

A FAMILY HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to jog your mind to help you in making notes on your own life or to guide you in recording the life experiences of another member of your family. It will serve as a means of conveying a picture of what life was like and a sense of what was important.

Skip questions which do not apply or those that cannot be -- or are chosen not to be -- answered. After all, this questionnaire is a basic list of questions to be used as a guideline for recording personal history. Be sure to include birth dates and places, parents, surrounding circumstances and conditions, siblings, spouses, and children.

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Provided for the convenience of the members of the Foothills Genealogical Society

GRANDPARENTS

1. What were the names of your mother's parents?
2. When and where were they born? Where did they live?
3. What did this Grandfather do for a living? This Grandmother?
4. Do you have any personal memories of them? Describe.
5. What were the names of your father's parents?
6. When and where were they born? Where did they live?
7. What did this Grandfather do for a living? This Grandmother?
8. Do you have any personal memories of them? Describe.
9. Did you know any of your grandparents well?
10. What do you remember hearing about your great-grandparents?
11. Did you ever meet your great-grandparents?
12. Did your great-grandparents, grandparents, or parents come to the U.S. from a foreign country? What stories are told in your family about the crossing? Do you have any relatives in foreign countries?
13. What traditions are still practiced in your family?

CHILDHOOD

The Family House

14. What type of house did you live in as a child? Describe.
15. What other buildings were on the same property?
16. Did you have a yard? A fence? A swing? Flowers? Trees? A lawn?
17. If you moved during your childhood, tell where and when and what you can remember of each house and the family circumstances and reasons for the move.
18. As a child, did you have a room of your own, or did you share it with someone else? If so, whom?
19. Did you have a bed of your own?
20. In what room did you eat? Kitchen? Dining room?
21. Where did you eat when there was company?
22. Did your house have a parlor or living room? Was the family allowed to use it?
23. How was your home heated? Was it warm in winter? Explain.
24. Did you have a fireplace?
25. What kind of kitchen stove did your parents cook on? Your Grandparents?
26. Did you burn wood? Coal?
27. Did you have to buy the fuel or was this a chore, such as cutting wood, with which you had to help?
28. Did you always have indoor plumbing? If not, when did you get it?
29. Did you always have electricity? If not, when did you get it?

30. Did you ever use candles or kerosene lamps? Whose job was it to fill the lamps and replace the wicks?
31. Did your family have a cellar? Where did you store apples, potatoes? Canned foods?
32. Did your family always have a refrigerator? If not, what did you use instead? When did you get a refrigerator?
33. Where did your family get water? Was it plentiful? What methods were used to conserve water?

Family Relations, Responsibilities, Conditions

34. What was your position in the family? Oldest? Youngest? Were there any advantages? Disadvantages?
35. What were your duties as a small child? Describe your responsibilities as you grew older.
36. Who cooked the meals? Who did the ironing?
37. Did you buy or make your own clothing? Who was the family seamstress? Who repaired the family shoes?
38. When did you learn to cook? Who taught you?
39. Did you learn how to sew? Crochet? Knit? Embroider? Other crafts? Who taught you?
40. Did you ever learn the mechanics of a car? Who taught you?
41. Did your parents keep in touch with distant family?
42. Did you visit relatives often? Near? Far?
43. How did you get your mail? How often?
44. Did you have any childhood diseases?
45. What do you remember about family pets?
46. Were you especially close to anyone in the family?
47. How did the family spend its evenings?

Family Income and Livelihood

48. What did your father do for a living?
49. Did your mother ever work outside of the home?
50. Did you contribute to the family income? In what way?
51. Did you get any allowance as a child? Or did you have to earn your own spending money? If so, how?
52. When did you get your first job outside the family?
53. Did your family have a garden? For family use or profit?
54. Who did the planting? Digging? Cultivating? Weeding? Watering?
55. What kind of vegetables did you grow? Who harvested them?
56. Did your family have fruit trees?
57. Who did the canning and what vegetables and fruits were canned? How?
58. Did you raise hogs or chickens? Cows? Other animals?
59. What kind of meat did you eat? How often? Did you slaughter your own animals? How often?
60. Did you keep a cow for milk?
61. Did you make your own butter? Cheese?
62. Did any of your family sell eggs or butter?
63. If you lived on a farm, what crops were planted?
64. Who did the work? Family? Hired hands? On what occasions?

Days, Seasons, and Special Occasions

65. What did Saturday mean to you?
66. Was Saturday night bath night? Where? How?
67. What did Sunday mean to you?
68. Did you attend church on Sunday? Along? With your parents or family or friends? Attend church another day?
69. Where did you attend church or Sunday school?
70. Did you have special shopping habits at Christmas? Did you earn your own money to buy presents?
71. How did you spend Christmas? Describe. Did you decorate a Christmas tree? Did you exchange gifts?
72. What kind of gifts did you receive at Christmas?
73. Did your family observe Easter? In what way?
74. How did you observe the Fourth of July? Where?
75. How was your birthday celebrated? Did you have a birthday cake?
76. What kinds of gifts did you receive on your birthday?
77. Did your family entertain often? What were the occasions?
78. Did your family attend picnics? Family reunions? What do you remember about them?
79. How did you keep cool in summer?

