

# Sharing Family Stories

By Jolene Roehlkepartain



What do you know about your parents? Your grandparents? Other ancestors? Explore your family's rich history and dig into insightful stories of perseverance, faith, and love.

## For

Teen Family

## Season

Spring

## Needed

Bible, *Washington Post* article: [Importance of Family History for Teens](#), Our Family's Important Stories worksheet (see last page), pens or pencils, your family tree information (if you have it)



by justjorie

## Prepare in Advance

- Download the *Washington Post* article: [Importance of Family History for Teens](#).
- Make a copy of Our Family's Important Stories worksheet (see last page) for each person.
- Mark your Bible at Matthew 1:1-17 and Genesis 10:1-32.

## Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin:

*God, we give thanks for our family and the many family members who lived before us. Be with us as we explore the stories of our family. Help us to learn from them and be inspired to become the best people we can be. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

2. Have each person take a quick look at Matthew 1:1-17 and Genesis 10:1-28 in your Bible. Do not read these passages aloud. Simply point out that both are *genealogies*. The Matthew passage gives the genealogy of Jesus Christ and his connections to important ancestors, such as David and Abraham. The Genesis passage tells of the family connections of Noah. Every family has a rich history of ancestors.
3. If you have a family tree or a list of ancestors, look together at that information. You don't need to go through it in detail, but invite each person to point out family members he or she remembers. Which family members do you wish you knew more about? (If you don't have any family history information like this, find out if another extended family member does. In the meantime, simply list family members you remember most vividly and those you wish you knew more about.)
4. Read aloud the article from the *Washington Post* titled "Study: Teens' Knowledge of Family History a Sign of Social-Emotional Health:" [Importance of Family History for Teens](#). (Stop before the "Do You Know" questions.) Discuss the article: Do you agree with the author? Why or why not? When has a family story been important to you?
5. Give each person a copy of the Our Family's Important Stories worksheet and a pen or pencil. Take time for family members to complete the worksheet. When they finish, have a conversation about your responses. Give each family member a chance to talk, and respect your different perspectives.
6. Celebrate family's history. Talk about how it helps to shape who you are, but also how you have the ability to create new family stories by the choices you make each day.



## Our Family's Important Stories

Families often tell stories about their ancestors. Use the following questions to help you remember some stories like this.

Which member of our extended family do you like best? Why?

Which family member do people say you look like or act like? Why?

What do you know about our great-grandparents and earlier ancestors?

Which countries did our ancestors come from?

Which story about a family member is your favorite? Which story is most memorable?

What have you learned from our family about being a Christian? How did you learn these things?

What does our family value? How can you tell?

