



Activity: Family Tree

Materials needed: Blank paper for drawing

Description: This activity might best be done for homework, with results discussed in class. Demonstrate to the class how to draw a simple family tree. You may even want to make a template that the students can customize.



Students draw a family tree that has at least parts of three generations. Each “entry” on the tree should have either a name or relationship (“Myriam Betel” or “Grandma”). Ask students to think of things to say about each person on the tree that can be put in the past tense. This doesn’t mean the person has to be deceased. It can be “got married” “was born” “lived in” “went to school,” “worked,” “won,” “wrote,” etc. Each entry should also include two to four words maximum that will remind the student of something the student wants to say about the person. For example, “cruise ship” might remind the student to say “My grandfather was a chef on a cruise ship,” or “farm,” “We always spent summers on my Aunt Georgia’s farm in X.”

When the trees are complete, students share them with a partner. Tell students to bring in any related family photos to share with their partner. Partners should be encouraged to ask questions.

For an activity the entire class can share, ask students to choose one relative or ancestor to “honor.” They will prepare and give a brief biographical presentation about this person, using as many past tense verbs as they can. Tell the students to think of two or three interesting or special things about this person to illustrate why he or she was chosen. If they have a photograph, so much the better!