

KINGS LANDING

A LESSON ON BECOMING
THE FAMILY HISTORIAN



LATE ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL

OBJECTIVES

- Provide students with a working knowledge of the vocabulary related to genealogical research
- Learn to fill out forms and charts used when doing family history research
- Learn about conducting a basic oral interview

GRADE LEVEL(S)

- This lesson is intended for students from Grade 4 to 9, but students of all ages may enjoy the activity.
- Please fully read this lesson and adapt it to the student's level.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Blank ancestral forms (included)
- Blank family group sheets (included)
- Blank paper for note taking
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Recording device (optional)

LESSON

As “the family historian”, you’ll want to research your family’s genealogy. Genealogy is the history of a family over several generations. A generation is all the people that are at the same stage of descent from a common ancestor.

Genealogy is a big subject and can take a long time to learn. But every genealogist starts in roughly the same place; with themselves. This lesson will teach you how to use the first two forms that every genealogist uses: The Ancestral Chart and The Family Group Sheet.

These forms help you organize the information that you will collect about your family. It is important to learn how to fill them out so that people who read your work will understand it easily. We’ve provided you with forms, but there are many other forms available online. If you are using a computer program to do your research, the program will generate these forms for you.

The chart most people begin with is an ancestral chart. This chart begins with you and branches back in time, displaying the line of your direct ancestors. Most charts cover four generations and have a space for names and important dates: birth, marriage and death. With these dates, you also want to record where they took place. As your family tree grows, you will need several ancestral charts. You can print big ones with more than four generations that hang on a wall, but it is always good to have some on regular paper so that you can store them in a binder.

A blank ancestral chart looks like this:

Ancestral Chart Chart No. ____

The chart is a tree structure starting from a single box on the left (No. 1) and branching out to 15 boxes on the right. Each box is numbered and contains a vertical list of labels: 'Born: Place:', 'Married: Place:', and 'Died: Place:'. The boxes are arranged in four columns: Column 1 (leftmost) has box 1; Column 2 has boxes 2 and 3; Column 3 has boxes 4, 5, and 6; Column 4 (rightmost) has boxes 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. Lines connect the boxes to show their parent-child relationships.

No. 1 on this chart is the same as No. ____ on Ancestral Chart No. ____

It has spots for the names and important dates for your ancestors, a spot to number your chart the upper right-hand corner and a spot to keep track of numbers on the left at the bottom.

The first ancestral chart that you create will begin with you, you are the first generation of your chart. Numbers 2 and 3 are the second generation and so on. You will want to print your name (first, middle and last) in spot 1 on the left.

Under your name, you will write your birthday and where you were born. If you are married, record the information here; when and where. If this is an ancestral chart for another person and they have died, then you would record when and where under the marriage information.

Print your information neatly so that when you share your information with others, they will be able to read it. There are no rules with how to write your dates but when you do, make sure you do it the same way every time. Many historians like to use day/month/year and they spell out the month. For example, 16 August 1900. If you do not spell out the month, it can be confusing for other people when they read your chart.

We are going to use a member of the Grant family from Kings Landing as an example.

Here is what our first spot on your ancestral chart looks like:

1. Carol Beatrice Grant
Born: 16 August 1900 Place: Southampton, NB
Married: 15 August 1923 Place: Southampton, NB
Died: 21 October 1990 Place:

If you do not know something, leave it blank. We do not know where Carol Grant was living when she died yet, so we will leave that spot blank until we find out.

The number two spot on your ancestral chart is where you record your father's name.

Male lines use the upper tracks of the chart or the even numbers. For your chart, ask your father his name, including middle and for the information under his name. If your father is not able to help you fill out the information, ask someone that you think will know it.

Here is what we were able to find out about Carol Grant's dad:

2. John Franklin Grant
Born: 2 June 1867 Place: Southampton, NB
Married: 12 September 1894 Place: Southampton, NB
Died: 23 May 1959 Place: Southampton, NB

The information for your mother is recorded in spot 3. The female line follows the bottom track or the odd numbers. If your mother is not able to help you fill out the information, ask someone you think will know.

The information for the first 90 years of your family tree can be tricky to fill out because a lot of the records that family historians normally use are protected by privacy laws. Family historians use a lot of private government records like birth and marriage certificates. These are not made public until sometimes 90 years after they happen. These first few branches of your ancestral chart will be filled out by talking to the people around you who know. This could be a parent, aunt, uncle or grandparent. We call this type of research, oral interviewing.

