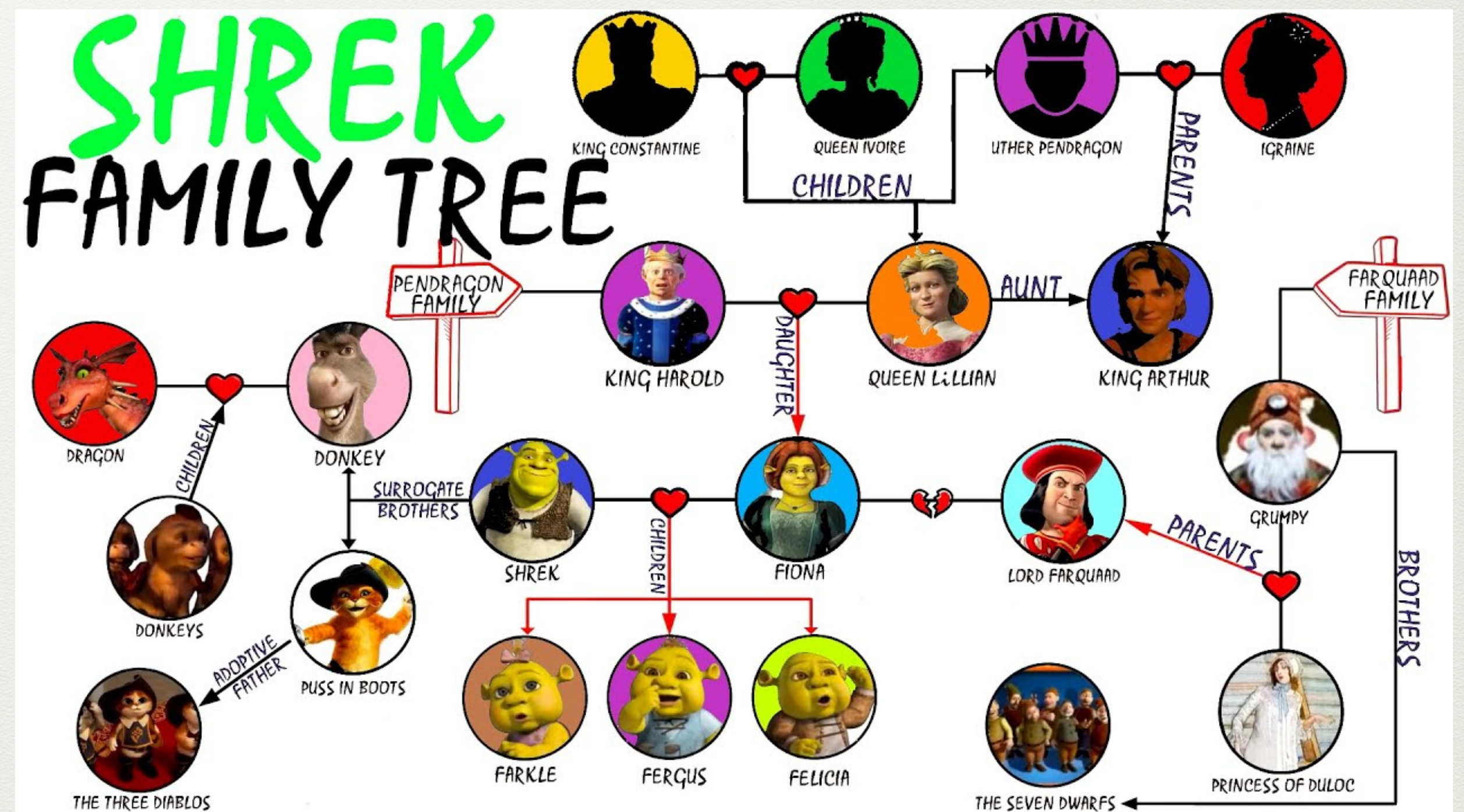


Genealogy Writing Workshop II
 Organizing Your Story
 March 2023

Broad Structures

Life Stories

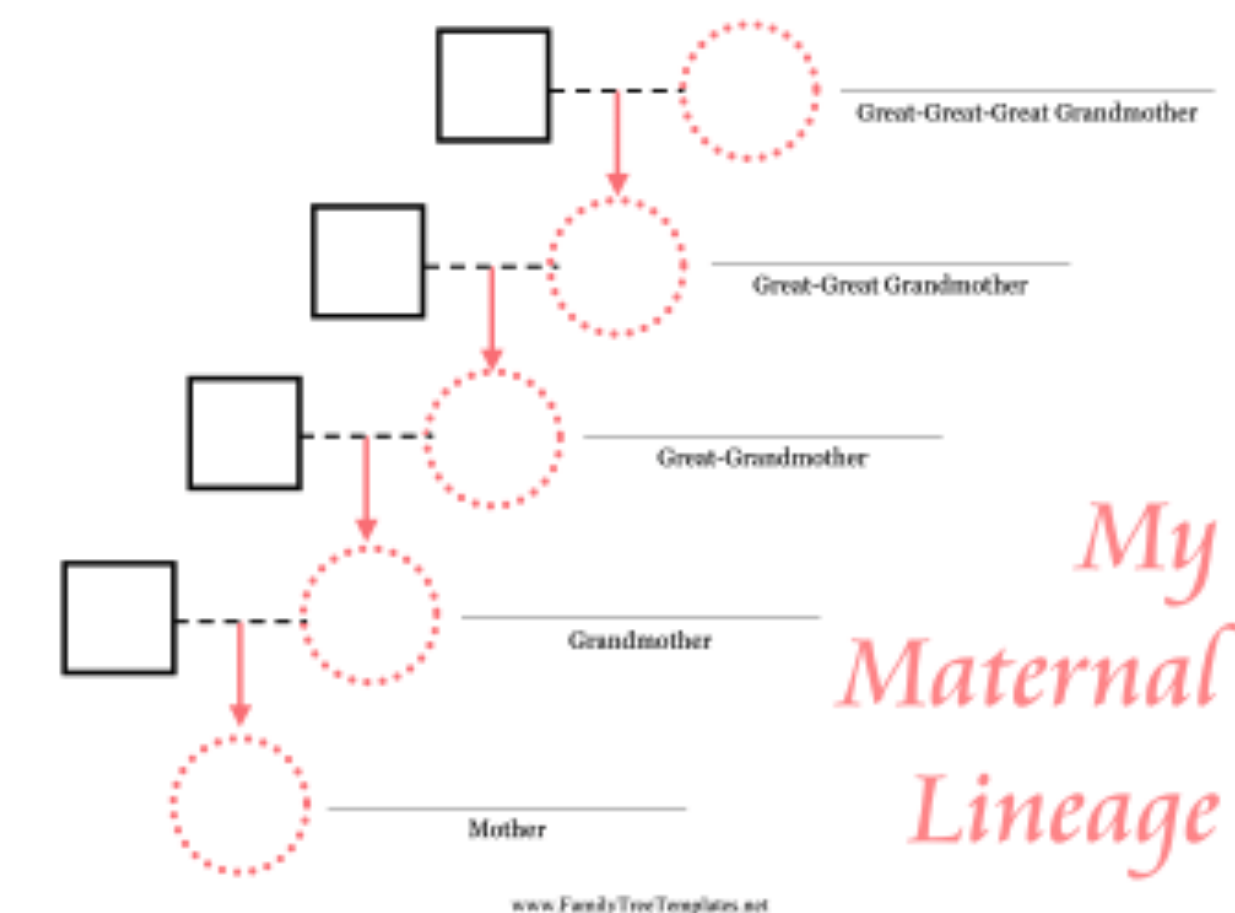
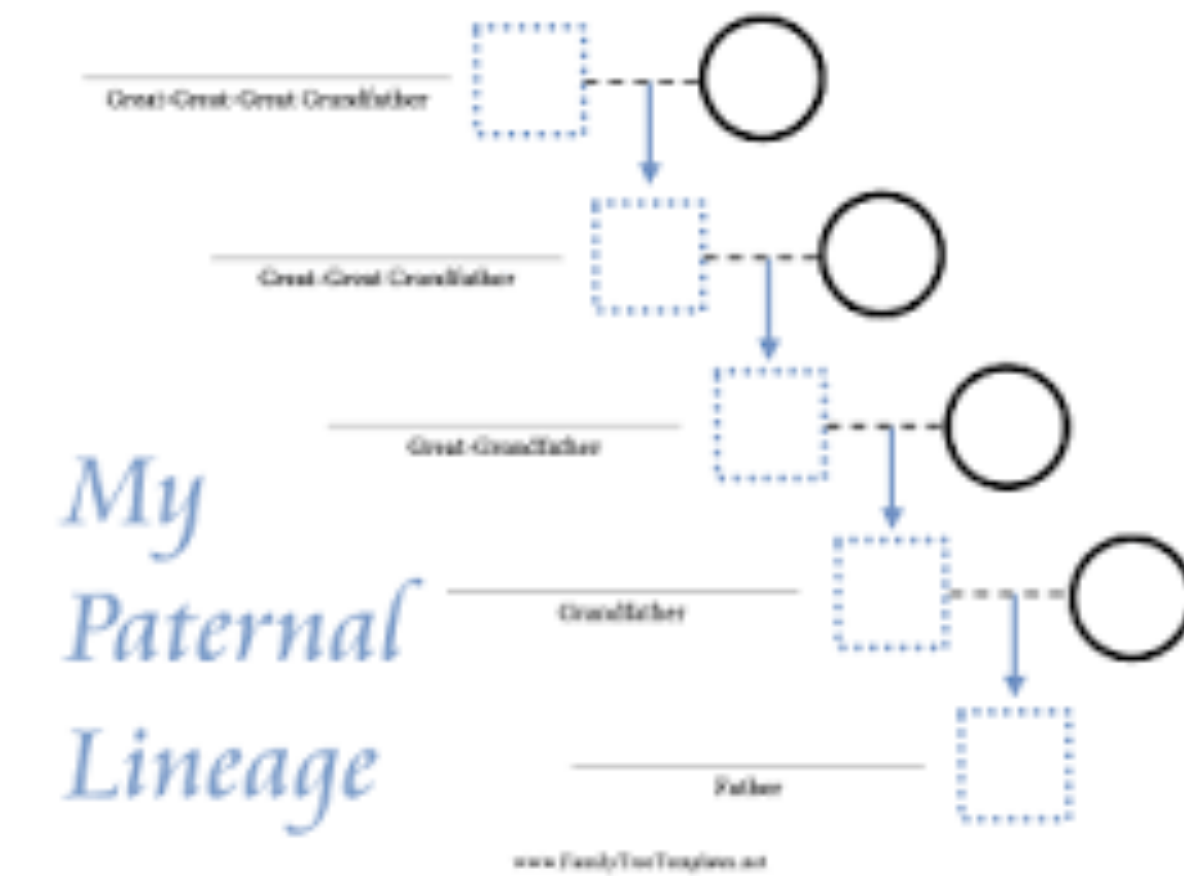
1. Autobiography: Our own full-life story as told by ourselves.
2. Memoir: Our partial life story focusing on an important event or period in our lives.
3. Biography: The full life story of another person.
4. Memoir-Style Biography: the partial life of another person focusing on an important event or period in their lives.



