

# *Italian Genealogy for Kids*



**An education kit for Italian Australian  
primary students and parents.**

Acknowledgements:

developed by Tania Barbati

Images reproduced with permission by the Italian Historical Society and Tania Barbati



La famiglia è un collegamento con il nostro passato e un ponte verso il nostro futuro

The family is a link to our past, a bridge to our future. – Alex Haley

September 2012

# Finding out where I come from

Have you ever wondered from where your family originated in Italy? Or whether you are related to someone famous? Or who your parents' grandparents were? What did they do? Where did they live? What were their names? Why not investigate your family history? Genealogy is the study of family history - all the people who are in your family tree as well as those who have lived before you.

One of the first ways to start is by speaking to your parents. They can give you information regarding their birth details, their life growing up, and even some information and details about your grandparents. If your grandparents are still alive, imagine what they can tell you! Don't forget your aunts, uncles and cousins too!. Have a large notebook so that you can jot down notes and information or a digital recorder if you have access to one.

## Genealogy Jargon

Ancestor – any person from whom you are directly descended. For example, your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents etc

Archival paper – acid free paper that will not turn yellow or become brittle with age that is used to protect documents and artefacts

Artefacts – an object made by humans such as a tool or work of art

Emigrate – to leave a country to live in another

Family shield or crest – symbols and/ or colours that are used to represent a family

Family Tree – a chart demonstrating how people are related to one another in a family. These can be found in many shapes eg. fan chart, pedigree chart, bow tie chart

Genealogy – the study of the history of a family

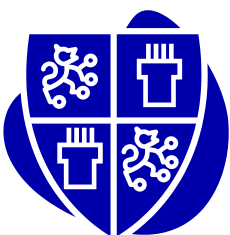
Generation – people born and living in the same time. You are a member from one generation, your parents are from an older generation and your grandparents are from an even older generation

Heirlooms – objects that have been passed down the generations by your ancestors eg. photographs, jewellery, letters, dowry objects, wedding dress

Heritage – anything that is passed down from previous generations, like traditions, stories

Memento – something that serves as a reminder of the past

Time capsule – a container used for storing documents and artefacts, as being typical of the present time that will be opened at some future time



## *A Piece of the Past ~ Una cosa del passato*

- A) Look at the everyday objects below. These objects give us a glimpse into the past. Do you recognize them? What would they have been used for? When would they have been used?



- B) Find a memento or an heirloom, either a family keepsake or an object that has been passed down. Research it by interviewing parents, grandparents or other relatives who can shed some light into the object.

Possible questions:

**What is the object?**

**What was it used for?**

**Who used it?**

**When was it made?**

**What memories does it evoke?**




- C) Bring the object to school or take a photograph of it, if it is too precious. Ask the teacher if a class museum of family mementos can be set up. Label each item using the answers from the above questions.

(See the last page to find out what the above objects are)

## Where do they come from in Italy? ~

### Da dove vengono in Italia?

- ❖ Do you know from where in Italy your ancestors originate? Which region, province, town or village they come from? You will need to speak to your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles etc.
- ❖ Enlarge a map of Italy. Using an atlas or the internet find the regions and towns where your ancestors lived. Mark these places with stickers or flags. 
- ❖ By clicking on a region on the following website, it will enlarge so the provinces and main towns can be seen of that region. <http://www.big-italy-map.co.uk/>



# Family Tree - L'albero genealogico

Family Trees can be drawn in various shapes and can show a number of generations. Photos can be included with names, dates of births & deaths.



Use one of the many templates below to record your family tree or make up your own.

