



My Family Now and in the Past!

**A Resource to Introduce Children
Ages 6 to 8 years to Genealogy at
Home, in School, or in Youth Groups**

Created by John H. Althouse



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BOOKS IN THIS SERIES:

AGS Genealogy for Children and Youth Project Series

My Family Now and in the Past! A Resource to Introduce Children Ages 6 to 8 years to Genealogy at Home, in School, or in Youth Groups

(additional books in future)

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Introduction

This is one of a series of resources developed by the Alberta Genealogical Society to introduce the wonders of “genealogy” and “family history”, disciplines enjoyed by millions, to children and youth. These resources do not constitute a whole course of genealogy; nor do they cover every aspect of the two disciplines. They are instead what might be regarded as “a sowing of seeds.” It is our attempt to arouse an interest within the young person of his or her family and their past. This, we hope, may cause these young people to either continue on with this study of genealogy or family history, or to take it up at a later, at a less busy time of life.

“My Family Now and in the Past” has been prepared specifically for children between the ages of 6 to 8 years. It begins by examining the child’s family, looking at the organization of the family, its members, and their relationships. It notes that families existed well back in the past, and introduces the child to the ideas of “ancestors” and “history” as they apply to the child. This book is activity based, requiring the child to be actively involved in the study of family. It is designed to be used as a whole unit or may be used selectively, employing the pages best suited to the needs of your children. However, the best study of family is done not alone but with interested and involved adults nearby to give support and deal with questions and concerns that may arise for the child.



Use of This Unit

This unit is the property of the Alberta Genealogical Society (AGS). It may be used by any individual or group for the express purpose of introducing genealogy to children individually or as members of a group. It may be used by schools, by youth groups, or by individuals in a family. It may be downloaded and reproduced in part or in whole solely for this purpose. This resource shall not be used for any other purpose or sold by any individual or group. It is free to anyone, whether an Alberta Genealogical Society member or not, to introduce some of the important basics of the family, its forms, its purpose, its functions, and its past; and genealogy to children in a specific age group. It is our hope that these resources will create an interest in genealogy and family history in children.

This unit is designed to be flexible and to be adaptable. While this is an entire unit of study, it may be used in its entirety, or selected activities from it may be used if they better meet your needs and those of the children that you instruct.

This unit has been specifically designed for children aged 6, 7, and 8 years. It has been designed by an experienced classroom teacher and was evaluated by expert teachers with years of experience with children of this age level. Children at these ages may lack the fine motor skills necessary to write within the boxes provided on individual worksheets in this unit. Where this is likely to occur, we recommend that you use the sheet as a template and create a larger copy on the board, Smart Board, on experience paper, or in any other appropriate display medium.

We suggest that adults who will be using this unit familiarize themselves thoroughly with it. As the unit recommends the use of specific resources, make certain that you have acquired these before beginning the unit. The unit loses something without them. It is our desire that this unit provide an interesting and enjoyable introduction to a pastime that they can follow for a lifetime.



Part of a Family!

This is Hazel. She was seven years old when this photo was taken. Hazel is a "**person**" someone having her own name, interests and qualities. Her "**given name**" Hazel is her own

special name. Hazel will be a part of many groups in her life time. She is a part of a very special group of people known as a "**family**."

What is a "family"? Who are the members of any "family"? What are the good qualities of groups? What qualities are needed to make groups work well?



The photograph to the left shows Hazel's family - Hazel, her mother, her father and her brother. Her family also has its own name which is used by all members of the family. This name is sometimes called a "**family name**" and at other times called a "**surname**." Hazel's family name is Rutherford. So, to people, Hazel is known as "Hazel Rutherford."

