Discovering Your Ancestors

More and more Americans obsessively trace their family history, as evidenced by the surge in genealogy websites. Each day, millions visit sites devoted to discovering their ancestors. Increasing amounts of records, such as ship registries and marriage and death certificates, are digitally scanned and made available to the sleuths, too. And now there's a new option: photo detectives.

Armed with fashion magazines and an eye for detail, photo detectives hunt for clues contained in old photos. Hair styles, the cut of clothes, and the objects in the pictures all allow these detectives to pinpoint dates, places, and even professions. It also requires an expert's knowledge in social history. For example, a photo of a woman with unusually short hair in the 19th century likely indicates that she had scarlet fever, as a sufferer's head was often shaved. Or a photo of a baby carriage in the mid-1800s could serve as an announcement that the infant had died, as opposed to recording his birth. The period had a very high infant mortality rate, and custom dictated that death cards be sent to family and close friends. These are just some of the facts that photo detectives must readily have at their fingertips.

The earliest photos, which come from the 1830s, usually necessitated a studio visit by the whole family—a lengthy and formal process. But when Kodak invented the snapshot in the 1880s, family collections ballooned with shots of birthdays, holidays, and everyday life. Unfortunately, most people didn't bother with labels, which now thwarts the efforts of descendents unable to correctly identify the old pictures.

Enter the photo detectives. But customers may not always like the results, for what gets discovered may disagree with family lore.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface are the recommended vocabulary for this lesson.
Select one or all of the following warm-up activities.

1: **Define:** What does "genealogy" mean? Can you use it in a sentence? Can you give examples?

2: **Brainstorm:** Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "genealogy" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

3: **Title:** Speculate and/or discuss the contents of today's article from its title: "Discovering Your Ancestors."

4: **Family History:** What do you know about your ancestors? Talk with a partner about your family for a few minutes.

5: **Do you agree or disagree? Why?**

- a. I'm interested in history.
- b. I'm interested in my family's history.
- c. It's important to know the history of your family.
- d. Pictures are an important record of a family's history.
- e. I want my children's children's children to know about me.
Select one of the following vocabulary acquisition activities.

1: Vocabulary match: Individually or in pairs/groups, match the words in column A (from the article) with the best choice in column B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. obsessively</th>
<th>q. equip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. devote</td>
<td>r. prevent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. sleuth</td>
<td>s. detective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. arm</td>
<td>t. require</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. pinpoint</td>
<td>u. tale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. readily</td>
<td>v. identify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. necessitate</td>
<td>w. grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. balloon</td>
<td>x. excessively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. thwart</td>
<td>y. quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. lore</td>
<td>z. focus on</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2: Fill in the Blanks: Fill in the blank with the correct word.

|a. More and more Americans (          ) trace their family history.|
|----------------|---------|
|b. Each day, millions visit sites (          ) to discovering their ancestors.|
|c. Increasing amounts of records are digitally scanned and made available to the (          ).|
|d. (          ) with fashion magazines and an eye for detail, photo detectives hunt for clues in old photos.|
|e. Hair styles and the cut of clothes allow these detectives to (          ) dates and places.|
|f. These are just some of the facts that photo detectives must (          ) have at their fingertips.|
|g. The earliest photos, which come from the 1830s, usually (          ) a studio visit by the whole family.|
|h. Kodak invented the snapshot in the 1880s, and family collections (          ) with shots of everyday life.|
|i. Most people didn’t bother with labels, which now (          ) the efforts of descendents.|
|j. What gets discovered may disagree with family (          ).|

3: Define: Define each word, correctly pronounce it, explain the meaning and/or usage, and offer an example sentence to the class.