Online templates:

[http://www.genealogy.com/genealogy/cgi-bin/tree\\_gen.cgi?undefined](http://www.genealogy.com/genealogy/cgi-bin/tree_gen.cgi?undefined)

<http://www.myplaceinhistory.com>

<http://www.myheritage.it>

Printable templates:

<http://www.workman.com/familytree/>

<http://kids.familytreemagazine.com/kids/teachersforms.asp> - adoptive & stepfamily trees

Downloadable templates:

<http://misbach.org/freecharts.html>

<http://www.familytreetemplates.net/>

## Family Crest ~ Lo stemma familiare

In the past a Family Crest was used to identify a family's history and values. Originally warriors would choose colours and symbols to represent their families. Some of these have been passed down through the generations. Most of us do not have connections to these ancient warriors and the symbols that were used. Below are some examples.



*Montalto*



*Grossi*



*Di Vincenzo*

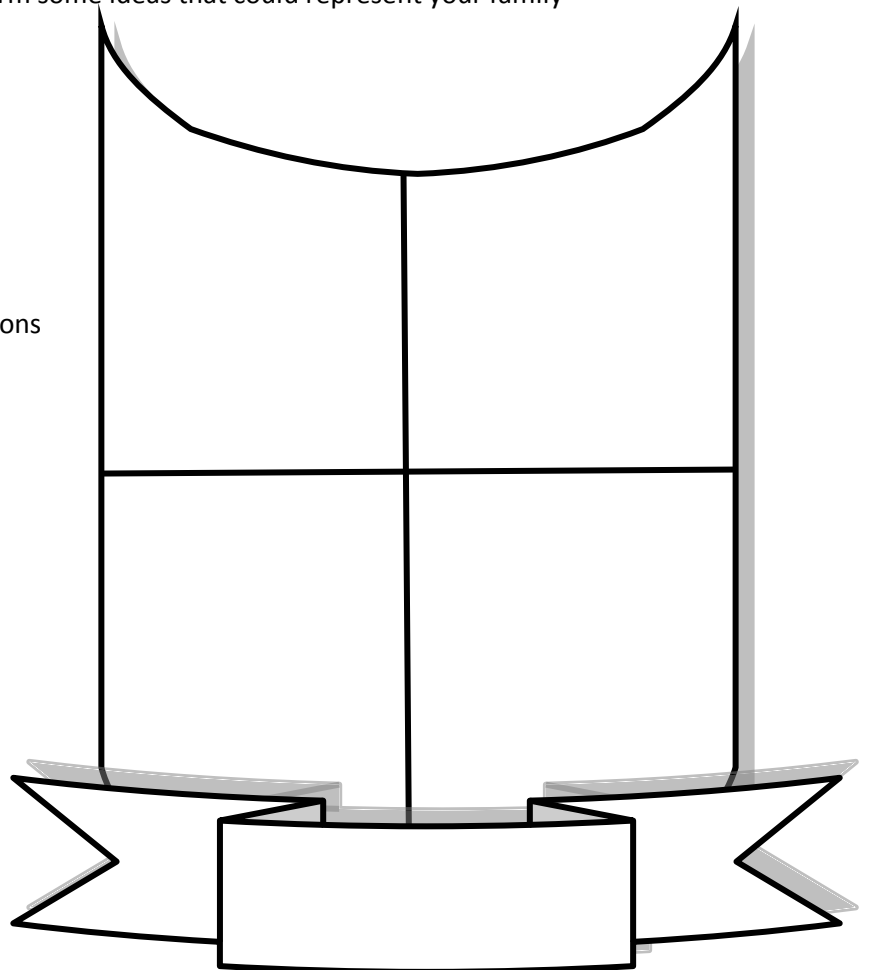


*Raimondo*

- The following Italian website [http://www.stemmario.it/stemmario.php?q\\_t=0](http://www.stemmario.it/stemmario.php?q_t=0) displays some examples of family shields. You might find that your family has a shield or crest already, illustrate it.
- Create one for your own family.  
With your family brainstorm some ideas that could represent your family history, lives or values.

for example:

- Flags of the town or region
- Special foods that are eaten
- Photos/ drawings of celebrations and favourite family events
- Symbols that could represent the surname of the family