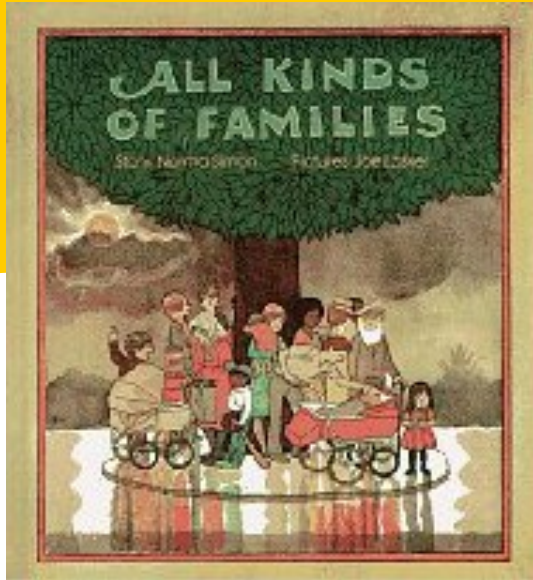


Part of a Family Worksheet

Hazel Rutherford, the girl in this photo is the daughter of Alberta' first Premier. This photograph was taken over 100 years ago. Answer these for "**Hazel**" and then for "**YOU**."

What is...?

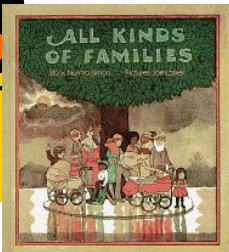
	For Hazel	For YOU
Given Name		
Family Name		
Number in Family		
Names of Family Members		



All Kinds of Families

Read aloud to
the children

the book All Kinds of Families by Norma Simon and illustrated by Joe Lasker. This book looks at what a "**family**" is. It looks at what makes a family. This book presents many important ideas about families. Ask them: **What important things about families did you read about in this book? Are all families the same? Why are all families important?**



A Picture of My Family!

In this space, draw a picture of your **family**.



The Name Game!

This is certainly a big group of people. How can we sort them out? We

show a certain person, place, or object by giving it a name. We give families and a person names also. **A person in a family will have several names.** Each name has a different purpose. Here are some of these names:

All families have a name which separates it from other families. This name is know as the "**family name**" or the "**surname**." Names like Smith, Hernandez, Mah, and Ibrahim are all surnames. Not all people who have the same surname are always from the same family; there are several families who often use the same surname. Our surname often can be traced in one or more countries where our ancestors once lived.

Very often today and in the past, a woman would give up the her surname when she married and take on the surname of her husband. The surname of her family which she often gave up at marriage was called her "**maiden name**." In some cultures, women kept and used their maiden name even after marriage. Today, more women continue to keep and use it for various reasons.

Each individual has his own special name or names to show him or her as one special person within the family. These names may all be given at birth or some may be assigned later at special ceremonies or events for a variety of reasons. These names are known as "**given names**." George, Susan, Diego, Maria, Lin, and Mohammed may all be "given names." Sometimes, we shorten our name or have another name that describes who we are which is not our official name these names are known as "**nicknames**."



The Name Game!

Work Sheet

All About Your Name

What is your family name or surname? _____

What country / language did it come from?

What was your mother's maiden name?

What are your given names?

When were they given to you?

Were you named after someone, that is given the given name of another member of your family? Who?

Do you have a "nickname"? What is it? How did you get it?

All names have a meaning. If you know the meaning of either your surname or one of your given names tell its meaning.



“YOU!”

Tell the children that in genealogy you want to go back as far as possible into the past, but you always begin your search with “**YOU**”! So, start with you and list as many people in your family now and in the past as you can.

You also might like to discuss the relationships of the people in the focus family described next before doing the work sheet on p.8.

Focus Family: The Miller family lives on 1st Avenue in our town. This family consists of Mr. John Miller, his wife Mrs. Susan Miller, and their two children Bob and Mary. Two houses from them live Mrs. Susan Miller’s parents Mr. Mike Jones and Mrs. Jane Jones. I will use these people to give you some examples on the next page. In between, these two houses lives John Miller’s brother Mark Miller and his wife Penny Miller and their two children Sam and Marilyn.



Members of Your Family

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Name the members of your family who live in your family home and give the relationship of this person to you on lines 2 to 8. Bob from page 7 has done an example using his family on line 1. to show you how to do this.