Multi-Generational Family Structures

Pole-shaped Family History.

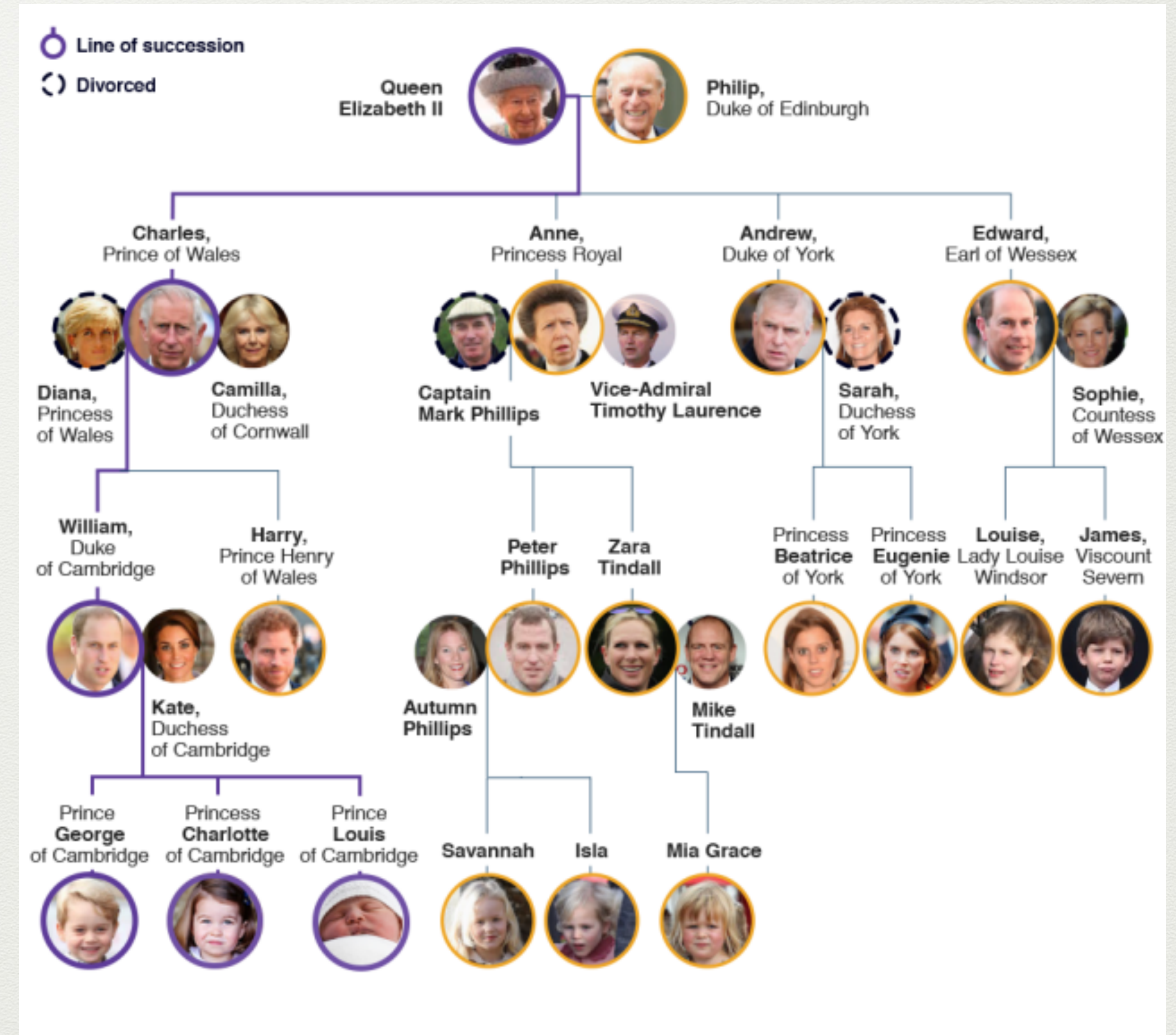
- Usually covers a single surname, although you can jump between male and female ancestors, or one gender.
- It only includes direct ancestors starting with the earliest-known member with that surname and ends with the most recent ancestor with that surname.