- Use the shield samples on the websites below, or draw your own.
  - [http://www.heraldry.ca/kids\\_en/heraldry\\_make\\_shield.htm](http://www.heraldry.ca/kids_en/heraldry_make_shield.htm)
  - <http://www.fleurdelis.com/meanings.htm>
  - [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4814418\\_design-family-shield.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4814418_design-family-shield.html)

## *Let's talk... ~ Parliamo...*

*When investigating your family history you will be talking to many family members about their lives. Think about the type of information you want to learn. Be prepared with a list of questions like the ones below or think up some of your own. Have a notebook to write notes or better still, use a digital recorder, so that you can listen carefully without having to quickly jot down notes. Remember that some people may not want to answer certain questions for personal reasons so respect their privacy. When interviewing people, ask them if they have any heirlooms, photos or letters etc. that can support their story.*

- What is your name (given name, nickname, maiden name etc.)?
- Were you named after someone? Who?
- When and where were you born? (date and country of birth/ in a hospital or at home)
- What were your parents' names?
- What are your earliest memories?
- Where did you live? Describe your neighbourhood. Describe your house, How big was it? How many rooms/ bathrooms? Did it have plumbing, lighting, heating, a laundry, a telephone?)
- Did you attend school? Which school did you attend? Tell about your teachers, favourite subject, least favourite subject, discipline.
- What was your first job? How much did get paid?
- Tell me about special celebrations. How did you celebrate Birthdays, Easter, Saints' Days, Christmas (customs and traditions, presents)?
- Did you get married? When? To whom? Name, where and when he/she was born, grew up, lived, his/her parents and any other details.
- Where did you meet?
- How did you propose/ or were proposed to?
- Tell me some details about your wedding. How long did it take to plan? Details about clothes, cost, bridal party, honeymoon etc.
- How many children did you have? What names did you give them?
- Why did you leave Italy? What circumstances in Italy caused you to leave it?
- Describe your journey to Australia. Did you arrive by ship or aeroplane?
- What objects/ items did you bring from Italy to Australia?
- What issues/ difficulties did you encounter in Australia?
- Describe your early life in Australia – work, housing, socialisation, language, food
- How do you feel about your life in Australia?
- Have you ever returned to Italy? Why?



Sample questions taken from: <http://www.howtofindyourroots.com/start>

# Games from the Past ~ I giochi del passato

How different were the games played by your parents and grandparents when they were children?

Here's a game called *Morra* which is a hand game that has been around since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century when the Turks brought it to Italy. It is played with 2 players who display a certain number of fingers on the right hand and simultaneously guess out loud the total number of fingers that will be presented by both players. If no-one guesses the correct sum or both players guess the same number, they continue playing until there is a clear winner.

Reference: <http://www.incamerano.net/morra.html>



Bartolomeo Pinelli (1781-1835)-Il gioco di morra-1809

Ask your parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles about the types of games they played as children. Have them show you some games and then play some with them. Write the details of the games and create a book.

Aim of the game:

---

---

---

---

How to play:

---

---

---

---

---



## *Time capsule ~ Una capsula del tempo*

A time capsule is a collection of objects and/or information that is gathered and housed in a special container to put away or bury, and is re-opened some time in the future to communicate what life was like in the past. When will the time capsule be opened? In five years? Ten years time? This is something you will need to decide.

*What sorts of items would you include in a time capsule to communicate to future generations in your family what life was like today?*

Here are some ideas:

- Photos of family members, leisure time, celebrations and work
- Old mobile phone
- Games
- Footy cards
- Favourite books
- Traditions
- Personal stories from each member of the family – see sample letters on the next page

Points to consider when choosing items for the time capsule:

- Use archival quality paper for photocopying of documents, newspaper articles and photos etc.
- Avoid CDs and DVDs as the technology to support them may change if the time capsule is to be opened in 10 years time
- Avoid using felt tip pens and documents created with bubble jet printers
- Avoid rubber items as these will deteriorate over time
- To separate items made from different materials in the capsule use polypropylene or archival paper
- Choose a container that is strong, waterproof and materially stable
- Label the items in the capsule using permanent ink on archival paper. Attach the labels with fishing line or linen cord.



