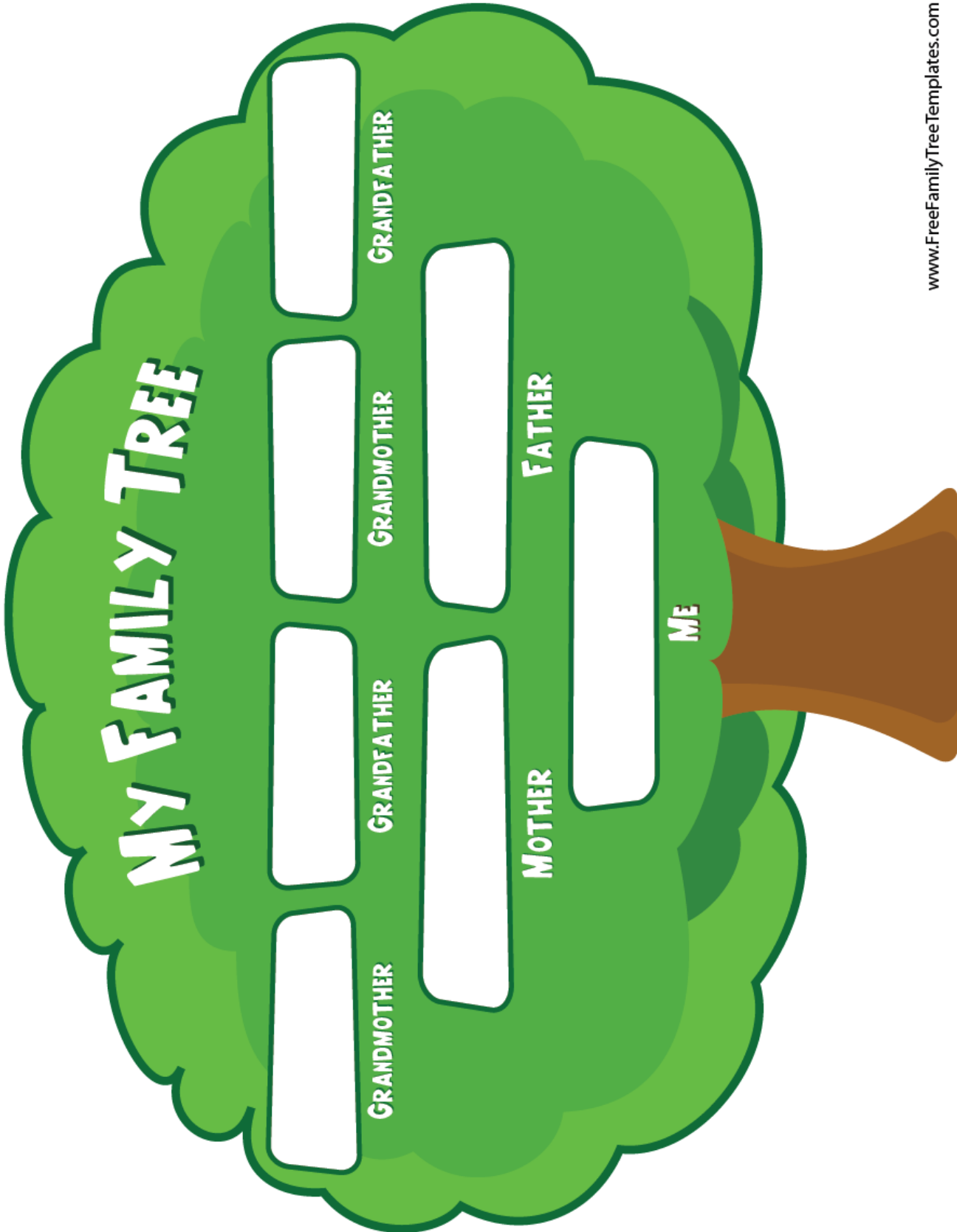
Permission granted (sign & date):

