

## Genealogy Tasks You Can Do in 15 Minutes or Less

### Getting Started

- Decide the day(s) to work on family history when you have a short amount of uninterrupted time
- Start slow. For the first few, choose an amount of time (10, 15, 20 minutes) that works for you
- You can always spend more time on a task but at least meet your decided minimum time
- Big task? Break it into smaller ones that fit your allotted time. You can always continue later
- Decide what task you want to do in your first session or map out several sessions ahead of time
- Some suggestions include:
  - Filling out a six generation chart with the information you currently have
  - Sort photos for digitization or filing
  - Start researching an ancestor
  - Looking for that one census you are missing from an ancestor
- Midwest Genealogy Center website has various forms for genealogy research for free and fillable <https://www.mymcpl.org/genealogy/research/family-history-forms>
- Hard to stop searching for your ancestors?
  - Set a timer
  - Have a family member or friend text or call you when time is up
  - Don't get off track
- This would be a great time to watch a video on a particular type of record or genealogy aspect you are interested in
- This could include
  - Getting started
  - Census records
  - DNA
  - Newspapers
  - Using vital records, and more
- MGC videos <https://www.mymcpl.org/genealogy/get-started>

### **Fact checking**

- If you come across a family tree with family members in it, check to see if they have sources
- Fact check vital information, residences, military history, children, etc.
- Focus on one family member and check those sources for accuracy
- This could be done in multiple sessions
- You may come across new information
- Another session - add the new sourced information to your tree

### **New Family**

- Speaking of adding to your family tree, what about new family members?
- Add the newest addition to the tree with birth information, then as they grow you can add life events in real time
- If someone gets married, add the spouse to the tree filling in life events

### **Hints (Ancestry, MyHeritage, etc.)**

- Check one or two of them to see if they relate to your ancestor – accept, reject, or ignore

### **Same Person Twice!!**

- Check for duplicate people in your tree – merge or delete them

### **Family Tree Cleaning**

- View your tree in list view and see where you need to research next or to clean up disconnected people or wrong person

### **Ancestors**

- Look for that missing U.S. census record or vital record
- Take it one record at a time
- Didn't find it. Make a note in research log to check later (More on this in a moment)

## **Biography**

- If you are considering writing a book or blog or paper on your family line, start writing it now, a few paragraphs at a time
- Just write – later you can spell check, grammar check, or edit

## **Research Log**

- Keep a research log either in a notebook or in the cloud to determine where to research next, where you have researched, etc.
- What ancestor do you need to work on?
- What additions to the research log are needed?
- What family members haven't you started on?
- What brick walls do you have? Where to look next to break down the wall?

## **Interview**

- Phone or visit a relative and conduct a brief interview learning about their or another ancestor's life and times
- Use a session to jot down open ended questions
- Be prepared to run over your allotted time, if necessary

## **AI for Genealogy**

- Help transcribe genealogy documents and records, even those with handwriting!
- Generating creative and coherent narratives based on the information provided
- Brick walls? Use AI to brainstorm ideas and suggest potential research
- Language translation
- Analyze complex family relationships, and more

## **Colorize black and white photos**

- With the right app or software this can be done in minutes while still keeping the original intact
- Some apps include Adobe Photoshop and Canva
- Full color, sepia, and more

- Not interested in colorization, try enhancements
- Fix focus, contrast, brightness, etc.
- Examples of Photo Editing Apps
- PhotoDirector, Promeo, YouCam Perfect, Pixlr, PicsArt
- AI apps including Vivid AI and Lensa
- You can also use these apps to create collages and for scrapbooking

### **Scan or upload photos**

- Ready to digitize those old photos?
- Start the process a few at a time
- Ask to scan photos other family members have
- Scan new photos or download from family social media pages

### **DNA**

- DNA (if you have taken a test)
  - Look at one of your DNA matches
  - What information can you learn from the match
  - Still working on it after time is up? Make a note to look at it later
- DNA (haven't taken one but purchased one)
  - Spit in the tube or swab the cheek!
  - Mail it off
- DNA (want to order one)
  - Place the order

### **DNA Ethnicity Estimates**

- If you have taken a test, look at the ethnicity estimates
- Does anything surprise you? If so, make a note to investigate. You might find new ancestors

### **DNA Matches**

- Look over your DNA matches
- Make a note of which ones you want to look at first
- Do they have trees?
- Are they on the paternal or maternal side?
- Can you see where your line and theirs meet?

### **DNA – Uploading to other sites**

- Upload your results to free sites such as GEDmatch and DNAGedcom
- DNA is only helpful when compared with as many results as possible. Widening the number of people to compare MAY increase the chance you'll find useful matches
- Free sites usually have additional tools to analyze your results