Multi-Generational Family Structures

Pyramid-Shaped Family History

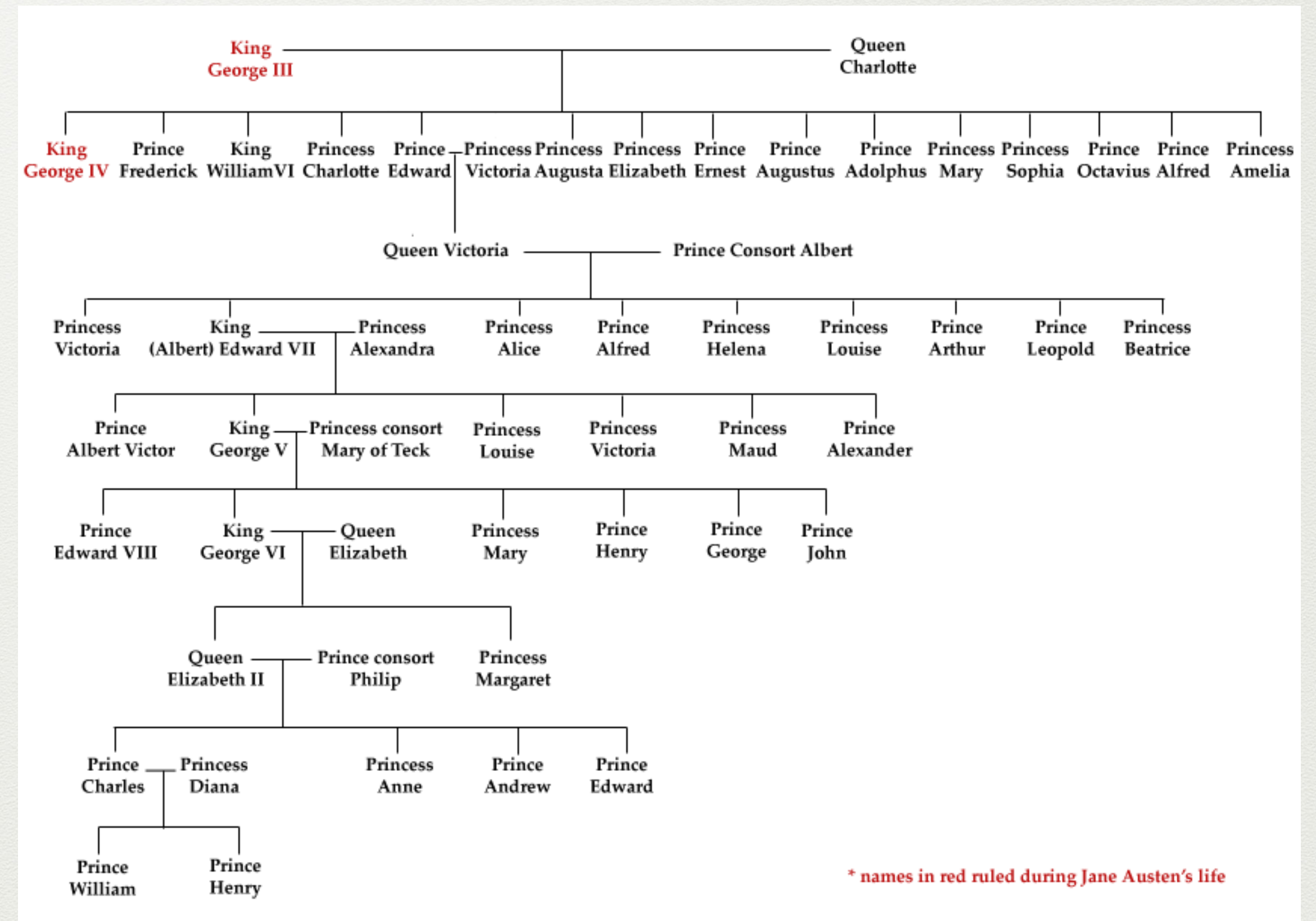
- It usually starts with a single individual or couple.
- It spreads out to cover all or many of the people of following generations.
- It can follow a single surname line only or includes a mix of surnames; that is it might only cover male descendants who carry the family surname, or include female descendants as well.
- It ends at any chosen point.



