



1774 Hezekiah Alexander Homesite

Three centuries of historical artifacts · Living history interpretations and exhibits

CREATIVE WAYS FOR CHILDREN TO EXPLORE & PRESERVE THEIR HISTORY

Keeping a Journal/Diary

Wouldn't it be neat to read one of your grandparent's journals or even your great grandparent's? You may not be able to read theirs but you can keep your own journal for your grandchildren and great grandchildren to read. Write about your personal history such as what you think and feel. Also incorporate a few lines on what you saw that day, what you read about, or heard on the local news, etc. These things are all a part of history in the making and you can do your part by recording it.

If you don't have a diary or journal already, you can easily make your own. If you need help getting started, head to your local library or bookstore for books on keeping a journal. Try to write a little bit each day or every other day. It will be real neat for you to go back and read about your own history as well as amaze your descendants.

Playing Detective with Photographs

Pictures are worth a thousand words, so take some of your family's old pictures (ones before your time) and do some detective work. Ask the relatives who may know a little bit more about the pictures the basic five questions: who, what, when, where and why? For example, who is in the picture? What are the relations between the people in the picture? When was the picture taken? Where was the picture taken? Think of some more questions, you would like to know. Write all these answers down and see if that information links to any other information you have discovered about your family. Some pictures may open a door to a new mystery about your family that you can try to solve!

Writing and sharing your own story

In order to learn more about your family and be creative with the information you have gathered, you can write a story! One way to start off may be to focus on one particular relative that really interests you. Do a little research about him or her by interviewing them, reading their old diary, or asking other family members about them. You can also start off with a time period of your family's lives or a place your family lived. Take your information and define your focus of the story in order to help you select the important facts to add to your story (you don't want to put in *everything!*) The goals of your story should be to, first, tell the reader what is unique about your family and also, tell how your family shared experiences with other people of the same era.

Your family history may connect to other families and other historians. If people read your story, it can offer a lead to their own family history. Scholars could find tales about your family that can help bring historical study to life for others. So your story must be an accurate, well-documented story and easy for others to find it. To do so, make copies of your family story and send it to other family members. Donate your story to your local library or historical society. Use your computer skills to create your own family Internet site featuring your story or add it to the My History website at www.myhistory.org.

This project is a great way to learn more about your own family story and offer what interesting facts you learned to others. The long tedious process of creating a story will pay off with you gaining a precious knowledge about your own family history.

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