

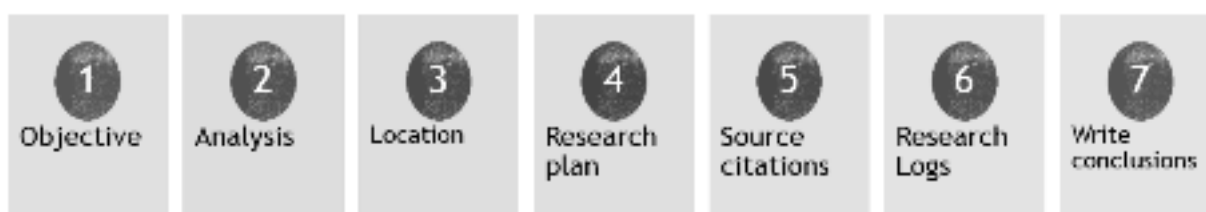
# Essential Habits for Becoming a Better Genealogist

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## The Genealogy Research Process



### Document and Spreadsheet Downloads

- [Research Project Document](#) (link to google docs file) - click the link to make a copy in your own Google Drive. A Gmail/Google Account is required.
- [Research Project Document](#) (download Word file) - click link to open a preview of the docx file in Google Drive. In the top right hand corner, you will see the option to download the file.
- [Research Like a Pro Spreadsheet](#) (link google sheets file) - click the link to make a copy in your own Google Drive. A Gmail/Google Account is required.
- [Research Like a Pro Spreadsheet](#) (download Excel file) - click link to open a preview of the xlsx file in Google Drive. In the top right hand corner, you will see the option to download the file.

## Objective

### Research Question

Task: Analyze your tree and choose a simple research question such as “where did my ancestor die?” or “which John Smith” is my ancestor? Write it down in your research project document.

### Write Objective

Task: Write an objective from your question using the key identifiers of complete names and birth, death, and marriage dates and places.

*Read More:*



- [Doing a Genealogy Research Project from Start to Finish](#) - post by Nicole about her first experience doing the RLP process
- [Research Like a Pro, Part 1: What's Your Question?](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 2: Research Objectives](#) - Podcast episode by Diana and Nicole
- [Am I Researching the Wrong Person? Research Objectives Can Help](#) - post by Nicole

## Analysis

### Timeline

Task: Gather and review sources that are already known about your relative and make a simple timeline.

### Analyze Your Sources

Task: Go through each event in your timeline and analyze the source (original, derivative, authored) and information (primary, secondary, unknown). Look for gaps and write down any questions or ideas you have in the sources to search section of your Research Project Document.

#### Read More:

- [Georgia Ann \(Lewis\) Dawson Timeline Analysis](#) - Example Timeline by Diana
- [Track Your Family with a Timeline](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 3: Analyze Your Sources](#) - Podcast episode by Diana and Nicole
- [Genealogy Evidence Analysis – Free Template and Lucinda Keaton Sample](#) - post by Nicole
- [Research Like a Pro, Part 2: Analyze Your Sources](#) - post by Diana
- [Original or Derivative Sources: What's the Big Deal?](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 32: Indirect vs. Direct Evidence](#) - podcast episode by Diana and Nicole

## Location

### Background Information and Locality Research

Task: Choose a locality in your timeline and learn about it. Add basic information about the locality to the background information section of your Research Project Document.



## Locality Research (Record Collections)

Task: Finish your locality research by creating a list of important record groups in the locality and where to find them online. You'll use the *FamilySearch* Wiki and Catalog and other collections.

### Read More:

- [Research Like a Pro, Part 3: Where Did They Live?](#) - blog post by Diana
- [RLP 4: Locality Research Part 1](#) - podcast episode by Diana and Nicole
- [RLP 5: Locality Research Part 2](#) - podcast episode by Diana and Nicole
- [The FamilySearch Catalog: A Researcher's Best Friend](#) - post by Diana
- [Create Your Own Research Guide](#) - post by Diana
- [United States Record Finder](#) at the FamilySearch Wiki

## Research Plan

### Hypothesis

Task: Create a hypothesis based on what you learned from your timeline and source analysis.

### Identified Sources and Prioritized Strategy

Task: Make a list of sources that you have identified that might answer your research question. Prioritize the records you have listed in "identified sources to search." Make sure you have at least 4 records to search but no more than 6-7 in your prioritized plan.

### Read More:

- [Research Like a Pro, Part 4: What's the Plan?](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 6: Research Planning](#) - podcast by Diana and Nicole
- [Research Like a Pro, Part 4: What's the Plan?](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 6: Research Planning](#) - podcast by Diana and Nicole

## Source Citations

### Source Citations

Task: Make source citations for events in your timeline.

### Read More:



- [Research Like a Pro, Part 5: Where Did You Look and What Did You Find?](#) - post by Diana
- [Source Citations: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 7: Source Citations](#) - Podcast by Diana and Nicole
- <https://www.evidenceexplained.com/> - Elizabeth Shown Mills' Website
- [Diana's Citation Templates](#) - list of common citations Diana uses. You can see the elements of a citation and how they are arranged. Use the template by changing the information that applies to your source.
- [BYU Citation Templates](#)

## Research Logs

### Research Log

Task: Add entries to your research log for each record collection in your prioritized strategy. Search the collections for the information you seek. Log what you found in your log with a complete source citation and a link to the record or database. Abstract or transcribe any documents like wills or court records.

#### Read More:

- [Research Like a Pro, Part 5: Where Did You Look and What Did You Find?](#) - post by Diana
- [Research Logs: The Key to Organizing Your Family History](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 8: Research Logs](#) - podcast by Diana and Nicole

## Write Conclusions

### Report Outline

Task: Make an outline of what you're going to write using your research log and put everything into a logical order. Follow your outline and write a summary of your research. Include future research suggestions.

#### Read More:

- [Research Like a Pro Part 6: Write it Up](#) - post by Diana
- [RLP 9: Report Writing](#) - podcast by Diana and Nicole
- [Georgia Dawson Report](#) - by Diana