

Family History Project

A WebQuest for Mosad Shalom 6th Grade

Designed by

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Introduction

You are about to embark on a journey through time to discover your family's past and your roots. As you look to your living relatives to find out information, you will find that they will give you information you might want to explore further. Look at this process as if you were peeling an onion layer by layer. First- hand information is important, but there is also a huge amount of information that can be found on the web that will help you better understand who you are. Your Family History is our Jewish History and your Jewish History is our American History.

The Task

You will provide information on the following:

- The meaning and origin of your family name
- From where did your family originate
 - How long ago and why
 - If you know the exact city or town they came from, provide a little history or background on the region, country, or town.
 - What was your relatives' life like at that time. You can find this out by discussing this with your relatives or extrapolate from information you found on the internet or stories you've been told.
- Try to go back at least 3+ generations if you can (Great Grandparents)

- **REQUIRED ELEMENTS** – 50 points

- These two required elements are meant to give you a feeling for the history of your family and its ethnic origins.

- **FAMILY TREE (25 points)**

A main portion of your research will involve creating this family tree. Ideally, students should be able to create a family tree going back a total of 4+ generations (great, great grandparents). Others will find that going back is much simpler due to research completed by previous family members. Your family tree should at minimum include birth, death dates, and locations. If you are unable to complete a tree for reasons beyond your control, please see me to make alternative arrangements.

You can use the Family Tree template provided or you can create one of your own, or see the link in the Helpful Website section of this Webquest.

- **SURNAME AND GIVEN NAME ORIGINS CHART (25 points)**

- This chart will ask you to explore various origins and variations of names in your family. You should look not only at last names, but also first names and given Hebrew names.

Ancestry.com provides information on some names, as do other genealogy-based sites.

- **CHOICE ELEMENT** - 100 points

- In looking over the choice element, please realize that the products are not set in stone. I would encourage you to produce something that better fits the way you learn.

Please note that a poster will not be an acceptable product; however, a bulletin board or display of some sort would. I can provide some of the materials needed for completion of either a bulletin board or display if requested early enough. Should you like to create your own choice element, please discuss your ideas with me by March 15.

Here are some suggestions:

- **COLOR-CODED FAMILY TIMELINE**

- The creation of this detailed timeline representing important events in your family history will really help you to see what your family was doing at various times throughout history. Your timeline should include key events (immigration, military service, movement within the US, etc) as well as key events from United States history that were happening at the same time.

- **ANCESTOR ORAL INTERVIEW**

- Your goal in completing this interview is to go beyond the basics. You should concentrate on asking your ancestor about interesting stories from their childhood about the family. Ideas might include: a weird relative, a famous relative, a hard time in the family, a myth of the family, family traditions, items that have been passed from generation to generation (ex: furniture, books, dishes) etc. I will work with students on creating this digital interview using technology.

- **ANCESTRY GAME/GRAPHIC NOVEL**

- This game will encourage you to complete research about the people, places and event that were important to your ancestors. You can select a single ancestor or a branch of your family and develop a game that highlights his/her or their movement through history. I encourage you to be creative and include a lot of content in the

game.

- **COLOR-CODED ANCESTRY WORLD MAP COLLECTION**
 - This portion of your project involves making a color-coded map of the world showing the immigration patterns of your ancestors. Some of your maps will be more detailed than others because you may know the exact city from which your family came. Other portions of the map will only make reference to the country. Ports of embarkation mentioned on ship manifests should also be included on your map if you can find them.

- **“PUSH” FACTORS RESEARCH PAPER**
 - This research asks you to research factors that influenced people to leave from one country in your heritage. Ideally, you will have an immigration year from either US Census materials or immigration records that will provide you with a date and country. You simply need to research what was happening in this country and summarize your findings, stressing reasons that your family may have emigrated from the home country. (Bulletin Board,

- **FAMILY SCRAPBOOK**
 - This project will require you to scan old family photos and lay them out in an attractive design, incorporating primary source documents and captions. This can be done “old school” or digitally in a slide presentation.

- **LOCAL HISTORY SUMMARIES**
 - Every community that your ancestors lived in has a unique history. Look up these communities online and provide summaries of their histories from the time period in which your family lived in the area. You may want to include major industries or events that made these communities special. You could demonstrate your knowledge in a paper format, a bulletin board or other approved method.

- **MILITARY SERVICE RESEARCH**
 - Many students have ancestors who have fought in wars.

Research not only the ancestors military records, but delve into the battles and engagements their division, regiment, battalion or corps saw action. You might demonstrate your knowledge through the creation of a detailed timeline, research paper or other medium.

The Process

To accomplish this task you will have to

- Identify who your relatives are in each generation going back at least three generations or more.
- Design a set of interview questions and interview as many of your relatives as you can.
- Fulfill all the criteria of the “Required Elements”
- Fulfill all the criteria of at least one of the “Choice Elements”

Evaluation

Student performance will be evaluated by how well you have met the goals of the tasks as listed above.

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Included all three required elements for project	Included only 1 element of project	Included at least two of the project elements	Included all three elements of the project	Included all three elements of the project at level above expectations	
Student demonstrates Research Skills	Student demonstrates research skills at an entry level. Not a lot of information	Student demonstrates research skills that indicate learning and interest in subject	Student is clearly able to research subject at hand and is able to use a variety of tools for completing project	Student completes project above and beyond expectations	

Presentati on	Student presents project but is not fully engaged in the process and does minimum amount of work.	Student presents project adequately and meets minimum standards using presentation tools.	Student presents project with full mastery of the subject and the presentation tools at the student's disposal are used effectively	Student goes above and beyond presenting information in an interesting and competent manner demonstrating mastery of information tools at student's disposal	
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Conclusion

After completing this project you will have learned where you came from and the struggles, adventures, or events that led to your creation. You will understand how those who came before you have contributed to your life as an American and as a Jew.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Use these sites as a start, but by no means is this a complete list. Put on your detective hats and delve into the world of genealogy.

Ancestry.com – This will be the primary source that many of you will use for completing portions of this project. There is a cost involved!!!!

<http://www.ancestry.com/>

U.S. Census Bureau Genealogy – This site will allow you to search portions of the census from past years.

<https://www.census.gov/topics/population/genealogy.html>

United States Surname and other

Countries Distribution – This unique site enables visual learners to see how your family name has migrated throughout the United States according to census data as well as various other countries.

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Surname_Distribution_Maps

Family Tree Templates -

<https://familyhistorydaily.com/free-genealogy-resources/free-family-tree-templates/>

National Archives

<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/start-research>

GIVEN NAME ORIGINS

<https://www.behindthename.com/>

<https://www.familyeducation.com/baby-names/browse-origin/first-name>

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