Research Activity Three: Finding People Using Genealogical Resources

Objectives:
Students will:
- know how to use Familysearch.org/ and other Web sites to search for given people and their relatives' birth, marriage, death, and family information.
- Organize the information they found into a labeled family tree chart for that family.

*The ISBE standards are in the unit introduction.

Materials:
Computer with Web access, printer
Browser (Google.com)
http://www.familysearch.org
Mormon archives plus international databases, social security death indexes

http://www-personal.umich.edu/~cgaunt/illinois.html
List of Illinois and separate county links for research. Teacher should browse and bookmark likely sites so students will not be overwhelmed.

Family Tree chart (see link to pdf)
http://www.familytreemagazine.com/forms/research/ancestor.pdf
Five generation chart to print out.

Opening:

The main idea of this lesson is that there are many online research tools that we can use for free to find basic statistics about our research subjects, and our own ancestors. They range from county and state records to international databases that link many sources of information. What used to take months of research to find by traveling to the libraries and record halls where these records are held, now takes several seconds or minutes!

One warning. Some of you may be lucky and find the exact information you want very quickly. Others may have to search several sources and think creatively to find information. A search on Google.com® of the individual's name may yield some results, even if the Familysearch.org® site did not. Some records were in courthouses that burned down in the nineteenth century. Other family records just do not happen to be online. You will need to be searched for by phoning or going to a place that holds records.

However, it is amazing what you can find online by searching with different keywords. You can also find the phone numbers or addresses of people and places you can use to complete your research. The uncertainty of finding what you are looking for is part of the job of doing real research!

Procedure:

1. In the computer lab or on a screen from you computer, show the class the Familysearch.org web site and it search interface page.
http://www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/frameset_search.asp

2. Note the different databases the results come from:

▶ All Resources

Ancestral File

▶ Census

▶ International Genealogical Index

▶ Pedigree Resource File

▶ US Social Security Death Index

▶ Vital Records Index

▶ Search Family History Web Sites

Some lists are more helpful than others. The 1880 census fits the Illinois agricultural timeline; the Ancestral file often has useful pedigree and family entries; the Social Security Death Index has twentieth century death records and lists the state the person died.

3. Show them how to fill out the information in the form's blanks and choose the correct parameters (country, year, etc.). Try it several ways with a name you have practiced with in order to show them that sometimes you get different information if you input different sets of data. This is especially true with the names of married women.

Henry Sadorus, Sr.

4. Next go over a page of results. One page may have dozens of results if the name is common or a state is not specified. Sometimes the search yields no results; try again with a different version of the data (teachers may need to help with ideas here.)

5. Note the format of each resulting name: spelling of name, location, and dates. You can eliminate some names because of the wrong century date or obviously wrong location.

6. Click on a likely result for the person in question. Go over the information the result provides.
Example:

Individual Record

Henry SADORUS (AFN: 43N2-JF)

Sex: M

Pedigree

Family

Event(s):

Birth: 26 Jul 1783
, Bedford, Pennsylvania
Death: 18 Jul 1878
Sadorus, Champaign, Illinois

Parents:

Father: William SADORUS (AFN: CJ74-F0)
Mother: Catherine (AFN: CJ74-G5)

Family

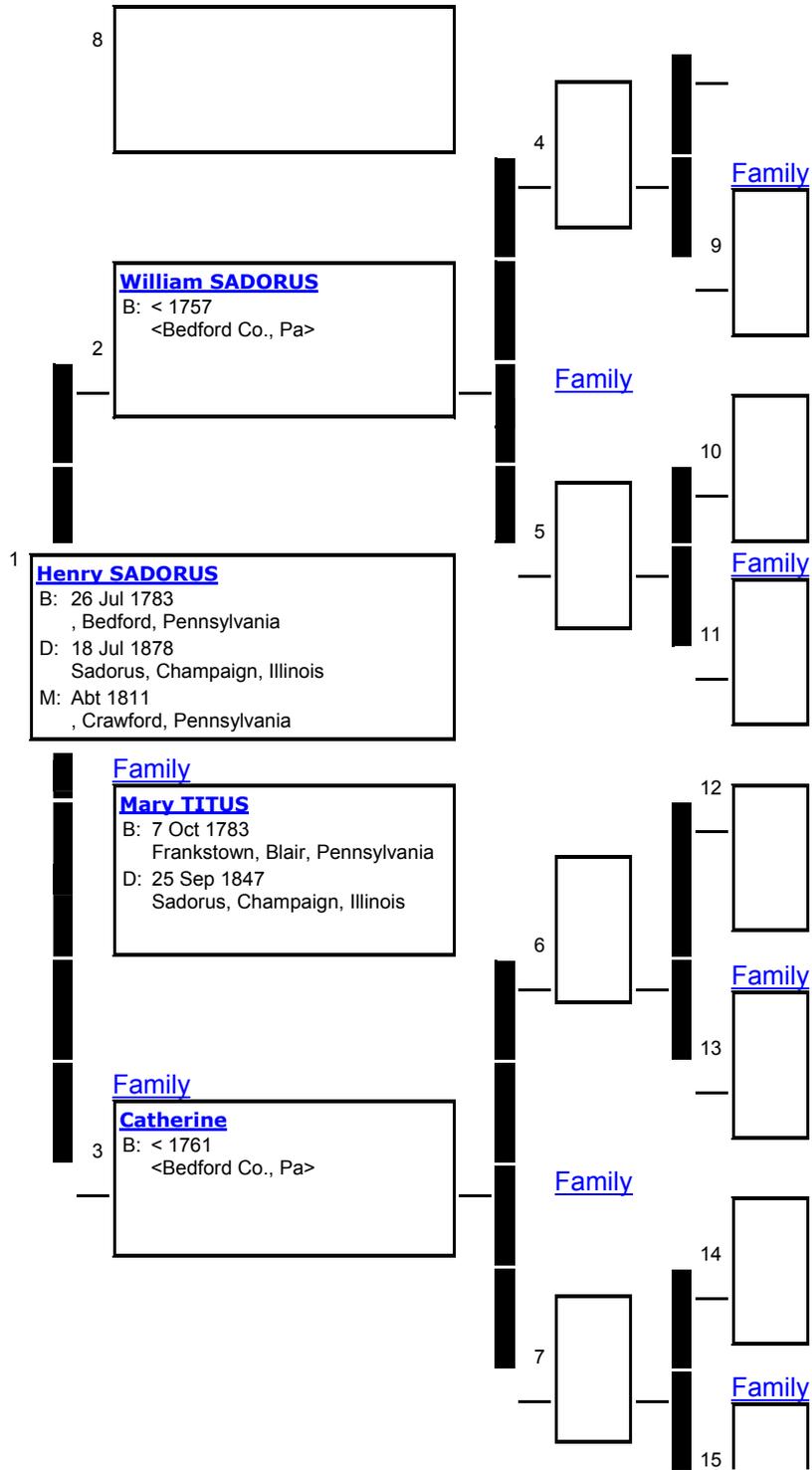
Marriage(s):