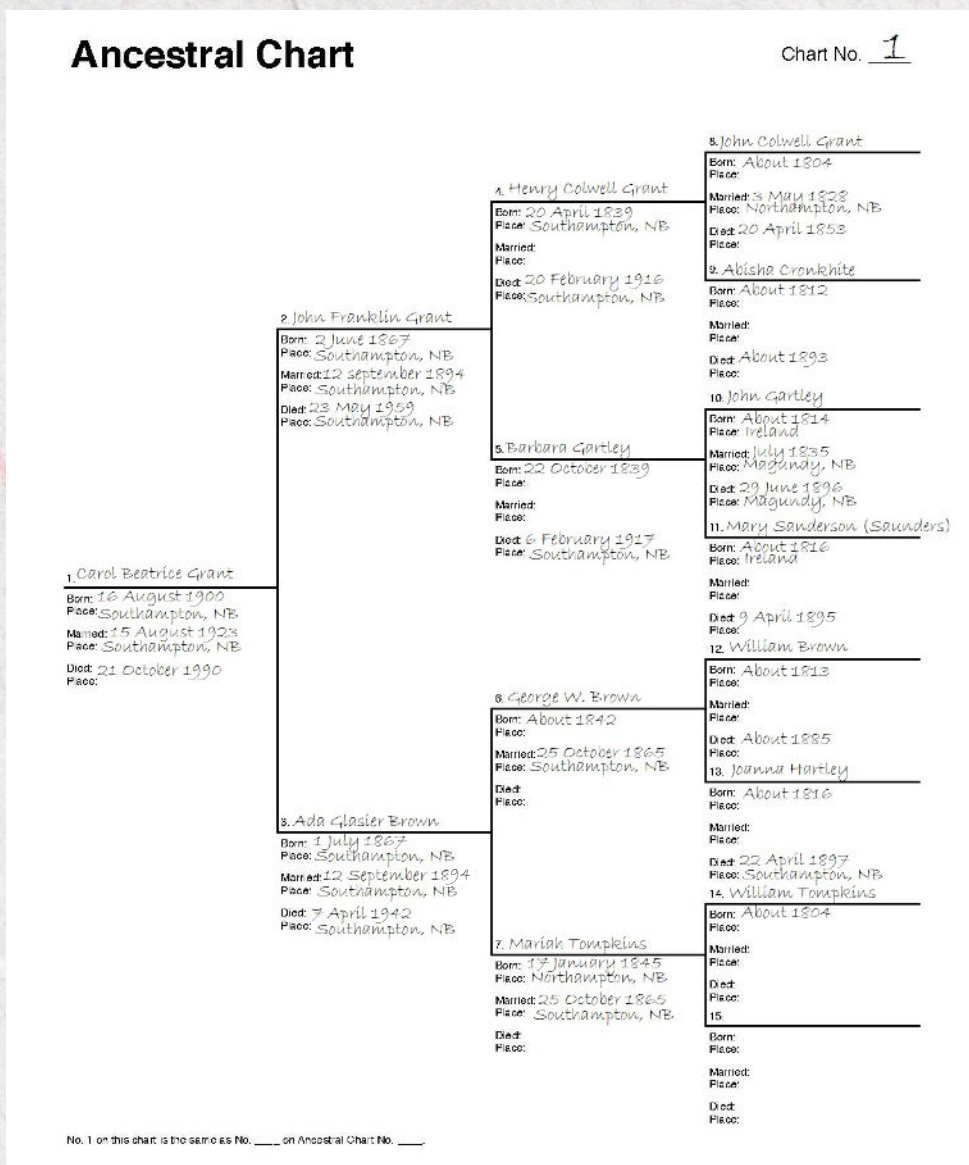
As a family historian, you will be getting a lot of practice doing oral interviews. Sometimes it helps to record your oral interviews so that you can go back to listen to them. If you do want to record, always ask permission first and if the person agrees to be recorded, but does not want you to share the

recording, you must respect their wishes. Here is what we found out about Carol Grant's mom:

<p>3. Ada Glasier Brown</p> <p>Born: 1 July 1867 Place: Southampton, NB</p> <p>Married: 12 September 1894 Place: Southampton, NB</p> <p>Died: 7 April 1942 Place: Southampton, NB</p>

In the ancestral chart, we use the "maiden" name of the women. This is the last name that they were born with and is usually the same last name as her father. Many women take their husband's name after she is married, especially in the past.

This can make our mothers and grandmother difficult to research. After you have traced your family tree back four generations, you might have a chart that looks similar to this one:



Note the empty spots on the chart. This is normal when you first fill one out. It is also normal to not have all your locations and details for your dates.