Name of Each Person	This Person Is My _____
1. John Miller	father
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Not all our family members live with you. Name some of these members of your family. Tell how each of them is related to you. Again, Bob has done an example to show you how to do this. You use some of lines 2 to 8.

Name of Other Family Members	This person is My _____
1. Jane Jones	grandmother
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	



Your Mother or Your Father?



Now, that you have listed all the people you know, they can be divide those who are in your family into two

categories "**paternal**" and "**maternal**" families. Your "paternal family members" are those people who are direct relatives of your father. Your "maternal family members" are those people who are direct relatives of your mother.

Take the list of family members you've made and classify them as either "paternal" or "maternal." Do this in the chart on the next page. Remember that your brothers and sisters can be related to both.



Your Mother or Your Father's Family?

Now that you have made a list of people who are related to you, write their names in the spaces under "Name" in the chart below. Put them into the correct groups "**paternal**" for those from your father's family and "**maternal**" for those from your mother's family by placing a checkmark under "**Father**" or "**Mother**." Bob has done lines 1 and 2 as examples for you. You do lines 3 to 12 for your family.

Name	Father	Mother
1. Jane Jones		✓
2. Sam Miller	✓	
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		



YOU!



Your Family Tree!

Genealogists often display the information that they collect in special charts. This is a very simple chart for your family called a "**family tree**." It is designed to show a family - parents and children. Complete this chart for your family or for a family in a book that you are reading from your school library. Do this on the next page.

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My Family Tree! Worksheet

Fill in the blanks below to create a simple "family tree."



←

Your brothers and sisters, put one in each box. Put them in order by age with the oldest on the left and the youngest on the right.

Your Mother

Your Father

Your Mother's Mother

Your Mother's Father

Your Father's Mother

Your Father's Father



Important Dates



Genealogists require certain important information about each member of the family that they are researching. This information deals with the date and place of certain "**vital events**" in a person's life. They often concentrate on three particular events. Two of these events we celebrate, and all can have a special ceremony. **What do you think these events are? What information do you think a genealogist wants to know about these events? Where does the genealogist get this information?**



Important Dates for Your Family



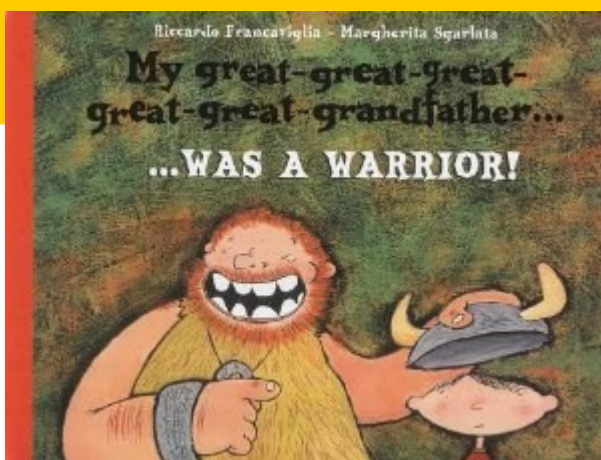
Find out the **dates** and **places** for some of the "**vital events**" in your family and place them in the chart below.

Name	Birth Date	Birth Place

Name	Marriage Date	Marriage Place



Who Are My Ancestors?

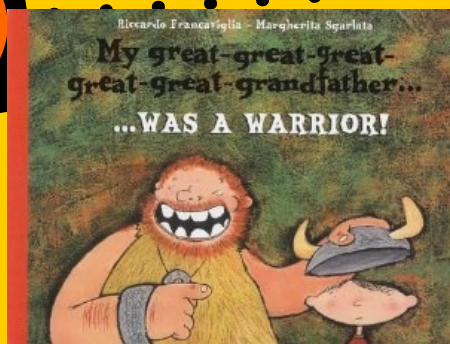


A Reading Activity

Read the book
My Great-Great

-Great-Great-Great Grandfather ...Was

a Warrior! by Riccardo Francaviglia and Margherita Sgarlata to the children. This should be done as an "**active reading**" that is one in which you stop periodically as you read asking the child or children questions related to this reading as it applies to them and families. A set of questions that may guide this active reading activity are provided on the back of this sheet.