Multi-Generational Family Structures

Broom-shaped Family History

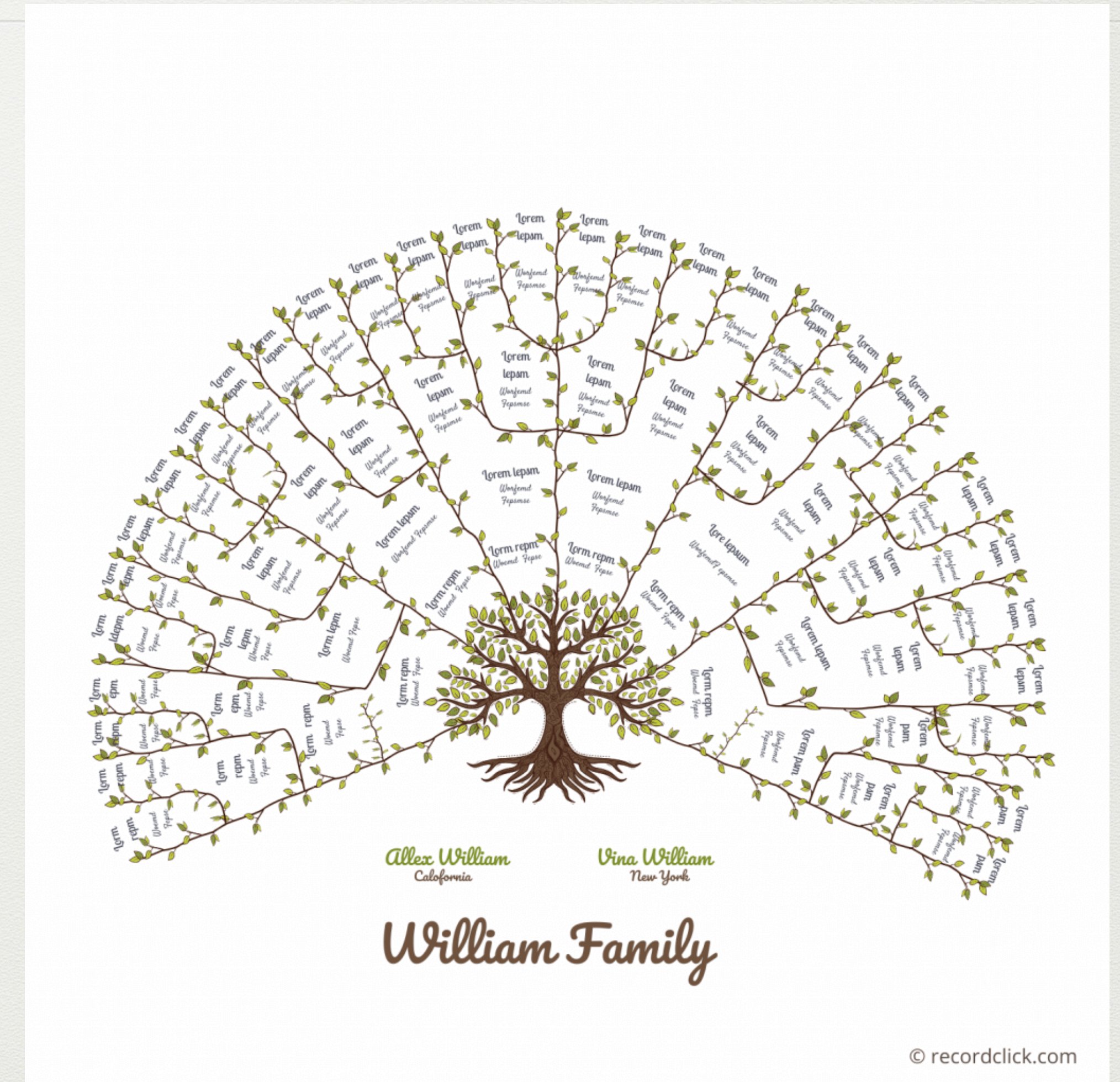
- It usually starts with two or more generations of a surname line family, documenting our direct ancestor only.
- At a logical point, it spreads out to cover multiple people in the succeeding generations.
- At the point of expansion, it might follow only the surname-line descendants or include female descendants as well.
- It ends at a chosen point.



Multi-Generational Family Structures

Who Begat Whom Family History

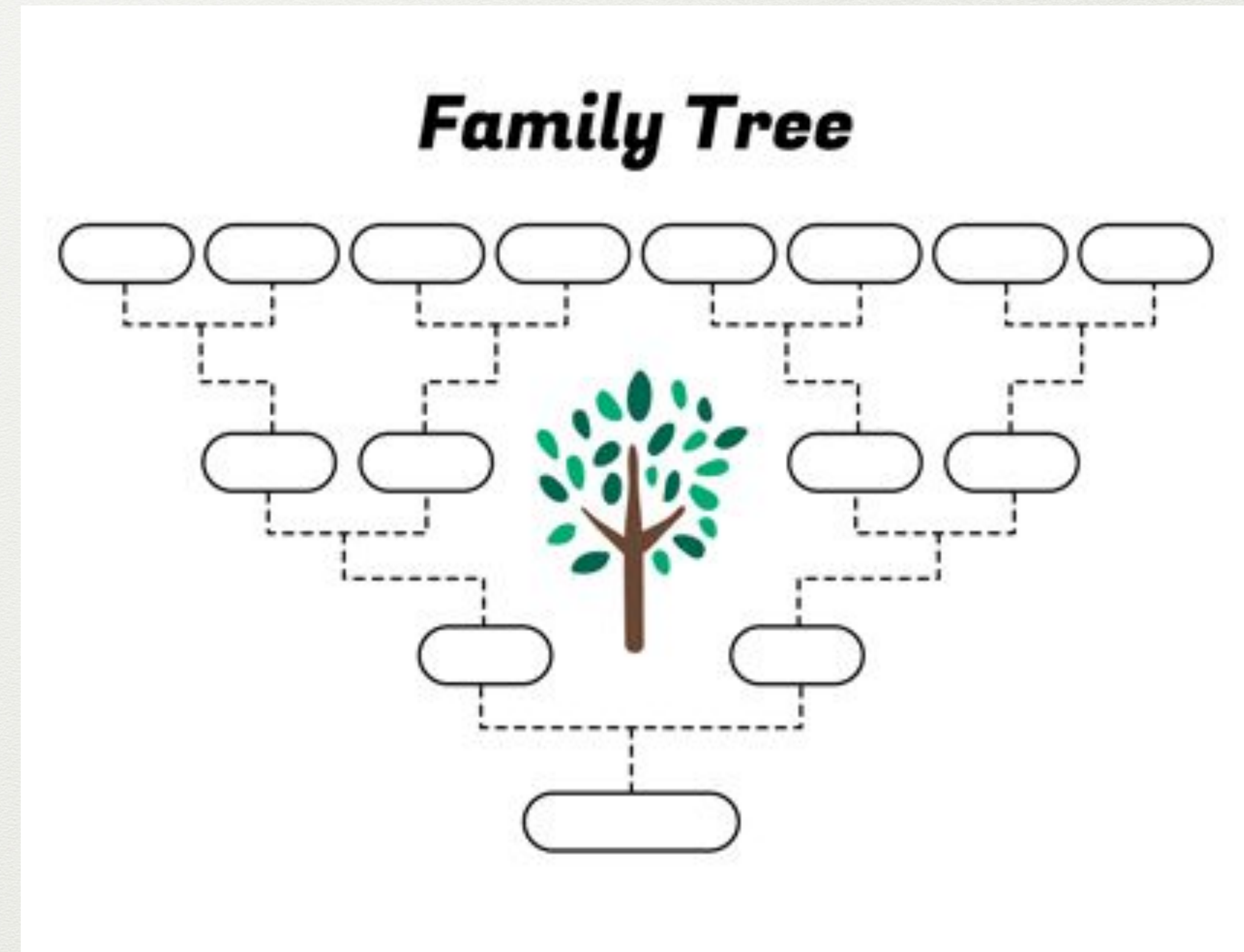
- It starts with a pole- or pyramid- or broom-shaped structure from a chosen point, covers everyone to the present day.
- Usually riddled with errors and is obsolete before publication.
- Tedious to write, difficult to structure, and boring to read.



