

Family Research Projects 2024

Family Stories Project Option – a list of topics for 2024

Family stories were introduced during Covid, when social distancing made it difficult to sit together to problem solve at our devices and we time available to write stories. The number of people writing or otherwise presenting stories from our monthly topic list scaled down during 2023. Sharing stories on monthly topics as a full class activity is not continuing in 2024, however we have the option of using a list of topics for 2024 largely chosen from topics remaining on our list to avoid duplication for continuing students. If you would like to add a story from this list to the 'Family Stories' page on the web, email it to bevlee47@gmail.com

Family Story topics — “from 250 to 500 words or thereabouts, oral presentations fine too in a classroom setting” Feel free to vary the brief to suit your needs if it doesn't quite fit.

The topics have been suggested across a year, generally with two options a month, but feel free to choose in any topic in any order whenever you feel inspired!!

Yr/Month	Topic	Brief	Category
2024/2a	'A Ha' Moments	What stands out as a memorable 'a ha moment' experienced while doing family research? Explain when it happened, who in your family tree was involved, what effect it had on you. It may be an 'a ha moment' you felt for the person involved, or felt yourself as you negotiated your family research journey 2a/24 OR	The Family Research Experience
2024/2b	'Disappointments'	Write about a time when you felt profoundly disappointed when doing your research. What triggered this? Who in your family tree was involved, what effect did it have on you? It may be a disappointment you felt for the person involved, or you felt as you negotiated your family research journey. How did you deal with it?	The Family Research Experience
2024/3a	“The Too Hard Basket”	Sometimes in our family history journey we decide to ‘give up’ on a particular line of research. Describe your experience and how you have, for example, worked around it or gone back to it over time. 3a/24 OR	The Family Research Experience
2024/3b	'Her Story' (International Women's Day falls in March)	The chance to write about a woman in your family research you have come to admire; someone who has struggled and prevailed; perhaps someone who experienced a family or other tragedy, or multiple tragedies; someone who fought for women's stories to prevail; who participated in the woman's movement; who had a particular gift which she shared with the world or other theme which you feel pertinent. 3b/24	People and Places
2024/4a	“A moral dilemma”	Have you faced a moral, an ethical dilemma in your research? Perhaps it relates to what to include on an online website; a family object in your possession; whether to share a story with others; etc. Write about it in 150 to 400 words. 4a/24 OR	The Family Research Experience
2024/4b	'We hope our ancestors are good people'	Write a story drawing upon your family research which relates to this topic--perhaps your hopes that particular ancestors were good people proved founded, perhaps they were unfounded. Share the story of your discovery. (Note Penny's story - https://www.digbystories.com/blog/always-hoping-your-ancestors-will-be-good-people) 4b/24	People and Places

2024/5a	‘People I’ve met’	Write about people you’ve met – online, on the phone, or in reality - during your family research quest and what this has meant to you in your family history journey 5a/24. OR	The Family Research Experience
2024/5b	My family research network - ‘heroes’ and ‘nuisances’	It is wonderful when a family story is confirmed by the careful family research of another, however frustrating and sometimes devastating when the family story being shared by others about members of your family is totally incorrect or otherwise misleading. Write about a scenario or two which illustrates this from your own family tree. 5b/24	The Family Research Experience
2024/6	“Now ... Where <i>did</i> I come from?” #1 (DNA)	Have you, or a close member of your family, had a DNA test? Was there a particular reason for the test? Describe the test chosen, the process involved, and the results received, both initially and over time. Share the story of particularly strong and significant results, any contacts made, any disappointments you may have had. What has having a DNA test meant to you and your family? 6/24	Inheritance (DNA)
2024/7a	‘Overseas Adventures’	As we research we sometimes discover, to our surprise, that we have a relative/relatives overseas who experienced life changing events while in other countries - for example, a relative who was a govt official in Hong Kong in 1942 who was interned in a Japanese prison camp in HK during the war; a great-uncle and his young family living in Illinois during the Civil War. Don't worry if the ancestor/s are a little distant, tell us how you became aware of & came to understand the overseas adventures/ experiences of those concerned. OR	People and Places
2024/7b	‘Travel Tales’	A number of our class members have been able to travel to places in which their forebears lived, visit local historical societies there, even meet distant, and sometimes not-so-distant relatives, all as a result of their passion for family research. Photographs have been taken, journals/blogs written, relationships formed which continue through emails and phone calls. Share your most memorable family research ‘travel tale’. (Note –You may be able to write a number of different stories on this topic).	The Family Research Experience
2024/8	Disaster/Tragedy	Looking back through your family tree, write about a time when a disaster or tragedy struck one of your forebears, perhaps a whole family or even generation/generations. Locate them in your family tree, set the context in which they lived, describe the disaster or tragedy, perhaps using newspaper records if available, and what the impact on the family is likely to/appears to have been. <i>Alternative wording</i> - 'Tragedy' - Share a story of a tragedy which enveloped the life/lives of your ancestors. What happened? Who did it affect? What may have been the impacts on your family members at the time/over time?	People and Places
2024/9a	‘The role of Letters in my research’ (Correspondence 3)	Share two or three interesting letters or emails about a shared ancestor which provided information and supported problem solving during your research. Set the context first, include the letter (or in the case of long letters, the relevant part), then comment on the aftermath. OR	The Family Research Process

2024/9b	'The role of books and other resources in my research'	Tell us about books (from historical novels to memoirs, autobiographies, academic essays, edited papers, researched, etc) you have read during your research which have solved problems or otherwise strengthened your research ... As we are living in the online environment, which resources available on the internet have given you leads, provided information, solved mysteries and more?	The Family Research Process
2024/10a	'A question answered....'	"Tell us about a time when someone asked you a question/sought information for which you were able to find answers because of the work you have completed on your family tree. What did you find? Did responding to them lead you to develop further understanding of the lives of the forebears involved; your family tree - if so how?" OR	The Family Research Process
2024/10b	'Institutions'	"Tell us about a person or family you have come across in your research who for some period of their life was 'institutionalised'. After locating them in your family tree, explain the circumstances of their institutionalization? (Who, Why, When, Where, How etc). Explain the context and eventual outcome. Could range from being imprisoned on old ship hulls before transportation; workhouses; mental institutions; etc....	People and Places
2024/11a	Family Research, the gift that keeps on giving!	Over time, family research typically results in opportunities to meet with people connected to your family tree in some way. In time, perhaps when you think you have 'bedded down' your family tree, another opportunity arises to meet someone interested in your family tree to exchange information, documents, photographs, visits. Write about some connections you have made over the years, including the most recent experience based 'gift' your family research has offered to you. OR	The Family Research Experience
2024/11b	'Publish or Perish?'	What to do with all our research? We at times lived in hope that one day someone would be interested, often experiencing disinterest from family members when we were passionately involved in our research. How best to share our work with others? Share your story, whether you have published, or are working towards, publishing your research in some form. Or perhaps you have decided not to?	The Family Research Process