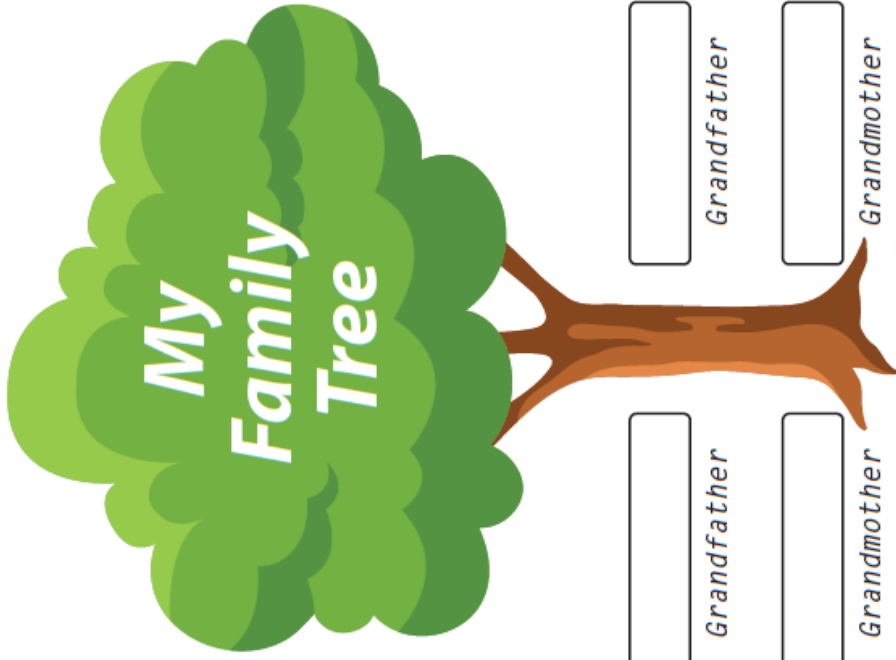
_____ Participant's signature *date*

_____ Interviewer's signature *date*

Family Trees

Family trees are a great way for kids to dive into family history. It can help them find their place in the extended family and learn about what your family was like in past generations. Family trees can be as detailed or as simple as you want them to be. We found a few examples of trees to get you started.





<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Uncle</i>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Aunt</i>
<input type="text"/>	
<i>Cousin</i>	

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Uncle</i>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Aunt</i>
<input type="text"/>	
<i>Cousin</i>	

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Uncle</i>
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<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Aunt</i>
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<i>Cousin</i>	