Who Are My Ancestors? Reading Activity

Questions for Guided Reading

1. What do you think your family members were long ago?
2. What is a Viking? Where did Vikings live?
3. Did your family once live in another place?
4. Were the boy and the Viking related? How?
5. What is an "ancestor?" Who are your ancestors?
6. "I want to see if you are at all like me." says the warrior. Are you like other members of your own family in any way? How?
7. Why do you think that the boy is worried about going to school with the warrior? (Should we ever be ashamed because someone is different?)
8. What things does the boy discover that he does that his ancestors also appear to have done? Were there ways in which the boy was different from his warrior ancestor? How?
9. Are our ancestors important? Why? Why would it be good to learn who they were and how they lived?
10. What do we call the story of the past? What do we call the story of the past of a single family?



Your Ancestors!

Your family began long before you were born. There were family members who lived long ago. You call these family members

"ancestors." They may have lived in Canada for a long time or for just a short time. This girl's ancestors can be traced back to the 1780s in New Brunswick. Your ancestors did not always live here in Canada but came here from some place across the seas that they once called home. This little girl is Carrie. Her father brought his family to Edmonton over 100 years ago where he worked as foreman during the building of the High Level Bridge.

Who are your **"ancestors,"** and what do you know about these important family members? Have they lived in Canada for a long time or have your ancestors lived elsewhere until recently? They may have once lived somewhere very far away at one time. Where did they come from? What did they bring with them from their **"culture"** that your family still uses or does today?



Family Show and Tell!

The girl in the picture is Carolyn Marie Thompson or Carrie. This photograph was taken about 100 years ago. The Bisque doll had

been passed down to her from her older sister and was later passed down for younger generations of Carrie's family to enjoy. This doll has done a great deal of traveling through the years. Recently, the doll has been lovingly placed by its current owner in the collection of Provincial Museum for future generations of children to see and enjoy.

Do you have something old that once belonged to one of your **"ancestors"**? Do you have something that originally came from a place far away where your ancestors once lived; or something from another **"culture"**? Is there a story that goes with this family treasure? What is that story?

Bring such an object that tells you about an ancestor or how your ancestor did in the past for "Show and Tell," and tell others the story of your family treasure.

(N.B. As an alternate the instructor might suggest the children bring a photograph of the object rather than the object itself. OR Perhaps, the instructor might prepare a "centre" of these type objects [or photos of them] you have chosen. Local museums may be able to help you here.)



It's Off to Work They Go!



These are some of the tools used by a "blacksmith". Blacksmith is an old occupation. The work that a person does is called an "**occupation**." A baker, a mechanic, a nurse, and a farmer are a few examples of occupations. Each occupation does a certain type of job which is called their "**work**." A blacksmith makes horse shoes and other objects from metal; a carpenter builds things from wood. Sometimes, a family may do the same occupation for a very long time. This is what often happened in the past.

Different members of the family go to work to help provide the things that your family needs. **In discussion with your children have them name "occupations."** Place them on a sheet of experience paper or other large display so that the children will have the spelling of the names for a future activity. You may also select some of these words as words for your weekly spelling word list. Beside these names of "occupations," list the work that each does, e.g. a person who makes new clothes by sewing.



It's Off to Work They Go! Work Sheet

In the chart below, write the names of occupations on the left side of the chart and on the right side write the work that the occupation does. You may use the list which the class made earlier to help you.

Occupation	Work

Now, list the occupations of three of your family members now or in the past and the work they do in this occupation.

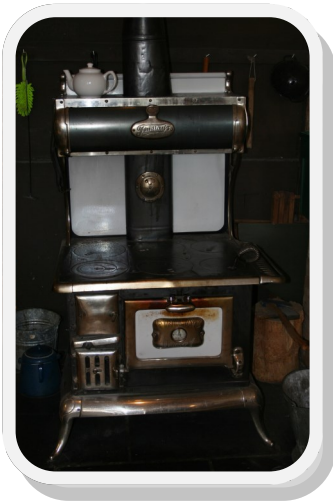
Occupation	Work



History!

