

Making Family History Come Alive

1. Add scrapbooking skills to your family history research to create unique keepsakes to use for special occasions, such as reunion invitations, birthdays, etc.
 - a. Take a scrapbooking class to create unique remembrance books using your pictures and documents from home.
 - b. Use scrapbooking computer software to create remembrance books
 - c. Use Word or Publisher to create scrapbook pages
 - d. Create scrapbooks for special occasions or to maintain a pictorial history
2. Combine audio and video to make memories. Create your own personalized family history video by combining family stories with family pictures or videos. Share this with your family members in order to preserve and celebrate your family heritage.
 - a. Use PowerPoint to create a family history presentation
 - b. Record (either audio or video) your relatives during family events or reunions. Get them telling stories and keep the record.
3. Create a family cookbook - Invite family members to submit their favorite recipes -- from their own family or one passed down from a distant ancestor. Ask them to include details on, memories of and a photo (when available) of the family member best known for the dish. The collected recipes can then be turned into a wonderful family cookbook.
 - a. Prepare family favorites on special occasions and be sure to tell the stories associated with that family dish.
4. Story time - A rare opportunity to hear interesting and funny stories about your family, a storytelling hour can really encourage family memories. If everyone agrees, have someone audiotape or videotape this session. Use computer skills to show pictures from that time period.
5. Movie time – When your family sits down to watch a movie that is based on an earlier time period, see if your ancestors lived in that time period near that place. Talk a bit about your ancestors before the movie starts so family members can associate their ancestors with the events, costumes, speech patterns, etc. shown in the movie.
6. Tour the Past - If your family is traveling or may be holding a family reunion near where your ancestors lived, schedule a trip to where they lived or visit the local cemeteries to see where they may be buried. It would be a great time to share stories about these ancestors in the place where they lived.
7. Add background history to your family history. There are so many websites offering information, pictures, fashion, popular music, etc. that can be added to “flesh out” your family’s information. When conducting your family research, be sure to include the following when searching for dates and places, you may be surprised at what you find:

- a. Obituaries
 - b. Wills
 - c. Bible records
 - d. Land records
 - e. Diaries
 - f. Letters
8. Invite an Ancestor to Dinner – There is a company that offers a unique product for bringing family history to life. They will take a picture of your ancestor and create a life-size picture that you can mount to use as a photo opportunity. The website is located at <http://www.familygraphics.com/inviteanancestor.html>
9. Play the “Generations” Game – this is a game that uses deductive reasoning to help search for a make-believe family, but you could use some of the reasoning to help search for your own. The game involves careers and lifestyles in addition to the standard names, dates, and places. The website is <http://www.genealogy4fun.com/index.html>.
10. Save your old movies on DVD – check with your local high school to see if they have a BPA (Business Professionals of America) chapter and see if they have the equipment to transfer your old movies onto DVDs. They may be able to do this for a nominal fee as a fundraiser for their association.
11. Family Events – set out different place mats with a pen, pencil, or colored pencils at the family tables. Each place mat would have a different question at the top and the rest would be blank for the family member to answer the question. Some questions could include the following, (the list is really endless):
- a. Describe your favorite holiday memories.
 - b. When did you meet your spouse?
 - c. Who was your favorite teacher and why?
 - d. Describe a childhood birthday.
 - e. Did you have a favorite TV or radio program as a child? What did you like about it?
 - f. If you could be an animal, which one would you choose and why?
 - g. What are your food preferences and how did they come about?
 - h. What is your personal secret of happiness?
 - i. Did you have a bicycle and what was it like?
 - j. What are your favorite memories of your grandparents?