



MY OWN TIME MACHINE

Do you remember the day you brought your first pet home? What about the day you scored your first goal? Or the summer you spent with your grandparents? These events in your life are part of your family history. Events in the lives of your parents and grandparents, who are your **ancestors**, are also your family history.

Family history information is gathered from many places. It may come from interviews with family members; family photo albums, **journals**, address books and **autobiographies**; birth, marriage and death records; school reports; certificates and awards.

Sometimes other historical events may be placed on your **timeline** or table especially if that event explains a decision made by your ancestor. Did your ancestor move because of a war, environmental disaster, lack of work or maybe even a gold rush! These events are part of your family history too.

In this project, *My Own Time Machine*, you will fill in a table which will help you organize and record your family history. As you work on your table you will also learn some of the basic methods and words used in **genealogy**. These words are in bold print and are explained below.

WHAT THE WORDS MEAN

- **Ancestor**: those from whom you are descended; that is your parents, grandparents, great grandparents
- **Autobiography**: a story you write about yourself
- **Chronological**: a series of events arranged in order of time from first to last
- **Decade**: a period of ten years
- **Genealogy**: the study of your ancestors and the collection of their names and dates
- **Given name**: the name parents give their children
- **Journal**: a record of daily events
- **Maiden Name**: a woman's name before she marries
- **Timeline**: events labeled in a table or on points along a line to show when they happened; time is marked in equal units along the line
- **Vital Event**: a birth, marriage or death recorded and kept in a register by the government or by a church.

RESOURCES

[My Own Time Machine](#): A blank timeline table with decades, for recording important events in your Family History. Provided by the Victoria Genealogical Society.

[BC's Time Machine](#): A sample timeline table, showing events from British Columbia's history. Provided by the Victoria Genealogical Society.



REFERENCES

BC Archives Amazing Time Machine and On-Line Vital Events Indexes - www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca. Ideas for using these amazing resources:

1. Go to [The Amazing Time Machine](#) on the BC Archives web site and browse through the information about the people, families, communities and events in BC history. Do you see that The Amazing Time Machine shows where and how people lived; what they did at work, in school and in sports? Can you think of some reasons why these early British Columbians chose certain homes, activities, clothes, and food?
2. You can also use this web-site to find the [BC Archives On-Line Vital Events Index](#), where you can look up records of a birth, marriage or death that happened in BC. Births up to 1903, marriages up to 1935 and deaths up to 1990 (each year more records will become available, so the latest years that births, marriages and deaths are available may be different than those given here). You might find the birth record of your great grandparent or marriage of your grandparents! But you won't find your own birth record, or that of Nelly Furtado, because the records of living people are kept private. However, you will find the death record of Canadian hero, Terry Fox, if you search using his **given name**. Our helpful guide [Finding the People](#) will explain how to use this site.

WHAT TO DO

1. Gather together as much of your family history material as you can!
2. Look at the sample table BC's Time Machine and see how dates, names, events and places are written. In the 1950's box see how Terry Fox's birth date is written. Write your dates this way with the day of the month first, then month, then year.
3. Be sure to list any nicknames in brackets after the given name. Even though we all know him as Terry Fox, his given name is Terrance and you won't find his vital records under the name Terry.
4. Remember to list all women by their **maiden name**. Nancy Greene is married to Al Raine, but in genealogical records she is still Nancy Greene.
5. Now record everything you know about your family history in **chronological** order on the *My Own Time Machine table* given to you. Remember that small events, like your first puppy coming home or the time you built a fort, are the sort of detail that bring your family history to life!
6. Don't forget you can record other relevant historical events. Does your grandpa tell stories about what he was doing, on the day in 1946, when the largest earthquake in BC's history struck? In 1957, did your grandma go to the Elvis Presley concert at Vancouver's Empire Stadium? Maybe she also went to the 1964 Beatles concert in Vancouver? Place those events on your table.



GENEALOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Resources for Students and Teachers

WHAT'S NEXT?

You could draw a much bigger *My Own Time Machine* table and fill in every year! Add information about your brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts and uncles because they are part of your family history too!

You could add photos to your table. The photos need to be placed on the table very near the date they were taken. Can you add a picture of yourself taken the day you were born? Or a photo of your grandparents on their wedding day?

PUT YOUR OWN TIME MACHINE ON THE WALL AT HOME.
CONGRATULATIONS - NOW YOU ARE YOUR FAMILY'S HISTORIAN!