

## LESSON 5B

# Gathering Family Information

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### INITIAL RESEARCH STRATEGY:

### CHECK THE CENSUSES AND THE INTERNET FOR INFORMATION

This process should be done before moving on to the primary sources. Completing this process will better prepare you for research in primary documents.

1. Search New FamilySearch or other internet family trees for information about your family.
2. Do a complete census survey. This means attempting to find your ancestor in every census they should be found in during their life time, from birth until their death. The most recent census available to the public is the 1930 census. Record the information about where each person was living, and who was in their household on your research log, in your computer family file, or on paper family group sheets.

Digital images or indexes of census records can be found on the following sites:

- o Record Search: <http://pilot.familysearch.org/recordsearch/start.html#p=home>
- o Ancestry: <http://www.ancestry.com>
- o Heritage Quest: <http://www.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library/do/index>.

Ancestry and Heritage Quest are fee websites, but they can often be accessed through public libraries. They are available for free at the Harold B. Lee Library at BYU, or at the BYU campus Family History Library (FHL), or at the FHL. Some census records are also available at the FamilySearch Record Search, and more will be added as they are completed.

Use ages to estimate birth years. Record calculated birthdates as "abt 1879" in your records.

Don't forget to record where each piece of information came from.

3. Search the internet for information. Many people post information about their family history on the internet, and you might have a common relative!
  - o Use various search engines to conduct a name or surname search! Not every search engine has every available website, so it's a good idea to use more than one.
  - o There are different symbols that can be used to make your search more effective. Free Genealogy Search Help for Google might help. Or you can conduct your own search. Don't forget to try various search terms to see different results. <http://www.genealogy-search-help.com/>
  - o The most common searches are where names are placed in quotation marks. Such as "William Long." It could also be helpful to add a locality in the search such as "William Long" AND "Van Buren County, Arkansas."

