

Writing Your Personal Family History

By Rachel Woods, About LDS Guide - <http://lds.about.com> - submitted by Lorraine Behunin

Writing a personal family history can be daunting, but it doesn't have to be if you take it a step at a time. This 12 chapter course comes with several questions for each category.

Directions for using this outline and links to signing up for the "Writing Your Personal Family History Email Course" (a weekly email for 12 weeks, one for each chapter) can be found here:

<http://lds.about.com/od/ldsfamilyhistory/a/personalhistory.htm>

Chapter One: Ancestry

1. Who was the first of your ancestors to come to America? (Or the country of your residence)
2. Write about your father's heritage.
3. Write about your mother's heritage.
4. Write about your pioneer heritage. (If you don't have any, how do you feel about being the "pioneer" in your family)
5. Write about the oldest relative you remember.

Chapter Two: Home and Childhood

1. Write about your father. (Birth, upbringing, talents, education, occupation, appearance, church and community service)
2. Write about your mother. (Birth, upbringing, talents, education, appearance, daily schedule, occupation, church and community service)
3. Draw a detailed floor plan of your home.
4. Write about your brothers and sisters.
5. Write what you know about your birth and first year.
6. Write about your elementary school. (Teachers, first day of school, bomb drills, favorite activity at recess, etc.)
7. Who was your best friend in elementary school?
8. Did you have a pet?
9. How did you do laundry? (By hand, wringer washer, cloths line, automatic?)
10. What radio programs, TV shows, cartoons, and movies do you remember?
11. Tell about family vacations and visits to grandma.
12. What ward did you live in? Who was your Bishop? Tell about Primary activities. (If you weren't a member at the time write about spiritual aspects or traditions from your childhood and family life.)
13. Do you have a favorite Primary or Sunday School teacher or favorite lesson?
14. Write about your baptism.

Chapter Three: Teen Years

1. Write about your Junior High/Middle School. Who was your favorite teacher and class?
2. Write about your best friend.
3. Who/what was popular in fashion, music, TV, Movie star?
4. What High school did you attend? (Size of school, favorite teacher, class, activities, student govt.)
5. Did you participate in YW/YM (MIA) Girls camp, scout camp?
6. Tell about stake conference.
7. Have you ever met a general authority or a prophet?
8. Did you participate in a dance festival?
9. Did you attend General Conference?
10. Did you attend seminary?
11. Write about your first boy/girl friend, first kiss.
12. Did you work during your teen years?

13. Were you in school plays or musicals?
14. Did you take private lessons for music, singing, sports?
15. Tell about your senior prom.
16. How was your testimony then?
17. Write about your most traumatic experience.

Chapter Four: Continuing Education

1. Did you go to college or a trade school?
2. Were you active in church during your college years?
3. Did you have roommates? What were they like? Do you still keep in contact?
4. Write about your first real job in your career field?
5. Did you continue education to a masters or PhD?
6. Do you have any published works?

Chapter Five: Love and Marriage

1. Tell about meeting your future mate. Describe him/her.
2. What kind of dates did you have?
3. Was it love at first sight?
4. Write about your engagement. (Proposal, parties, showers, wedding plans)
5. Write about your wedding day, marriage/sealing and reception.
6. Write about your honeymoon.
7. Draw a floor plan of your first apartment.
8. Was you're a match made in heaven or did you work toward blissful peace?
9. Were there subsequent marriages?
10. What was your spouse's most important quality then and now? Is it different?
11. Were there years of sacrifice? How did you get through them?
12. Did you travel or take vacations?
13. Draw a floor plan of subsequent homes.

Chapter Six: Children (Answer these 5 questions for each child.)

1. Tell about your (or your wife's) pregnancy. (Sickness, spiritual experiences, food cravings, etc.)
2. How was the delivery? Quick or bad, was your husband (or you) there? Did you/your wife breast feed or use a bottle?
3. Write about your baby's blessing, first word, step, tooth.
4. Experiences with: primary, school, baptism, blessings, priesthood, mission, college, marriage, work.
5. Write of other important experiences about your child.
6. What are they doing now, their special talents, skills.

Chapter Seven: Employment and Leisure

1. Tell about your day job. Have you moved up the ranks? Do you still have passion for your work?
2. What do you enjoy the most? The least?
3. Do you have plans for retirement? Or are retired?
4. What are your favorite hobbies and pastimes?
5. What is your favorite book and why?
6. What is your favorite movie and why?
7. Have you traveled abroad?
8. If you had a free day to spend on yourself what would you do?

Chapter Eight: Church Service

1. What was your first calling?
2. Subsequent callings?
3. Did you serve a mission?
 1. Who did you teach?
 2. Who did you serve with?
 3. Who was your mission president and his wife?
 4. What were your most spiritual experiences?
 5. What was your hardest trial?
 6. Write about the people, culture and customs of the area you served in.
 7. Write your testimony about missionary work.
4. How was your testimony at 25?
5. Have you witnessed miracles?
6. When did you receive your testimony of the Church?
7. When did you first read the Book of Mormon?
8. Have you seen prophecy fulfilled?
9. Write down the spiritual experiences you want your family to know about.

Chapter Nine: Community Service

1. Did you participate in PTA, VPO, Booster club or other community service?
2. Have you ever run for a government office?
3. Did you serve in the military, air force, etc.?
4. What is your view on politics including Iraq, cold war, Viet Nam, WWII?

Chapter Ten: Grandchildren

1. Write about your first grandchild. Did you attend the birth?
2. Tell about him/her: healthy, happy, appearance, talents. (Write about each grandchild.)
3. What do you do to be a good grandmother/grandfather?
4. How is it different than being a mom/dad?

Chapter Eleven: Memories of Significant Events (Write about any of the following.)

1. The depression, WWII, Korea, Viet Nam.
2. The release of POW's, Pueblo incident, Cuban Missile Crisis.
3. The assassination of JFK, RFK, and Martin Luther King.
4. Do you remember the National Guard being called in to integrate schools in the south?
5. Do you remember the first man in space, first man on the moon, Apollo 13, Challenger?
6. The Berlin Wall coming down, Hostages in Iran.
7. Visits to significant historical church sights.
8. Visits to other significant history sights.
9. Fairs, theaters, amusement parks, Disneyland, Disneyworld, or other significant locations.
10. What did you do about food storage and emergency preparedness?
11. 9/11.
12. The loss of your parents and/or other relatives.

Chapter Twelve: Testimony

1. Summarize your patriarchal blessing.
2. Write about other blessings you have received, given, or witnessed.
3. Write your testimony.
4. What do you want your family to know and remember about you?
5. When you meet the Savior on the other side, what do you hope He will say?