AGS Genealogy for Youth Project

The story of the past is called "**history**." A family also has a story of its own past. Their story of the past is called a "**family history**." What stories of the past do you think families are interested in? How do people learn them? Events, records, and objects from long ago in the past are called "**historic**." Events, records, or objects from our time and very near our time are called "**modern**." Study the objects below on this page. Tell whether each object shown is "historic" or "modern". Why do you think your answer is correct? (As an alternate activity, prepare a centre or series of images of historic and modern objects for the children to classify for the exercise on p.22.)



1.



4.



2.



3.



5.



7.



6.



History! Work Sheet

AGS Genealogy for Youth Project

"Historic objects" are also called **"artifacts."** Artifacts are often put in museums. You are the keeper of a museum. You must select only the "historic objects" from those below for your museum. Which are they? (As an alternate activity, prepare a centre or series of images of historic and modern objects for the exercise on here.)



1.



2.



3.



7.



5.



4.



6.



8.



9.



10.



Now and Then!



Lesson Preparation: In advance of this lesson, get an archival photo of a place that is now familiar to the children.

Go out and take a photo of this place as it is today from as close to the same viewpoint as possible.

Have the children examine the two photos. Ask them what they show. If they are unable to tell you that one is a photo of that place, then tell them. Ask them to tell you what is "**the same**," and what is "**different**" in the two photos. (See the exercise on the next sheet). Place their answers in a form such as on experience paper where they can be easily viewed.

Once the children have listed the similarities and differences, introduce them to the idea of "**change**." Change is when a person or an object becomes different in some way. Have them suggest things that they know of that have changed. (Attempt to extend this beyond the idea of place.) Note that many things change. Have students suggest why they think things change over time.

Read aloud to the students an excerpt from a book which talks about a family in the past e.g. The Little House in the Prairie books by Laura Ingalls Wilder or a similar one. **Ask the children to fill in the chart on the next page with ways in which the family in the story is "the same" and ways in which it is "different" from families today. Conclude by asking the children if they found that families have changed and how.**



Now and Then! Work Sheet

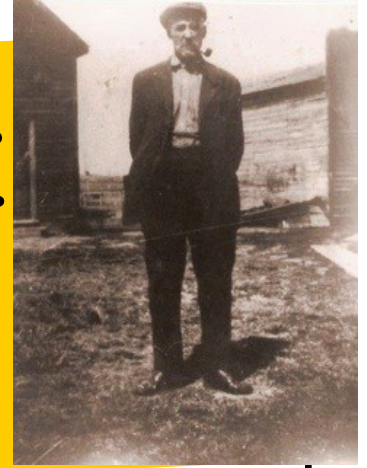
In the chart below, list the ways in which the family in the story that has just been read to you is the same and how it is different from your family or any family today.

The Same	Different

From what you see in your chart, how have families changed and how have they stayed the same?



What Is Family History?



This train wheel marks an event in the history of the Umbach Family. Sheriff Isaac Umbach of Stony Plain (above right) chained the train to the tracks when the railway did not pay taxes owed to the town.

Students have learned that "**history**" is the story of the past. There are special histories that tell the story of a single family. These histories are called "**family histories**." Sometimes, these "family histories" form a whole book while at other times they form a part of a history of the place in which you live.

Read a short family history to the students. (one of a family they know or know of works best.) Ask students to tell what they think should be included in a "family history." Ask them if any know of a history that has been written about their family.

We can show the events in a history by arranging them in order from oldest to newest in a special chart called a "**time line**." Show the students a list of events with the years and have them arrange them on a blank time line form. (This can be done in a group with a large visible time line form on a wall and easily attachable and removal events available for students to attach to it.)