Multi-Generational Family Structures

V-Shaped Family History

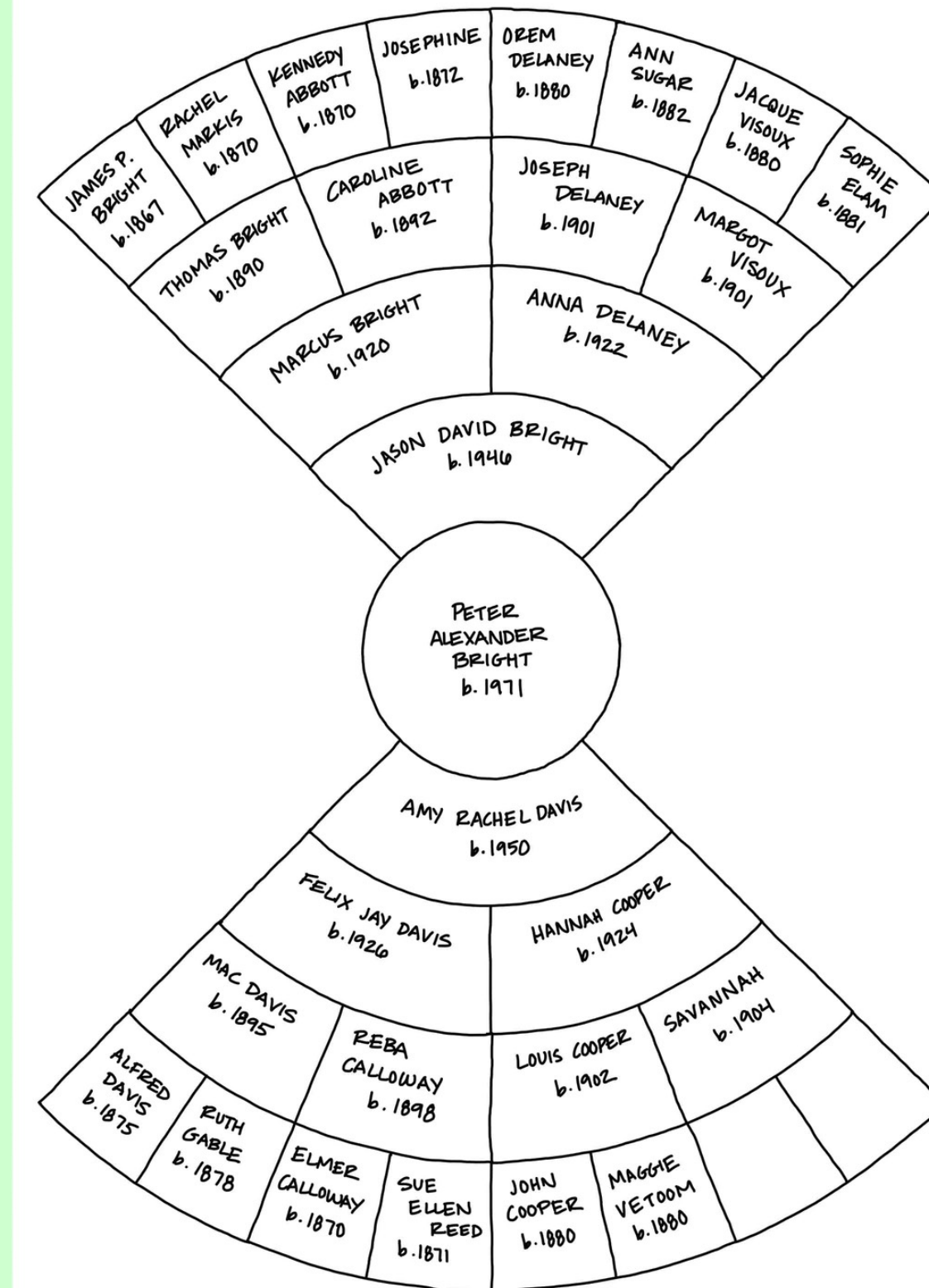
- It usually starts with ourselves and documents two or three preceding generations.
- Anything more than three requires a different structure.



Multi-Generational Family Structures

Hourglass-Shaped Family History

- It usually starts with ourselves and documents preceding generations (usually two or more) and succeeding generations (usually one or two).
- It is best produced as a computer printout for immediate family member publication.



