



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc.

Learn More With Ancestry Academy

by Joanne Mason



Ancestry.com has a wealth of genealogical research bells and whistles, depending on the subscription you choose. But did you know you can access Ancestry Academy, the site's library of educational videos, for free?

I didn't realize this until I read Nancy Hendrickson's "[Ancestry.com for Free? 7 Ways to Research With No Subscription](#)" in the January/February 2021 issue of *Family Tree* magazine. There, you'll find a brief summary of what Ancestry Academy has to offer, but I thought it would be fun to delve even further.

Ancestry Academy divides its video library into 11 categories:

[Five Minute Finds.](#) This section is a grab bag of videos, all under five minutes long. Topics include census records, agricultural schedules, and tips for using Ancestry and its related sites, Fold3 and Find A Grave.

[Researching Your Military Ancestors in the US.](#) This section includes research videos for the Civil War, World War I, and the War of 1812. You'll also find videos on pension application files and tips for using Fold3, an Ancestry-related site.

[Newspapers.com.](#) Searching newspapers and obituaries for information about your ancestors? Check out this category. (Note: Newspapers.com is another Ancestry-related website.)

[Getting The Most Out Of Ancestry.](#) Even if you've been using Ancestry for years, there is always more to learn. In this section, you might find research paths you hadn't considered before.

[Researching a State.](#) This collection offers state-specific research information on Illinois, [Massachusetts](#), Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, and Virginia.

[Researching Outside the United States.](#) Here, you'll find tips for researching English, Italian, Irish, German, and French-Canadian genealogy.

[Methodology and Skills.](#) Build your skills in a variety of areas, including African American research, Canadian records, church and religious records, cemetery information, and more.

[Find a Grave.](#) Learn more about this helpful cemetery resource (also related to Ancestry). You'll find out how to set up a Find a Grave account, add memorials, and edit your information.

Understanding DNA. What should genealogists know about DNA? Look here for videos on the science behind DNA testing and how to link the connections you make with your research.

Did You Know? This category offers videos on house histories, lineage societies, non-population schedules and more.

Census Records. Here, I enjoyed a series of videos called “Who is that Tick Mark? Using Early Census Records.” It helped me understand all those slash marks on early census pages.

Within each topic listed above, you’ll often find several more related videos. For example, the series “You Found What in the 1940 Census?” includes 14 videos, and “Mining Obituaries for New Evidence” offers 10.

Wherever you are in your genealogical journey, you’re sure to find something of interest in Ancestry Academy.