

WRITING PERSONAL HISTORIES

Writing a life story may require time and effort, but it offers many satisfactions. Writing a life story provides a person with the opportunity to review his or her own life, the pleasant memories, the difficult experiences, and the goals he or she formulated. In addition, the life story is a means of preserving an individual's memory for future generations to appreciate.

If you illustrate your life story with pictures, it takes on a new meaning. You see yourself as you progress through each phase of growing. You visualize yourself as a continually growing, progressing human being. If you provide visual records, your descendants will truly get to know you and they will appreciate this. You can provide a narrative about each picture that you show with the date, time or even what it represented.

HOW TO ORGANIZE THE MATERIAL

By categories
In chronological order

WHAT TO INCLUDE

Spiritual experiences
Important events and accomplishments
Family traditions
Feelings and opinions
Reactions and interpretations to life events

LEAVE A RECORD OF YOUR FAITH

Bear your testimony-- strengthen your family now and in the future with a record of your faith. Who knows, perhaps reading your life history in the future will change the course of someone's life.

Tell how faith works in your life
Tell what is important to you

IMPORTANT FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS AND TRADITIONS

Favorite songs, stories, poems, nursery rhymes
Humorous family anecdotes
Favorite recipes and menus
Family traditions
Holidays and vacations
Favorite or typical Family Home Evenings or reunions

SUGGESTIONS AND ITEMS TO CONSIDER WHEN WRITING YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY

1. The history of your family (Your ancestors)

Write histories of those you knew personally
Write a sketch of those you did not know
Tell about their living conditions, occupations, religious background or experiences.
Native country, major change in residence, where, when and why

2. Parents, brothers and sisters

When and where your parents were born
When and how they met
When and where they married
Brothers and sisters - names, birthdates, birthplaces
Your association with your brothers and sisters

3. Your birthplace

Time, place, county, state, country
Kind of house, weather, doctor, etc. and other incidents associated with your birth

4. Your early recollections

Visits from grandparents or other relatives
Unusual happenings
Visitors in your home
Accidents
Playmates
Family experiences including trips and vacations

5. Early church activities

Religious convictions taught in your home
Prayers answered
Attitude toward the Church, blessings received, priesthood ordinations or offices held
Faith promoting incidents
Recreational activities
Early attendance at Church functions

6. Baptism and confirmation into the Church

Where, when and by whom
Impressions

7. Home tasks, economic and religious conditions in the home

Responsibilities, allowances, comparative prices
First job, wages, experiences
Occupation of parents

8. Schools

Schools attended
Teachers, studies, activities, associates
Achievements, social, report cards, humorous situations
Who or what influenced you

9. Youthful associations and activities

Primary, scouts, Young Women and Young Men
Special activities, amusements, dancing, dramatics, sports and vacations

10. Mission, military service and job experience

Choices, decisions, summer employment
Influence of associates, brothers and sisters, parents, grandparents
Influence of teachers, leaders, Church authorities

11. Your courtship and marriage

To whom and where
How you became acquainted, special dates, first date and dating years
Engagement, parties, gifts
Wedding, reception, gifts, honeymoon, first home, income
Companion, date of birth, family, home, etc.

12. Your vocation

Training for your job, promotions
Companies you worked for
Salaries, associates, achievements
Your own business

13. Your children

Names, dates and places of birth
Characteristics, habits, clever or unusual sayings and doings
Growing up accomplishments, schooling, marriage, vocations, sicknesses
or accidents

14. Your avocations

Sports, home hobbies
Dramatic and musical activities
Reading habits, favorite songs, movies, books, writers, poems
Genealogy
Travel

15. Special celebrations or holidays you remember

Easter, Christmas, national and local holidays
Vacations, trips, how you traveled, with whom, special incidents

16. Moving to new homes or locations

Adjustments, ties, description of homes
Neighborhoods, new friends, new schools

17. Your plans and hopes for the future

18. Encouragement and counsel to your descendants

Philosophy, faith, convictions, love, concern
Big decisions in your life, influences, how they were made
Great learning experiences
Summation of your personal values and beliefs