If you have a year but not a day or month, put "About" in front of the year until you know for sure. There will be mistakes and things that you will need to verify. For instance, when we filled out this chart, we were not sure if #11 should be Mary Sanderson or Mary Saunders. We made a note of both names and will look for answers as we go through the records.

In the upper right-hand corner, we numbered this chart "1". This will help keep us organized as we create more ancestral charts. Each person will become ancestor #1 on a new chart, with a reference to their number on the original chart (lower left-hand corner) so you can easily follow the family through the generations. Each new chart you create will also have its own individual number (chart #2, chart #3, etc.).

For example, your father's father's father will be ancestor #8 on the original chart. As you follow his family line, you will need to create a new chart (chart #2), listing him in the #1 position. On each new chart, you should include a note referring back to the original chart (Person #1 on this chart is the same as Person #___ on Chart #___).

Another family history form is the family group sheet. This is where you can keep track of families; father, mother and their children as well as their birth, death and marriage information.

There are a lot of different family group sheets available on the internet. Some will include spaces to record the children's spouses, as well as a section for comments and source citations.

Tracking your sources is one of the most important parts of tracing your family tree.

For each person that gives you information about an ancestor, you will want to make a note of the source of that information. For instance, pretend we interviewed Carol Grant about her family tree in 1989 and she told me that her mother was born on 1 July 1867. I would write down the birthdate and make a source note, "Carol Grant, interview by

[insert interviewer's name here], 4 November 1989." That way, if someone looks at the date and says it is wrong, then we can tell them where we learn the date and when. If it is wrong, we can do some additional research to find the correct date. Family historians are used to having to make changes to their family trees and track their sources for this reason.

Family Group sheets are another important genealogy tool used by family historians. These forms give you a place to record information on the children of your ancestors, along with their spouses. This is important when tracing your family tree and may help you find other sources of information. For example, when you have difficulty finding a birth record for your ancestor, you may be able to learn the names of the parents through the birth record of a sibling. They are usually more than one page long because there is a lot of information to collect and families sometimes have many children.

Family group sheets and ancestral charts work together. For each marriage in your family tree, you will want to fill out a family group sheet. The ancestral chart provides an easy at-a-glance look at your family tree and the family group sheet provides additional details that will not fit on the ancestral chart.

Now that your oral history information is collected, it is time to start comparing your information to primary source records. Primary sources are immediate, first-hand accounts of a topic, from people who had a direct connection with it. They include birth, death and marriage records as well as newspapers, diaries and letters. We will start looking at some primary sources in the next lesson. In the meantime, have fun filling out your family group sheets and ancestral charts!

ACTIVITY

- Interview your parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents and try to collect as much information in your family group sheets as you can.
- After you have filled out your family group sheets, use the information to create ancestral charts.

ANCESTRAL CHART

CHART NO. _____

1st Generation 2nd Generation 3rd Generation 4th Generation

1.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

2.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

3.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

4.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

5.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

6.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

7.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

8.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

9.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

10.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

11.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

12.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

13.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

14.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

15.

Born:
Place:

Married:
Place:

Died:
Place:

FAMILY GROUP SHEETS

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Name and/or Date	Place
Husband:	
Born:	
Married:	
Died:	
Buried:	
Other marriage:	
Husband's Father:	Husband's Mother:
Wife:	
Born:	
Married:	
Died:	
Buried:	
Other marriage:	
Wife's Father:	Wife's mother:
<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
1st Child:	
Born:	
Died:	
Buried:	
Spouse:	Date of marriage:
<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
2nd Child:	
Born:	
Died:	
Buried:	
Spouse:	Date of marriage:
<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
3rd Child:	
Born:	
Died:	
Buried:	
Spouse:	Date of marriage:

Sources

Prepared by/Date:

FAMILY GROUP SHEETS

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Name and/or Date	Place
4th Child:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Born: _____	_____
Died: _____	_____
Buried: _____	_____
Spouse: _____	Date of marriage: _____
5th Child:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Born: _____	_____
Died: _____	_____
Buried: _____	_____
Spouse _____	Date of marriage: _____
6th Child:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Born: _____	_____
Died: _____	_____
Buried: _____	Date of marriage: _____
Spouse: _____	_____
7th Child:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Born: _____	_____
Died: _____	_____
Buried: _____	Date of marriage: _____
Spouse: _____	_____
8th Child:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Born: _____	_____
Died: _____	_____
Buried: _____	Date of marriage: _____
Spouse: _____	_____

Sources

Prepared by/Date: _____