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<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Uncle</i>
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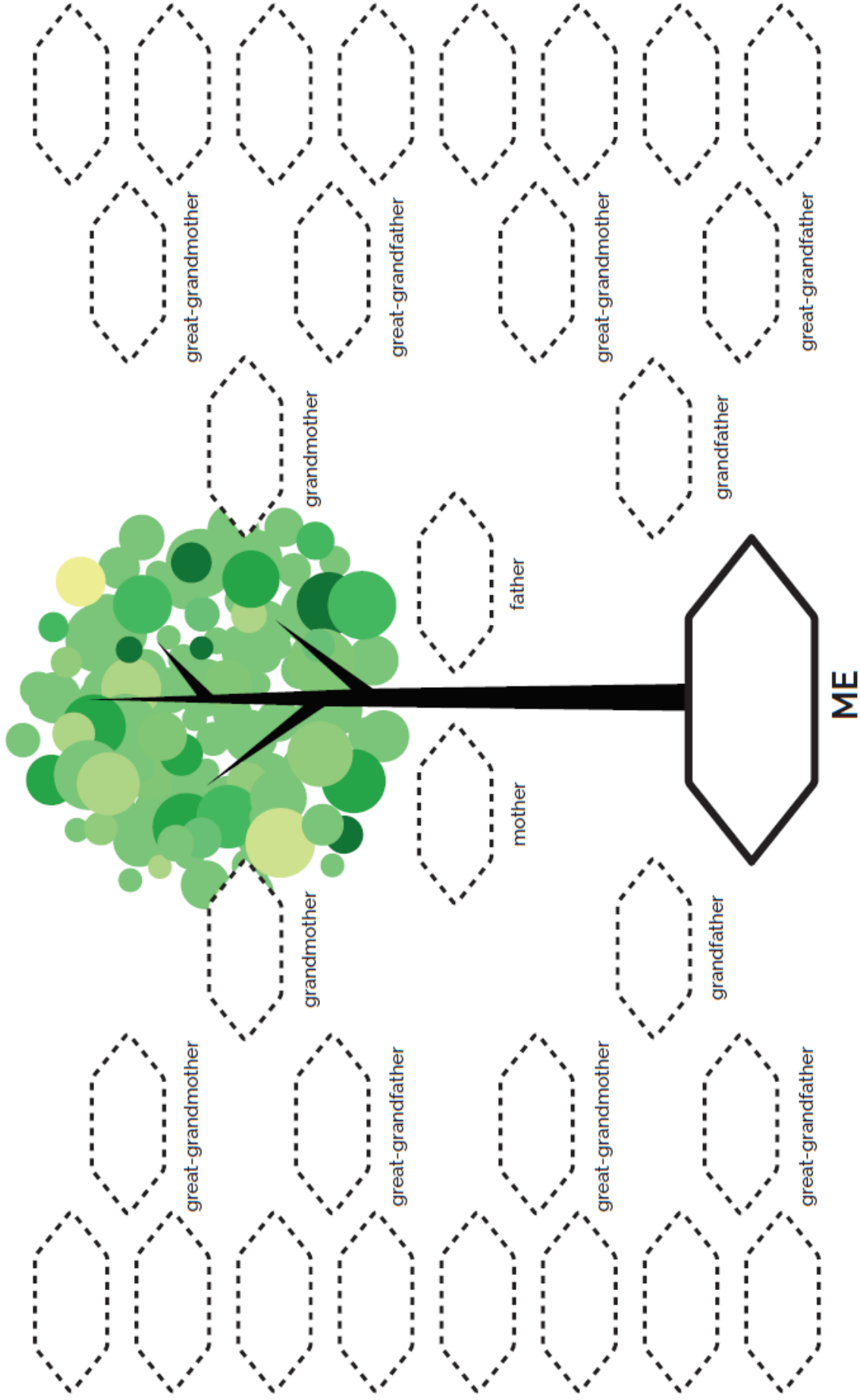
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<i>Grandfather</i>	<i>Grandmother</i>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Grandfather</i>	<i>Grandmother</i>

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Uncle</i>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Aunt</i>
<input type="text"/>	
<i>Cousin</i>	

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Uncle</i>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Cousin</i>	<i>Aunt</i>
<input type="text"/>	
<i>Cousin</i>	

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Mother</i>	<i>Father</i>

Family Tree



Ancestor charts can be useful to organize a lot of research and make it easier to see census information. This example is a 5th generation ancestor chart, which prioritizes the “closest” ancestors.

Chart No. _____

1

B:
P:
M:
D:
DP:

Spouse:

2

B:
P:
M:
D:
DP:

3

B:
P:
M:
D:
DP:

4

B:
P:
M:
D:
DP:

5

B:
P:
M:
D:
DP:

6

B:
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DP:

7

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DP:

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D:

31

B:
D:

Legend:

B: Birthdate
P: Place of birth
M: Marriage date
D: Date of death
DP: Place of death

