Avoid future frustrations by using *The Research Process*

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Gather what is known

1. Official documents: Birth, Marriage, Divorce, Death, Wills, Probate, Deeds, Military service records, Pension documents, Censuses, School Records, Tax Records, Migration/naturalization records,
2. Family/Personal Records: Bibles, scrapbooks, photographs, letters, baby books, wedding books, journals, diaries,
3. Publications: Newspapers clippings (obituaries, birth/marriage announcements), family histories/genealogies, biographical records, county histories.
4. Organize and summarize your records. Prepare a brief written summary of what is known with citations to the source(s) of all information presented in the summary.
5. Begin a list of friends, family, associates, and neighbors (FAN) for FAN/cluster research.

Name	Date	Location	Relationship to [research subject]

Collect copies of all sources/records found

Formulate a research question

1. Typical genealogical research questions address one of the following:
   a. Relationship (parents, spouse(s), children, siblings)
   b. Identity (distinguishing two persons with the same name and same age living nearby)
   c. Event
2. Focus on making the question specific by
   a. Identifying a unique individual
   b. Clearly stating what you want to learn about them
   c. Use details like location and date range to narrow the search.

Avoid wide-ranging research questions

Create a research plan

1. Begin with a *Timeline Analysis* – a chronological look at the events in the research subject's life.

Date	Event	Location	Source

2. Prepare *Locality Research Guides* for each location in which events occurred
   a. Content

_____ LOCALITY RESEARCH GUIDE

Locality History and Geography
- Jurisdictions
- Boundary changes
- Maps
- Gazetteers
- Migration trails & patterns
- Historical events
- Locality statutes, code, and law

Records

Record Type	Description	Repository	Hyperlink
Birth			
Marriage			
Death			
Census			
Probate/Wills			
Deed/Land			
Other Court			
Tax			
Directories			
Military			
Immigration			
Naturalization			
Church			
Cemeteries			
Newspapers			
Genealogies			

Other Resources & Repositories (include address, website URL, and contact info)
- Local cemeteries
- Local churches
- Local newspapers
- Courthouses/Government offices
- Libraries and Archives

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b. Where to find the information for your locality research guide
- FamilySearch Wiki: http://familysearch.org/en/wiki
- FamilySearch Catalog: http://familysearch.org/search/catalog
- Ancestry Card Catalog: https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/catalog
- Cyndi's List: https://www.cyndislist.com/categories/
- Linkpendium: https://linkpendium.com/
- Published locality guides
  1) National Genealogical Society Research in the States: https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/ris/
  2) State and Local Genealogical Societies: https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United_States_Societies
  3) Library of Congress U.S. State and Territory Guides: https://guides.loc.gov/local-history-genealogy-research-guides/state
  4) FamilyTreeMagazine: https://store.familytreemagazine.com/genealogy-research-state-guides/

3. Prepare a *Research Strategy*
   a. Determine the sequence in which you will search the available online records.
   b. Analyze and correlate findings as you progress and adapt/change the research strategy if indicated.
   c. Perform any on-site research (libraries, archives, etc.) needed.

4. Prepare a research log and determine how you will organize your findings.

Search the records
1. Locate the record
2. Prepare a detailed source citation for the record everything in the research log
3. Search and copy (download, print page/screen, snip-it, photograph) the actual record
4. Record the information found in the record in the research log

Use the results
1. Analyze, correlate and resolve conflicts
   a. Determine the reliability of the source and information
   b. Compare new information to previously gathered evidence
   c. Identify and resolve any conflicts (errors or discrepancies) between sources
2. Record your conclusions
   a. Prepare a written proof statement, proof summary, or proof argument (GPA) which addresses each of the following:
      - A statement defining the problem that needed to be resolved

- The located evidence that pertains to the problem
- Your conclusions
- Citations for all evidence presented

b. Add/edit information in your Family Tree and post ALL sources examined

3. Share your findings
   a. Post as a source or memory in FamilySearch Family Tree
   b. Publish a family history

References

1. Board of Certification of Genealogists. *Genealogy Standards*, 2nd edition revised. Nashville, Tenn.: Ancestry.com, an imprint of Turner Publishing Company, 2021.
2. Christine Rose, CG, CGL, FASG. *Genealogical Proof Standard – Building a Solid Case*. San Jose, Calif.: CR Publications, 2009.
3. *FamilySearch Research Wiki*. "Research Process." https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Research_Process : updated 12 November 2022.
4. Harold Henderson, CG. "Research Procedures" in *Professional Genealogy*. Elizabeth Shown Mills, editor. Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2018.