Book Structures To Consider

- Working title:
- Preface or Introduction: Explaining the “for who”, the “why”, and perhaps the “how”.
- Epigraphs: Short quotation or saying are a great way of starting your publication with a literary connection.
- Surname origins
- Central Biographies of core characters, persons of focus.
- Pocket Biographies of side characters like children
- Use of timelines for sense of context of historical time and place.
- Use of illustrations, maps and photos.
- Index



Consider Your Style of Writing

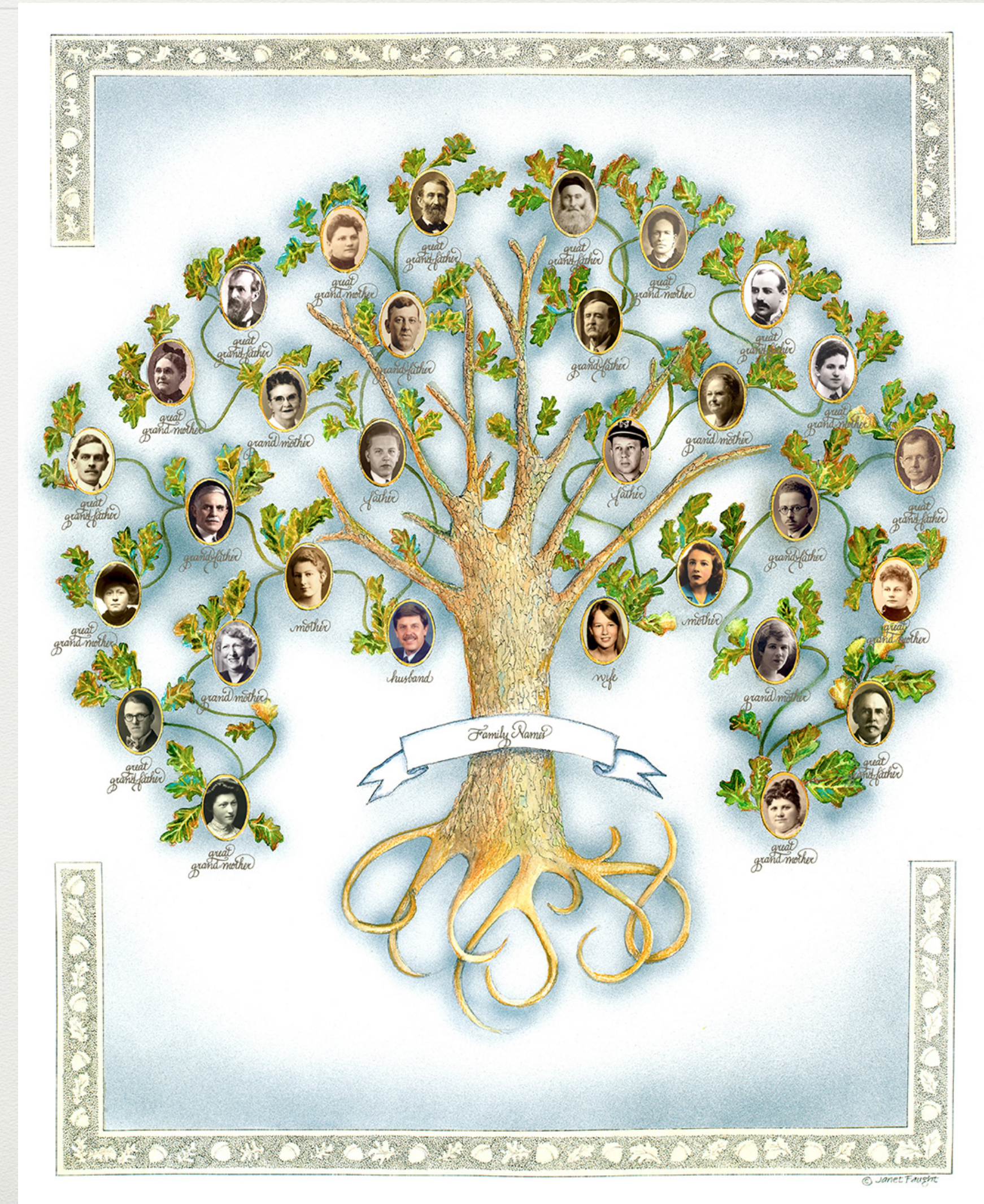
Literary Style

- Expository: Easy way of nonfiction writing, but can be dry.
- Descriptive: Literary and captures the imagination if well done, boring if not well done.
- Narrative: Storytelling is critical, but must be sequential and a modulated pace. Don't rush "then..and then...and then."
- Persuasive: Use lightly if at all.
- First person vs third person. First person comes from your point of view, third person is more objective.



Challenge

1. Set up the first draft structure for your book.
2. Come up with a first draft title.
3. Decide the overall purpose and theme for your book.
4. Determine if you are writing in the first or third person and be consistent.
5. Determine what items will be part of each story.
6. Start by writing about yourself in that format for practice , even if you are not going to use it.



