

Family Research and Historical Fiction Writing Project

Advanced Research Into
Our Family's Written Archives
With the Help
of
Leslie Tryon

Ms. Lyon's Fourth Grade Class
Tularcitos School
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Step One

Find an old letter, journal, book, or other piece of writing that was written by someone in your family. You can go way back in history if you want. Make a photocopy of that letter, as it is a "primary source," and keep the copy in this folder with your research.

The writer's name_____

Your relationship to the writer

Date on the writing_____

Main idea of the writing_____

Turn the page to see my primary source.

Step Two

Interview people in your family that know something about the writer of your primary source. Ask them about the writer, the time in history, and the rest of the family at that time. Take notes, tape record, or videotape the interviews.

I interviewed _____

Turn the page to see my interview notes.

Step Three

Look for old family photographs of your writer, his or her time in history, or the incident your primary source describes. Make a note of names, places, and dates that go with the photos.

Most of my photos are dated_____

Turn the page to see my family photos.

Step Four

Research that time in history. You may need to go to the library, use the Internet, or find old newspapers and maps. Take notes or highlight on copies so that you can easily identify details you will need when writing

your next step of this project.

I did my research _____

Turn the page to see my research.

Step Five

Write a story about the author of your primary source. This kind of writing is called "Historical Fiction." That means the story is made up, but the research you did will help you make the details accurate for that time in history. Use your primary source, notes, research, and interviews to make your story descriptive and interesting.

Remember what Leslie said about starting your story with an exciting idea. Using a "grabber of a beginning" in your story persuades your readers to keep reading.

Remember too that this is historical fiction. That means it is not a report about your family, rather it is an

imaginary story accurately set in a place in history. Use your research for factual details to add authenticity to your story.

Have fun. Your family is going to treasure this project for years. Who knows, maybe your grandchildren will find it in your attic someday!

Turn the page to see my historical fiction story.