

Writing Fascinating Family History One Story at a Time

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Writing a family or personal history does not have to be an overwhelming, all or nothing task. Join mother/daughter team, Sue and Crista Cowan, for hints and help on bringing life to your family stories. You will learn several writing techniques that you can apply to writing your own stories, the stories of those you knew and loved, and those of ancestors long deceased.

In this session we will walk through several of these writing tips. We will provide examples and you will be able to put some of them into practice right in class. So, come prepared with a notebook or paper and pen, or just use the blank space on this page.

1. Start where you are.
2. Find your best memory.
3. Map your life.
4. Write vignettes.
5. Do a daily quick write.
6. What are your “Milestones and Miracles?”
7. Make lots of lists.
8. Write right not rote.
9. Don’t stop for the details.
10. Take pictures of the places, objects, people.

11. Write about the emotions connected.
12. Don't speak for them but give context for their lives.
13. Walk in their footsteps.
14. Validate the truth of family stories.
15. Sometimes you have to stick it in the vault.
16. Don't let someone edit/proof your writing that has any investment in the story unless you want them to impose their perspective.
17. What if you don't remember? It's in there. Ignite the spark. Don't use memory as an excuse to stop.
18. Your story is tied to their story. Start and it will all tie together.
19. Use prompts like FamilySearch 52 Questions
20. Don't wait until it's "all done" to share it.

Want more from Crista? Find past episodes of her weekly internet show, The Barefoot Genealogist, on the Ancestry YouTube channel at <http://ancstry.me/TBGVids>.

Click SUBSCRIBE on that channel to receive notification each time a new video is uploaded.