

My  
**PIONEER**  
Ancestor



A **Zip** The Grandma Gap Activity Book

By Janet Hovorka & Amy Slade

# How To Use This Book

This activity book is designed to help create stronger bonds in modern families by encouraging the whole family to learn about their ancestors together. Greater knowledge about family history especially strengthens and empowers youth by creating self-esteem, resilience and a greater sense of control over their lives. Studying the family's past also strengthens the relationships between living family members by creating a shared experience and core identity that no one else in the world can duplicate. Young people can take the lead to accomplish the activities in this book with their family members.

It is our hope that learning about your family's past together can be a fun and exciting adventure and that this book will help all of your family members discover joy in the quest to find out more about your ancestors.

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# Introduction



Go west young man and grow up with the country.” ~Horace Greely

In the mid 1800’s, great excitement swept through the United States as many settlers moved from the eastern part of the country out to the wide open spaces of the American west.

There was a feeling of “Manifest Destiny”—that Americans had the support of diety and were called to conquer the wild landscape. Pioneers left home to work hard, become independent and earn a better life for their families.

If you have pioneer ancestors, you come from people who were tough and you have courage in your DNA. You might have a sense of adventure like the pioneers did and a desire to reach for the stars and accomplish amazing things. As you learn about your pioneer ancestors, you can develop the optimism and can-do attitude that helped them through their lives. It might just help you too.

If you have one pioneer ancestor, you might have several pioneer ancestors. For this book, you may want to focus on the one you know the most about or the one most interesting to you, but feel free to add other pages in the back with more information about other ancestors.



## Sections of this Book

The workbook starts with pages to fill in what you know about your ancestors and instructions on where to look for more information. Then there are pages with common cultural experiences which work like puzzle pieces to help fill in what the day-to-day lives of your ancestors were like. The pages with references that are not specific to your family members are marked at the bottom of the page with puzzle pieces. While you may not be sure that your ancestors experienced all of the details of this cultural knowledge, these are common experiences shared by many pioneer people in the past and they very likely apply to your family.