

Unearthing Ancestry: Advanced Genealogy

Genealogy · Answer Key · 17 Questions

1. Which of the following historical events significantly impacted the preservation and accessibility of early colonial records in North America, making genealogical research more challenging for that period?

- A) The Gold Rush
- B) The American Civil War**
- C) The Industrial Revolution
- D) The Louisiana Purchase

2. Before widespread civil registration, church records were a primary source for births, marriages, and deaths. In England, which religious body's records are crucial for tracing ancestry prior to the 19th century?

- A) The Society of Friends (Quakers)
- B) The Church of England**
- C) The Methodist Church
- D) The Catholic Church

3. The creation of the US National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in 1934 was a pivotal moment for genealogical research. What major category of records held by NARA provides extensive information about military service and potential lineage?

- A) Immigration and Naturalization Records
- B) Census Records
- C) Military Service Records**
- D) Land Records

4. In many European countries, patronymic naming conventions, where a child's surname is derived from their father's given name (e.g., 'son of John'), were common. Which region is particularly well-known for its extensive use of patronymics and matronymics well into the modern era?

- A) Italy
- B) Scandinavia**
- C) France
- D) Spain

5. The Domesday Book, compiled in 1086 by order of William the Conqueror, is a foundational document for English history and genealogy. What was its primary purpose?

A) To record land ownership and assess taxes

- B) To document religious affiliations
- C) To list all eligible military conscripts
- D) To create a royal lineage chart

6. The Ellis Island immigration station processed millions of immigrants to the United States. What common genealogical record, often confused with passenger lists, can sometimes contain errors or inconsistencies due to the sheer volume of arrivals?

A) Ship Manifests

- B) Naturalization Records
- C) Alien Registration Forms
- D) Port of Entry Declarations

7. In Australian genealogy, what significant legislative change in the mid-20th century made it more difficult to access records of adopted individuals prior to that time?

- A) The introduction of the Medicare system
- B) The establishment of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)

C) The tightening of adoption secrecy laws

- D) The implementation of a national identity card system

8. What type of genealogical source is considered a 'vital record' and is typically created by a government entity to officially document significant life events?

- A) A family Bible entry
- B) A newspaper obituary

C) A birth certificate

- D) A personal diary

9. The practice of surnames becoming hereditary is a relatively recent phenomenon in many cultures. In what historical period did surnames begin to become widespread and more formally established in Western Europe?

- A) The Roman Empire

B) The Medieval Period (roughly 11th-15th centuries)

- C) The Renaissance
- D) The Age of Exploration

10. DNA testing for genealogy has revolutionized the field. Which type of DNA is passed down virtually unchanged from mother to all her children and is useful for tracing maternal lineage?

- A) Y-DNA
- B) Autosomal DNA
- C) Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA)**
- D) X-DNA

11. The availability of census records is vital for genealogical research. What is a significant limitation of early US federal census records that can hinder research before 1850?

- A) They only recorded the head of household by name.**
- B) They were only conducted every 20 years.
- C) They were primarily written in Latin.
- D) They did not record ages or occupations.

12. In the context of genealogical research, what is an 'orphan tree'?

- A) A tree built by someone with no known ancestors.
- B) A tree belonging to a deceased researcher.
- C) A tree with a missing branch.
- D) A tree created without verifiable sources.**

13. The 'Great Famine' in Ireland (mid-19th century) caused mass emigration. What type of primary source, often found in passenger lists and emigration records, became exceptionally important for tracing Irish families after this period?

- A) Church of Ireland records
- B) Land valuation records
- C) Emigration and passenger lists**
- D) Constabulary records

14. What legal document, often filed by a deceased person's estate, can provide valuable information about family relationships, beneficiaries, and property, and is a crucial source in many countries?

- A) A marriage settlement
- B) A will and probate records**
- C) A deed of sale
- D) A business partnership agreement

15. The practice of changing surnames was more common in the past for various reasons. Which of these is LEAST likely to be a common historical reason for a family to change its surname?

- A) To assimilate into a new culture after immigration
- B) To avoid persecution or prejudice
- C) To conceal criminal activity**
- D) To align with a new religious affiliation

16. In United States historical records, what does the term 'indentured servant' refer to, and how might this status affect genealogical research?

- A) A person who owned land but was in debt to the crown; their property might be listed.
- B) A person who agreed to work for a period in exchange for passage or other necessities; their contracts or indentures can be vital records.**
- C) A person employed by the military; their service records would be key.
- D) A person who rented property; their lease agreements would be important.

17. What is the significance of the 'British Newspaper Archive' for genealogical researchers with British ancestry?

- A) It primarily holds official government gazettes and legal notices.
- B) It offers access to a vast collection of digitized historical newspapers, containing obituaries, marriage announcements, and local news.**
- C) It is a repository for British census schedules only.
- D) It is a database of British peerage and aristocratic lineages.