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</table>
**Discovering Your Ancestors**

**Advanced**

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**WORD RECOGNITION**

1: **Word Search:** Find the target words (in bold). Time yourself, and see how many words you can find in three minutes. In five minutes. In ten minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sleuths</th>
<th>lore</th>
<th>necessitated</th>
<th>obsessively</th>
<th>ballooned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>readily</td>
<td>devoted</td>
<td>armed</td>
<td>thwarts</td>
<td>pinpoint</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

```
D H Z C Y A P T L R G H V N S
E H U Q T I I E J O G F E Z
N O K Q E Z I A N B R Q H C N
O J W X A Y D S S P U E S E H
O Y L E V I S E S B O E I S D
L R Z Z L H S T Z E H I H S E
L N S Y X S H J O T C G N I M
A Z S T I H E J E B G E Y T R
B H L V R T W U B H Z W N A A
L L E X B A L O O N E D Y T Y
W L U A Y S W F R H G D T E R
Y I T F L T V H W O E S L D U
P N H P Z I K U T R V O Q U I
B H S L S Z P K O G K O L I
D E T O V E D L U X D H B V H
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2: **Target Word Pool:** Find the target words (in bold) with their exact match. Time yourself, and see how many words you can find in three minutes. In five minutes. In ten minutes.

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```
necessitates obsession lire pinpoint thwarted
thwarts sluice lure necessitated sleighs pinpoints unready ballooned
ready obsessively devotee armed devoted sleuth
necessitate arm alarming
army alarmed
balloon ballooning unnecessary obsessing
threat
sleuths laurel disarm obsequious lore
reading

devote necessitate balloons sleuthing pinwheel
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Heads Up English - 4

[www.headsupenglish.com](http://www.headsupenglish.com)
pre- or post-COMPREHENSION

1: Word Association: Brainstorm words associated with today's topic for two minutes. Present to the class.

2: Brainstorm Questions: Brainstorm questions that you would like to ask about today's topic. Answer the questions without looking at the article.

3: True or False?: Guess (before the article) or answer (after the article) whether the sentence is true or false. If false, correct the sentence.

   a. Family history has become very popular in the US. T / F
   b. Photo detectives use fashion magazines to find clues in photos. T / F
   c. History isn't very important to photo detectives. T / F
   d. Photography didn't become popular until the 1830s. T / F
   e. Old photos aren't usually labeled, so this causes problems for photo detectives. T / F

4: Questions: Answer the questions to check comprehension.

   a. What has been digitally scanned to help people find their ancestors?
   b. What are photo detectives?
   c. What do they use to find clues?
   d. According to the article, what happened in the 1880s?
   e. Why might customers like the information provided by photo detectives?

5: Vocabulary: In pairs/groups, remember how the words were used in today's article.

   a. obsessively  c. sleuths  e. pinpoint  g. necessitated  i. thwarts
   b. devoted  d. armed  f. readily  h. ballooned  j. lore

6: Fragments: Remember how the fragments were used, and complete the sentence from today's article.

   a. More and more Americans obsessively trace their family history...
   b. Or a photo of a baby carriage in the mid-1800s could serve as...
   c. The period had a very high infant mortality rate, and...
   d. But when Kodak invented the snapshot in the 1880s...
   e. But customers may not always like the results...
post-COMPREHENSION

1: Vocabulary: Circle any additional unknown words/phrases in the article. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the meanings. Present to the class.

2: Class Questions: Read through the article once more, and write down any questions that you would like to discuss in pairs/groups or as a class. Discuss.

3: Summarize: Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.

4: Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

   a. Did you like this article?
   b. What was your general impression after reading this article?
   c. Would you want to trace your family’s history? Why/not?
   d. Do you think it’s important to trace your family’s history? Why/not?
   e. What do you know about your grandparents? How about your great-grandparents?
   f. Do you have old photos at home? If yes, are there people in the photos you can't recognize?
   g. Would you ever consider hiring a photo detective to tell you more about your family? Why/not?
   h. Do you intend to go home after the lesson and look through old family photos? Why/not?
   i. Have you ever considered writing your history for future generations? If no, would you want to?
   j. How would you feel if you discovered one of your ancestors was a terrible person? Please explain.

5: Family History: Draw your family tree in the box below. Beside each name write a few notes about the person, such as occupation, likes/dislikes, hobbies, etc. Pair up with another student, and present to him/her.

6: Google Search: Type "genealogy" into Google news and read additional articles on this topic. Discuss or write an essay about your findings.
