



## WRITE THE BOOK REVIEW FIRST

Learn about your family by writing about them--from the point of a book reviewer!

Prepare by reviewing your family history by spending some time with old family photo collections, quickly sketching out some branches of your family tree, or just chatting with family members. The purpose is to refresh your memory about your family's story.



Feedback on this exercise? E-mail me at [hello@rose-prose.com](mailto:hello@rose-prose.com)

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make notes

Start by deciding what part of your family tree you want to write about. Make a few bullet-point notes about this branch (or branches), based on the preparation you did earlier.

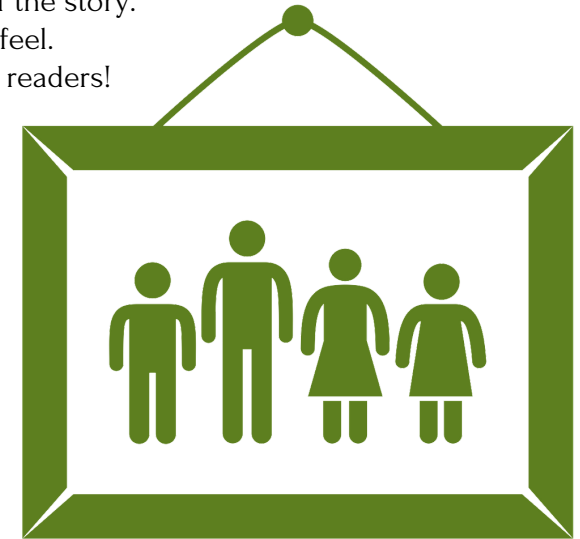
write

Imagine that you're a book reviewer. You've just finished reading a book about this family's history. Write the book review. Be sure to include these elements of a good book review:

- What's the genre of the story?
- What are the main themes in the book?
- A brief summary of the story (just enough for the reader of the review to know what the story's about).
- The moral or argument of the story.
- How the story made you feel.
- Your recommendation to readers!

repeat

Repeat this exercise for a book written about you. And, if you want an extra challenge, be even more succinct by writing the back cover book blurb for both the family and personal stories.



reflect

- How does this exercise make you think differently about your family history? Your personal history within that family?
- How does thinking about things like theme, moral of the story, and argument help you to make sense of your family/your own history?
- What does writing such a succinct summary of a large, sprawling history teach you about your writing style, strengths, and challenges.