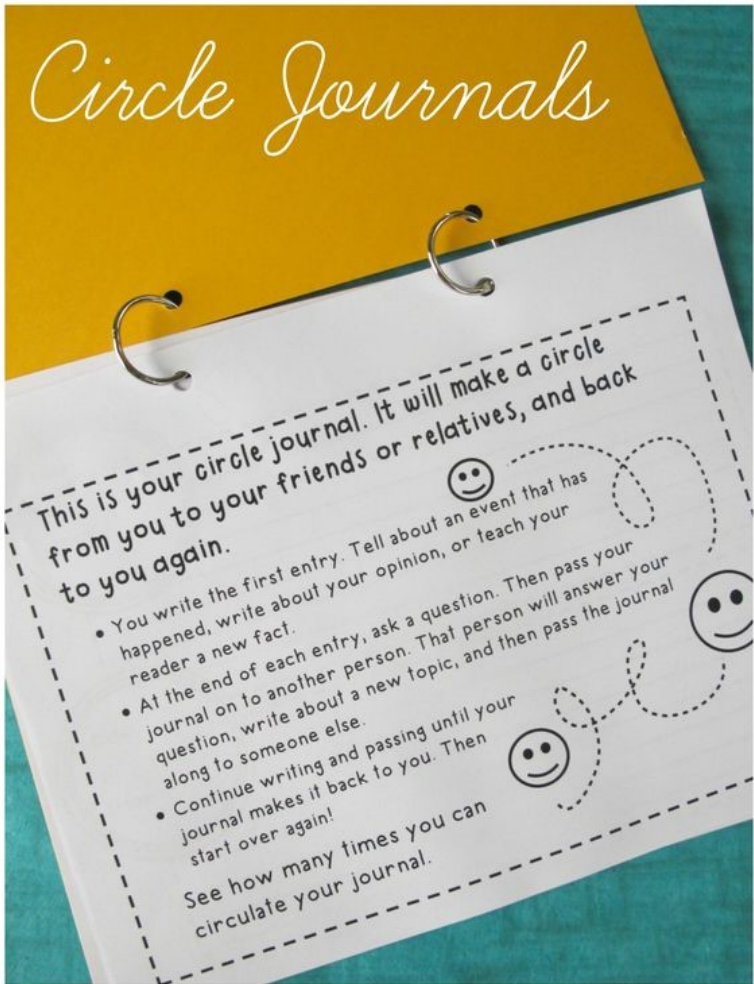
www.FreeFamilyTreeTemplates.com

Journaling

Journals are a great source of historical information and a great way to work through challenging times. Consider starting one of your own, because your life will be history some day! We have lots of journal ideas on our Pinterest board: <https://www.pinterest.com/memily89/srp-2020-imagine-your-story/genealogy/>



Another idea is to share a circle journal to pass back and forth between a parent and child or a grandparent and grandchild. Think about doing a daily question prompt as a family – and writing down the answers or creating an annual time capsule. You can buy any type of specialty journal, or you can create your own. We have just a few ideas to get you started.



* * * * * **Year End** * * * * *

Time Capsule Questions

Today's Date: _____ Kid Name: _____
 Interviewer: _____ Kid Age: _____

Questions for the Kid

Favorite Food: _____
 Why? _____

Favorite Thing: _____
 Why? _____

Favorite Thing to Do: _____
 Why? _____

Favorite Movie: _____
 Why? _____

Favorite TV Show: _____
 Why? _____

Favorite Book: _____
 Why? _____

What was your favorite part of the holidays this year? _____

What do you want to do next year? _____

Mama

My favorite season is.....

You won't believe the strangest

One time I took my teddy bear

The craziest dream I ever had was

If I owned a big boat, I would

When I am 100 years old, I will

I found \$1000 on the road, so I

Collecting History Remotely

Due to COVID-19, you may wish to take extra precautions with elderly relatives. A grandparent book or journal is a great no-contact way to connect. Just make sure everyone is comfortable with whatever arrangement you make and that you respect the desires of your relatives.



Google
Hangouts



You can also have a Zoom conversation and record it. Then the video will be available to link to or download for sharing with family or the Scott County Community Memory Project. Google Hangouts is another video recording option. Make sure you test the sound quality beforehand. You may also want to write instructions for your relative if they are not familiar with videoconferencing.



StoryCorps Connect is a new app designed to facilitate telling stories during social distancing. Both parties must log in to StoryCorps connect, you can start recording audio at any time. The audio and a still photo from each interview goes into the archive at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

This website is a great resource for getting started with any oral history interview:

<https://storycorps.org/participate/storycorps-connect/>