Spouse: Mary TITUS (AFN: 43N2-KL)
Marriage: Abt 1811
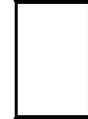, Crawford, Pennsylvania

Family

Note the name, the date and place of birth, the parent's name (vital in tracing the family line backwards in time), the spouse's name and place and date of marriage).

7. When you click on pedigree, you will be looking for the person's parents and possibly grandparents. Some families have entries that go back several generations.

In Henry Sadorus' case, it gives details of his parents' births and deaths.

8

4

[Family]

William SADORUS
B: < 1757
   <Bedford Co., Pa>

2

[Family]

9

10

[Family]

5

11

1

Henry SADORUS
B: 26 Jul 1783
   , Bedford, Pennsylvania
D: 18 Jul 1878
   Sadorus, Champaign, Illinois
M: Abt 1811
   , Crawford, Pennsylvania

[Family]

12

Mary TITUS
B: 7 Oct 1783
   Frankstown, Blair, Pennsylvania
D: 25 Sep 1847
   Sadorus, Champaign, Illinois

6

[Family]

13

[Family]

Catherine
B: < 1761
   <Bedford Co., Pa>

3

[Family]

14

7

[Family]

15

8. When you click on Family, you are looking for information about any children your subject may have had. In this case, Henry had eight.

Sex Name

M [William Sadorus JORDAN](#) (AFN:21SR-2PG) [Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt. 1808 **Place:** <Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania>

2. **Sex Name**

F [Mellessia JORDAN](#) (AFN:21SR-2QN) [Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt. 1810 **Place:** <Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania>

3. **Sex Name**

U [Aldula JORDAN](#) (AFN:21SR-2RV) [Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt. 1812 **Place:** <Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania>

4. **Sex Name**

M [Henry T JORDAN](#) (AFN:21SR-2S3) [Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt. 1816 **Place:** <Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania>

5. **Sex Name**

M [Allen JORDAN](#) (AFN:21SR-2T9) [Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt. 1818 **Place:** <Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania>

6. **Sex Name**

F [Mary JORDAN](#) (AFN:21SR-2VH) [Pedigree](#)

Born: Abt. 1820 **Place:** <Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania>

7. **Sex Name**

F [Eliza Jane SADORUS](#) (AFN:43N2-H8) [Pedigree](#)

Born: 28 Feb 1814 **Place:** Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania
Died: 29 Nov 1909 **Place:** Exeter, Tulare, California

8. **Sex Name**

M [William Henry Titus SADORUS](#) (AFN:50D8-1N) [Pedigree](#)

Born:	4 Jul 1812	**Place:**	Titusville, Crawford, Pennsylvania
Died:	18 Jun 1899	**Place:**	Sadorus, Champaign, Illinois
Buried:		**Place:**	Sadorus, Champaign, Illinois

Notice where they were born and died. It is also interesting to learn how long people lived in those days.

9. By following the children forward, or starting with the latest member of the family, it is often possible to trace a large family tree.

10. Students will, with the teacher acting as coach, perform one or more searches for their subject person or family, print out good results, and after analyzing for correctness, fill in information into the family tree chart about their subject and his/her relations.

Closing:

Now we have another tool to use to find information about people who lived before us. Historians and genealogists use these tools in their work. They slowly piece together a written picture of life and people of a past time from the facts in the data we found.

Why bother? Learning about the past is a tool with which to study the people and problems of the present and future. It is sometimes more difficult to know about past peoples because there was no television to record events the same day they happened, or record people's stories during their lifetime. A few people were educated enough and had the time and inclination to write journals and books. However, most of the world's population did not write about their lives. History is no just what is in written form ─ social history is in photographs, oral interviews, and public records. We are piecing together a picture of the lives of our subjects.

Now that we have used some genealogical sources to research our subject, we will next turn to the study of other public records ─ public land sales records

Assessment Suggestions:

- Students were able to navigate the Familysearch.org search interface and results.
- They were able to read and use the results information to fill in their family tree chart.
- They used the leads they obtained from the search results to research other aspects of the subject using the linked site on genealogy.

Illinois State Museum, History of Illinois Agriculture Web Exhibit