Ask the children what the important events in the life of their family have been and when they happened. Then, have them make a time line for their own life using the form on the next page. This will show a part of their "family history" because the story of each member of a family is a part of the "family history." (You might wish to insert the years in the diagram on the next page to fit your children prior to handing it out.)



Below is a blank "time line." Make a list of the important events of your life so far and also list the year in which they happened. If you are not sure, you may ask your parents. The numbers across the time line are years. Place the events that you have selected under the correct year. Place your name in the blank space after "A Time Line of...."

A Time Line of _____

Year

Event



Below is a blank "time line." Make a list of the important events of your life so far and also list the year in which they happened. If you are not sure, you may ask your parents. The numbers across the time line are years. Place the events that you have selected under the correct year. Place your name in the blank space after "A Time Line of...."

A Time Line of _____

Year				
Event				



Your Family History!



AGS Genealogy for Youth Project

Begin unpacking your family history! There are many things which we may already know about our family in the past, but there also many things which we might also still like to know.

Discuss with the children what those things might be.

Indicate that many of the things that they have listed are exactly the information that family historians and genealogists try to find. They begin doing this by making a "**plan**" which shows what they already know as well as what they would like to know. The ideas that the family historians and genealogists list in these plans are often "what they are seeking," "where they will look for it," and "what they hope it will tell them." The answers to each of these questions may help them find the exact information that they want and need.

Have the children list what they know and what they would like to know in the chart on the next page.



Your Family History! A Review



AGS Genealogy for Youth Project

What I learned about my family in this unit:



Your Family History! Work Sheet

AGS Genealogy for Youth Project

A Plan for the History of the
_____ Family.

What I Know	What I'd Like to Know



Resources

Required Materials

All Kinds of Families by Norma Simon and illustrated by Joe Lasker.
Chicago: Albert Whitman & Company, 1976. ISBN 13: 978-0-8075-0282-2

My Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandfather ...Was a Warrior! by
Riccardo Francaviglia and Margherita Sgarlata. Montreal: Lobster Press,
2002. ISBN: 1-894222-81-4

Resources and Extension Materials

Here are some resources which you can use as reference material* or to
extend or enrich the concepts covered in this unit for your students.

The Family Book by Todd Parr. New York: Little Brown and Company,
2003. ISBN: 978-0-316-73896-5

The Great Big Book of Families by Mary Hoffman and Ros Asquith.
London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2010. ISBN: 978-1-84507-999-4

Creating Junior Genealogists Tips and Activities for Family History Fun*
by Karen Frisch. New York: Turner Publishing Company, 2003. ISBN: 1-59331-029-3

Climbing Your Family Tree Online and Off-Line Genealogy for Kids*
by Ira Wolfman. New York: Workman Publishing, 2002. ISBN: 0-7611-2539-6 (Activities span a range of ages and abilities, so select carefully
with your students in mind.)



Credits

All photographs not specifically listed below are from the personal photograph collection of John H. Althouse. (2015).

Cover and p. 22, “unidentified children in winter clothing” photograph courtesy of Pat Greber, Grande Prairie and District Branch.

p.1 and 2: “Hazel Rutherford” photograph courtesy of the Mrs. Hazel McCuaig Collection through the Rutherford House Provincial Historic Site.

p. 1, 9 and 10, and rear cover: “The Rutherford family” photograph B. 10.159 from the collection of the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

p. 5 and 6: “H. Ball family” photograph courtesy of the Strathcona County Museum and Archives.

p. 13 and 14: “Leo and Pauline Hennig wedding” photograph courtesy of the Stony Plain Multicultural Heritage Centre.

p. 17 and 18: “Carolene Marie Thompson and Bisque doll” two photographs courtesy of Barbara Purin, United Empire Loyalist, Edmonton, Alberta.

p. 22: “Girl with cake” courtesy of Norma Wolowyk, Edmonton Branch member.

p. 25: “Sheriff Israel Umbach” photograph courtesy of the Stony Plain Multicultural Heritage Centre.

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My Family Now and in the Past!



**“The family is one of
nature’s masterpieces.”**

- George Santayana