

# **Write Your Family History: Create a Captivating Record of Your Family's Story**

## **Syllabus**

Instructor: Sunny McClellan Morton

### **Part 1: Writing Your Family Narrative**

#### **Lesson 1: Finding Your Subjects**

- A. Whose stories do you want to tell?
- B. Are you sharing everything or focusing on a specific theme?
- C. Starting a dateline and identifying historical themes
- D. Exercise

#### **Lesson 2: Understanding Your Audience**

- A. To whom are you telling these stories?
- B. Understanding audience and purpose
  - I. Messages, themes, morals
- C. Understanding perspective
- D. Exercise

#### **Lesson 3: Using Your Research**

- A. How will you incorporate your genealogical research in the book?
  - I. Using genealogical and historical research
  - II. Using historical details
  - III. Establishing time and place
- B. If gaps in your research exist, how will you fill them?
- C. Exercise

#### **Lesson 4: Shaping Your Story**

- A. Scenes and chapters
  - I. Plotting and planning your story
  - II. Your opening scene: How to hook the reader
- B. Using techniques such as dialogue
- C. What's next?
- D. Exercise

## **Part 2: Writing Workshop**

### **Week 1: First Draft Techniques**

- A. Dealing with the “fear factor”
- B. Ignore perfection -- just write!
- C. Assignment: Create up to two “first draft” chapters for review

### **Week 2: Keep Going!**

- A. Use your “first draft” techniques to keep writing
- B. Assignment: Create up to two more “first draft” chapters for review

### **Week 3: Second Drafts**

- A. Reading with a critical eye
- B. Editing and reordering
- C. Finding emerging themes
- D. Assignment: Critique your work

### **Week 4: The Next Chapter**

- A. Use your “first draft” techniques to keep writing
- B. Final thoughts
- C. Assignment: Create one final “first draft” chapter for review