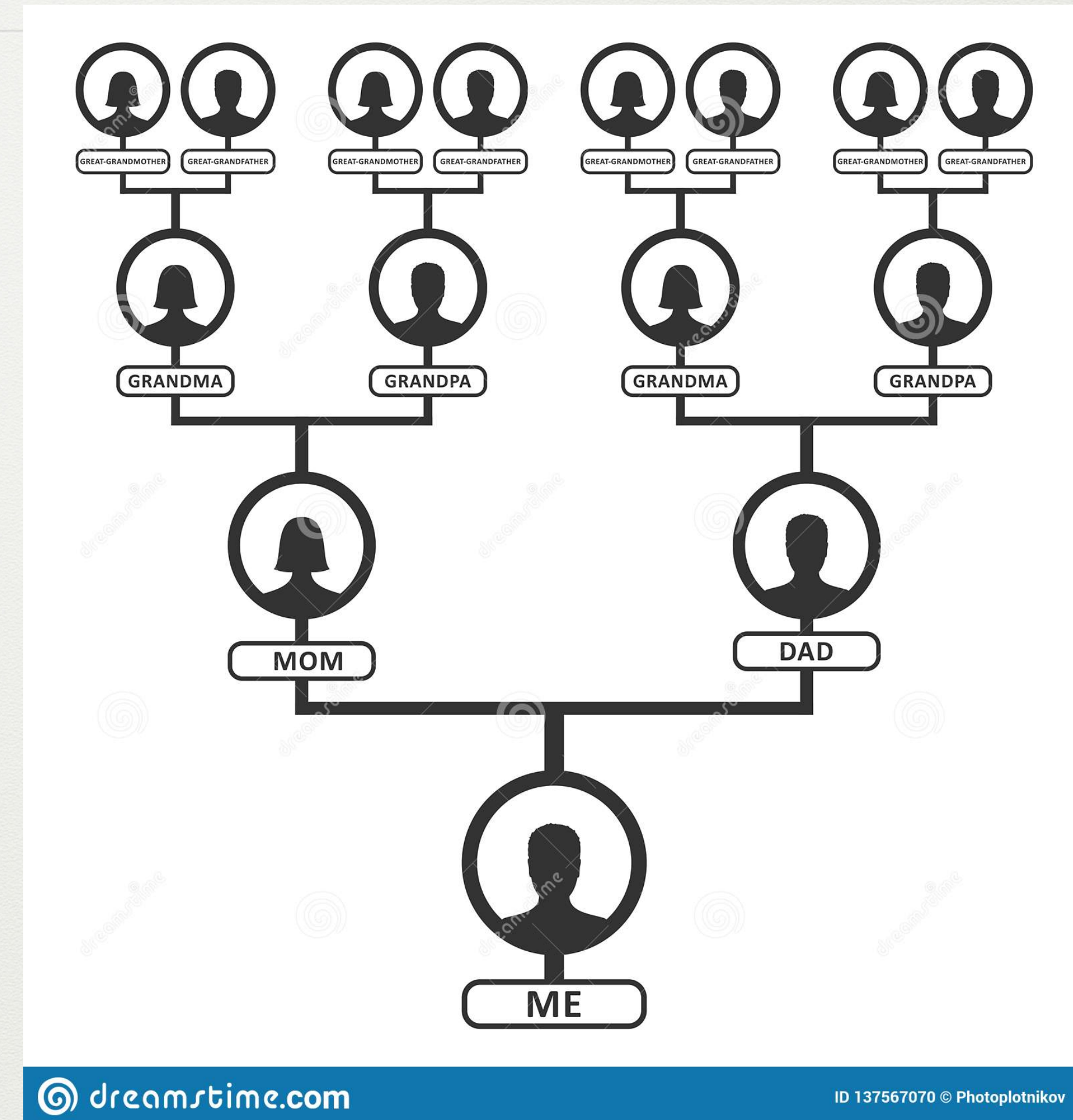
Sample Organization

- **Draft Title: The Book of Daniel**
- **Audience: Nephew and nieces, age 10 to 16**
- **Purpose: Education to promote interest in history. Format to be used for younger nieces, then a young adult type family history**
- **Format: James Michener approach with present at the end or reverse. Use DNA research for the migration of genetic evidence through history. Interview with Daniel will be similar to biographies center in his life now in historical context.**
- **Preface, Epigraph, Index**
- **limited third person, narrative with description, steady pace of young adult literature.**
- **Emphasis on historical time period, how they lived, technology of the time. History of the place.**
- **Targeted highlighted individuals longer story with pocket stories of interesting relatives.**
- **Emphasis on photos, maps, and some documents.**
- **Timeline on each page.**
- **Pedigree or extended family tree in the back.**
- **Lead-up to publishing: calendar, then chart, then book**
- **Possible Publisher Ancestry My Canvas or PDF format with Roots Magic if I can get timeline format.**



Legacy Family Tree Webinars

- **Get on the mailing list for free webinars and sign up for those you are interested. They will send you a link.** <https://familytreewebinars.com/>
- **Webinars are free to the public the first week and then go into a library behind a paywall.**
- **Carol Baxter “Structuring A Family History”:** <https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/structuring-a-family-history-class-1-of-4/>



Free Webinars from RootsTech Library in Family Search

- **Using artificial intelligence to write in Story Assist:** <https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/session/write-a-story-with-storyassist>
- **Using Photos to k=Kickstart a Photo:** <https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/session/how-to-use-photos-to-kickstart-a-story>
- **10 Steps to Writing and Publishing A Family History:** <https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/session/writing-and-publishing-a-family-history-10-steps-penelope-stratton>
- **Writing Your Ancestors Story (Series):** <https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/series/writing-your-ancestors-story>

