



READING ASSIGNMENT

Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice & Standards

- Chapter 12, "Reasoning from Evidence" by Thomas W. Jones, PhD, CG, CGL, FASG
- Chapter 17, "Lineage Applications" by Barbara J. Mathews, CG, FASG & Darcie Hind Posz, CG

Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace

- Chapter 1, "Fundamentals of Evidence Analysis," by Elizabeth Shown Mills, CG, CGL, FASG

Genealogy Standards

- Chapter 3, "Standards for Researching," Standards 35-50

Read each chapter, complete the written assignments, and be prepared to answer the discussion questions at the end of this assignment during your next group chat.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT – DUE ON THE 25th OF THIS MONTH

After studying the guidelines in Chapter 12, work through the evidence-analysis processes using a research question related to an individual you are researching.

PART I – RESEARCH QUESTION

- Craft a focused research question related to an individual. It can address a new problem or a problem that is already solved. See Standard 10.

PART II – EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

- Select five sources related to your research question. They may come from your files, from new research, or from both, and may provide direct, indirect, and/or negative evidence. Analyze the sources, the information, and the evidence using the guidelines found in Chapter 12. You may use the example table below, create your own table, or adopt a narrative format. All of the information found in the table below must be included.

Source:			
Citation:			
Information Provided	Source (Original / Derivative / Authored)	Information (Primary / Secondary / Undetermined)	Evidence (Direct / Indirect / Negative)
Comments / Analysis:			

PART III – SOURCE ASSESSMENT

- Pick **ONE** of your sources from Part II and complete the following in-depth analysis:
 - Analysis of reliability: Standards 35–39, 44
 - Analysis of background context: Standards 12, 24, 41
 - Analysis of information relevance and soundness of presumptions: Standards 42, 45
 - Analysis of evidence: Standards 40, 43

Guidelines for the assignment:

- Limit your submission to no more than ten pages, preferably fewer; do not include source images.
- Limit your sources to five; this assignment is about evidence analysis, not about conducting exhaustive research.
- Use sources from a variety of record groups (vital records, census, family bibles, tax records, and so on).
- Select a group of sources that represents a variety of evidence types (direct, indirect, negative).
- Explain why you categorized the sources, information, and evidence in the ways that you did; assigning labels is not enough.

SUBMITTING YOUR ASSIGNMENT

- Name your assignment “Evidence Analysis – FirstName LastName” and save it as a Word document.
- On *Basecamp*, in your discussion group workspace, click on the MESSAGES tab, click POST A NEW MESSAGE, title your post “Evidence Analysis – FirstName LastName,” and select EVIDENCE ANALYSIS for the category. Add a brief message, if desired. Then, attach your Word document, SUBSCRIBE your peers, coordinator, and mentor, and click POST THIS MESSAGE.

FEEDBACK INSTRUCTIONS – DUE BEFORE NEXT GROUP CHAT

Using information presented in the assigned reading as a guide, carefully review the evidence analysis documents created by your group members. Then, prepare feedback that answers the questions below. Be specific in your comments. Strive to be focused, concise and encouraging.

- Is the research question effective? Are there ways it might be improved?
- Are there any sources, information or evidence you would have categorized differently? If so, why?
- Is there enough evidence to draw a conclusion? Why or why not?
- What are at least three ways the analysis is strong?
- What are at least three ways the analysis could be improved?

SUBMITTING YOUR FEEDBACK

- On *Basecamp*, navigate to the message threads your peers used to post their education plans, paste your feedback into a LEAVE A COMMENT box (you may need to scroll past previous comments to find it), and click ADD THIS COMMENT.

ONLINE SOURCES & READING SUGGESTIONS

Thomas W. Jones, Chapter 2, "Concepts Fundamental to the GPS," *Mastering Genealogical Proof* (Arlington, VA: National Genealogical Society, 2013), 7-22.

Elizabeth Shown Mills, "Working with Historical Evidence: Genealogical Principles and Standards," *Evidence: A Special Issue of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 87 (September 1999): 165-184. Available online at <http://historicpathways.com/download/workwthhistevidence.pdf>.

This article provides excellent background information but uses an older version of the "Evidence Analysis Process Map." The newer version of the map can be accessed on *EvidenceExplained.com* at <https://www.evidenceexplained.com/content/quicklesson-17-evidence-analysis-process-map>.

Amy Johnson Crow, MLIS, CG, "Successfully Applying to a Lineage Society," August 2016, *Legacy Family Tree Webinars*, https://familytreewebinars.com/download.php?webinar_id=400.



CHAPTER 12: REASONING FROM EVIDENCE

1. Why does each piece of information within a source need to be appraised separately?
2. What is the difference between primary and secondary information? Give an example of a source that contains both.
3. When evaluating similar information from multiple sources, what does it mean to say the sources should be of “independent origin?”
4. As a rule, do original sources carry more weight than derivatives? (*Evidence Explained*, p. 24)
5. Describe the difference between negative findings and negative evidence.
6. What did you learn from completing this evidence analysis assignment?

CHAPTER 17: LINEAGE APPLICATIONS

7. When is it necessary to submit a proof argument with a lineage society application? (*Evidence Explained*, p. 396)
8. Describe the implications of working towards genealogy standards that may conflict with successful lineage society applications.
9. For those who have prepared or evaluated lineage society papers, what tips and suggestions can you share?