80. Did you go barefoot in summer?
81. What did you wear in winter to keep warm?
82. Do you remember any blizzards or tornadoes or floods? Other disasters?
83. How did these events affect the neighbors, relatives, or town? How did they affect you?

Friends and Games

84. What did you do for recreation?
85. Did you or your brothers or sisters have any hobbies? If so, what?
86. Who were your playmates?
87. Who was your best friend?
88. What did you and your friends do when you got together?
89. Did you and your playmates play any organized games? Football? Baseball? Hockey? Kick the can? Describe.
90. Did you ever learn to swim? Where?
91. Did you ever attend a taffy pull? Pop corn?
92. Did you ever participate in 4-H or scouting organizations? Camp Fire Girls?

School

93. Where did you go to school?
94. Did you ever attend a one-room schoolhouse? Describe?
95. How did you get to school? If you walked, how far?
96. What do you remember about these walks? Did you walk alone or with friends? Did you encounter animals that you befriended or that frightened you?
97. Were these walks a hardship in winter? In summer or hot weather?
98. How large was your school in the elementary grades, first through fourth? Fifth through eighth? Eighth through twelfth?
99. What recreation was provided or allowed during periods of rest or recess?
100. Were you helped by older students, or did you help others with their lessons?
101. What kinds of grades did you get? What were your favorite subjects? Who were your favorite teachers?

Transportation and Surroundings

102. Describe the size of the town where you lived or shopped?
103. Where did your parents shop? How often?
104. How large or how small were the stores?
105. If you lived in a small town or on the farm, did you ever go to the city to shop? Describe?
106. What was the largest town you remember visiting when you were young? What did you do there?
107. Did you ever travel on a train while you were young? What was the occasion? Where did you go and with whom?
108. Were you ever away from home as a child?
109. Did you or your family own a horse? A buggy? Were you able or allowed to ride?
110. When did your family acquire its first car? What make? How much did it cost?
111. When did you learn to drive a car? Who taught you?
112. Where did your family go on vacation?

Outlook

113. Whom did you most admire when you were young? Within the family? In public life? Why?
114. Did you choose someone to pattern your life after? Who and why?
115. When you were small, what did you hope to do when you grew up?

HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREER

116. What education did you get past high school? Did you study in your adult years?
117. When did you finally settle into your career?
118. Did your family support, oppose, or encourage you?
119. While you were in college or in training, did you live away from home? For how long?
120. Who influenced you most and helped you to develop your skills?

- 121. How many different employers have you worked for? Promotions? Achievements? Awards or Honors?
- 122. Would you choose the same career if you had it to do over?

MARRIAGE AND LATER LIFE

- 123. When and where did you meet your husband or wife?
- 124. How and where did you get engaged? Married?
- 125. Where did you marry and who was present?
- 126. Did you go on a honeymoon?
- 127. Where was your first home?
- 128. What was your spouse's occupation?
- 129. How many moves did you make during your married life? Where and why?
- 130. Where and when were your children born?
- 131. What can you remember of their baby days and childhood?
- 132. Did you or your spouse go into military service?
- 133. If your husband went into the service, what did you do while he was away? Where did you live?
- 134. What memories do you have of war years?
- 135. How has your health been through the years?
- 136. Did you have animals or pets or recreational equipment?
- 137. Who were your closest friends through the years?
- 138. To what organizations have you belonged? Any honors or awards?
- 139. Have you been politically active during your lifetime?
- 140. Which political party or parties have you belonged to, and why?
- 141. Which presidents have you voted for, and why?

PHILOSOPHY AND OUTLOOK

- 142. Do you have a philosophy of life to share with your descendants?
- 143. Do you have a favorite philosopher, teacher, or writer who best expresses your philosophy?
- 144. Do you have religious leanings or strong religious beliefs? Explain.
- 145. What are your favorite biblical passages?
- 146. What do you have to say about all the changes that have taken place within your lifetime?
 - a. The proliferation of consumer goods? Freezers? Dishwashers? Dryers? Electric stoves? TV? The Computer and the Internet? Cell phones?
 - b. The changes in men's and women's fashions?
 - c. The revolution in transportation and communication?
 - d. The struggle for political and civil equalities of minorities and women?
 - e. The technological breakthroughs in industry, medicine, and space exploration?
- 147. In our opinion, which have been the greatest advances or inventions of all?
- 148. What things have given you the most pleasures or satisfaction?
 - a. Your family, home, career, possessions, hobbies?
 - b. Man's increased mobility and knowledge concerning himself, the world, and the universe?
 - c. The hope for improved race relations and for world peace?
- 149. Is there anything that has caused you perpetual concern? What events or trends have disturbed you most in your lifetime?
- 150. What things do you fear most in regard to future generations? What and where are the greatest inherent dangers?
- 151. How would you encourage or counsel future generations on the following:
 - a. Marriage and the home?
 - b. Obligations to country and society?
 - c. Traits such as honesty, humility, perseverance, diligence, thrift, loyalty, reverence, kindness, faith?
 - d. Care of body, mind, and health?
- 152. What has been your experience with regard to the following:
 - a. Answers to prayers?
 - b. Necessity and power of love?
 - c. Will power as opposed to being ruled by one's feelings?
 - d. ESP?
 - e. Inner peace and tranquility?
- 153. What do you consider to have been your most important achievements?
- 154. If there was one single thing you would like your children and grandchildren to know about you, what would it be?
- 155. Other questions?