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The earliest photos, which come from the 1830s, usually necessitated a studio visit by the whole family—a lengthy and formal process. But when Kodak invented the snapshot in the 1880s, family collections ballooned with shots of birthdays, holidays, and everyday life. Unfortunately, most people didn't bother with labels, which now thwarts the efforts of descendents unable to correctly identify the old pictures.

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Notes:
Discovering Your Ancestors
More and more Americans (a. ______________) trace their family history, as evidenced by the surge in genealogy websites. Each day, millions visit sites (b. ______________) to discovering their ancestors. Increasing amounts of records, such as ship registries and (c. ______________) and death certificates, are digitally scanned and made available to the (d. ______________), too. And now there’s a new option: photo detectives.

(e. ______________) with fashion magazines and an eye for detail, photo detectives hunt for clues contained in old photos. Hair styles, the cut of clothes, and the objects in the pictures all allow these detectives to (f. ______________) dates, places, and even professions. It also requires an expert’s knowledge in social history. For example, a photo of a woman with unusually short hair in the 19th century likely indicates that she had scarlet fever, as a sufferer’s head was often shaved. Or a photo of a baby (g. ______________) in the mid-1800s could serve as an (h. ______________) that the infant had died, as opposed to recording his birth. The period had a very high infant mortality rate, and custom dictated that death cards be sent to family and close friends. These are just some of the facts that photo detectives must (i. ______________) have at their (j. ______________).

The earliest photos, which come from the 1830s, usually (k. ______________) a studio visit by the whole family—a lengthy and formal process. But when Kodak invented the snapshot in the 1880s, family collections (l. ______________) with shots of birthdays, holidays, and everyday life. Unfortunately, most people didn’t bother with labels, which now (m. ______________) the efforts of (n. ______________) unable to correctly identify the old pictures.

Enter the photo detectives. But customers may not always like the results, for what gets discovered may disagree with family (o. ______________).
Discovering Your Ancestors

a) ____________________________________________________________________________, as evidenced by the surge in genealogy websites. Each day, millions visit sites devoted to discovering their ancestors. Increasing amounts of records, such as ship registries and marriage and death certificates, are digitally scanned and made available to the sleuths, too. And now there's a new option: photo detectives.

b) ____________________________________________________________________________, photo detectives hunt for clues contained in old photos. Hair styles, the cut of clothes, and the objects in the pictures all allow these detectives to pinpoint dates, places, and even professions. It also requires an expert's knowledge in social history. For example,
c) ____________________________________________________________________________, as a sufferer's head was often shaved. Or a photo of a baby carriage in the mid-1800s could serve as an announcement that the infant had died, as opposed to recording his birth. The period had a very high infant mortality rate, d) ________________ ________________ ________________. These are just some of the facts that photo detectives must readily have at their fingertips.

The earliest photos, which come from the 1830s, e) ____________________________________________________________________________. But when Kodak invented the snapshot in the 1880s, family collections ballooned with shots of birthdays, holidays, and everyday life. Unfortunately, most people didn't bother with labels, which now thwarts the efforts of descendents unable to correctly identify the old pictures.

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**Discovering Your Ancestors**

**Advanced**

**ANSWER KEY**

**Vocabulary**

1. Vocabulary Match:

   | a. x | b. z | c. s | d. q | e. v | f. y | g. t | h. w | i. r | j. u |

2. Fill in the Blanks:

   | a. obsessively | b. devoted | c. sleuths | d. Armed | e. pinpoint | f. readily | g. necessitated | h. ballooned | i. thwarts | j. lore |

**pre- or post-Comprehension**

1. True or False:

   | a. T | b. T | c. F | d. F | e. F |

2. Fragments:

   a. as evidenced by the surge in genealogy websites.
   b. an announcement that the infant had died, as opposed to recording his birth.
   c. custom dictated that death cards be sent to family and close friends.
   d. family collections ballooned with shots of birthdays, holidays, and everyday life.
   e. for what gets discovered may disagree with family lore.

**Student Handout**

1. Fill in the Blanks

   | a. obsessively | b. devoted | c. marriage | d. sleuths | e. Armed | f. pinpoint | g. carriage | h. announcement | i. readily | j. fingertips | k. necessitated | l. ballooned | m. thwarts | n. descendents | o. lore |

2. Extended Listening

   a. More and more Americans obsessively trace their family history
   b. Armed with fashion magazines and an eye for detail
   c. a photo of a woman with unusually short hair in the 19th century likely indicates that she had scarlet fever
   d. and custom dictated that death cards be sent to family and close friends
   e. usually necessitated a studio visit by the whole family--a lengthy and formal process