[www.commonswikimedia.org](http://www.commonswikimedia.org)



[www.craftystaci.com](http://www.craftystaci.com)

Reference: <http://www.naa.gov.au/services/family-historians/family-archive/time-capsules.aspx>

## Sample letters for the time capsule

12<sup>th</sup> August, 2011

*My name is Marco and I am the youngest in the Galli family. My parents are Tony and Luisa. I have a brother, Peter who is 15 and a sister, Gabriella who is 13. I am 11 years old. I attend St. Patrick's School in Pascoe Ascot and I am in grade 6. I am school captain and my favourite subjects are Maths, Physical Education and Italian. Last week my class went on camp to Mt. Evelyn, it was fantastic! We went on a 10km bush walk and one evening we did a night walk where we saw many nocturnal animals like possums and bats. My friend Tom smuggled his DS into his bag and he was caught with it in bed by Mr. Troy our teacher. He confiscated it. The best part of the camp was the flying fox.*

*I play football on Tuesdays and soccer on Saturdays. My dad is the coach of my soccer team and my nonno Gerardo comes along to the matches to cheer me on. He loves to watch me play soccer. I would like to be a professional soccer player but my dad says that I have to be really committed and sacrifice some things in life.*

12<sup>th</sup> August, 2011

*I am Gerardo Galli and I came to Australia in 1956 on the ship *Achille Lauro*. I was 23 years old when I arrived and was met by my older brother, Paolo who had been here already 3 years. He helped me find a job in a pipe factory. I worked there for 2 years before going to North Queensland to cut cane. It was hard work but I made some good friends. I decided to stay in North Queensland after I met a girl with whom I became engaged. Her parents had emigrated from Sicily in 1945. I married in 1962 and with my wife moved to Melbourne. We had three children. One of my most memorable occasions was the birth of my first grandchild, Marta. Seeing that baby made me think of all the years in Australia and the many sacrifices and hardships that I endured. I was grateful for the life I have had and was proud that I had been able to provide a good life for my family and had passed on some of our traditions. Now here was the first of the next generation, I felt so proud. I like to spend time with my grandchildren and I like to know what they are up to...it makes me feel young!*

## *Timeline ~ Cronologia*

Create a timeline on someone in your family who has migrated from Italy. In the timeline document the significant events of the person's life and any local, national & worldwide events that affected their lives. Photos could be included. Here is a sample:

Storia dell'Italia e dell'Australia	Storia personale di Nino Bortoli
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><b>1930 – 1939</b> Fascism escalates in Italy</p> <p><b>1939 – 1945</b> World War 2</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px; background-color: #d8bfd8;"> <p><b>1943</b> – Italy surrenders to the Allies in World War 2</p> <p><b>1946</b> Italy becomes a republic</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><b>1946 onwards</b> – lack of work in Italy contributes to the mass migration to many parts of the world, including Argentina, Australia, Canada and United States of America</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px; background-color: #d8bfd8;"> <p><b>1955</b> The sugar cane industry's rapid growth in North Queensland continues for the next 15 years.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><b>1971</b> Australian census records 660,000 Italian born residents</p> <p><b>1970 -1980</b> Italy's economy improves &amp; Italian migration to Australia virtually stops.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px; background-color: #d8bfd8;"> <p><b>Early 1990s</b> in Italy – “Clean Hands”(Mani pulite) operation uncovers large scale corruption in political parties</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>2001</b> -- Federal government refuses to allow the Norwegian freighter <i>Tampa</i>, carrying rescued asylum seekers, into Australian waters</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>21<sup>st</sup> May, 1932</b> – birth of Nino Bortoli, Sulmona, Abruzzo</li> <li>➤ German soldiers enter Sulmona looking for food. Nino's father tells him to hide the cows in the mountains so the Germans won't take them.</li> <li>➤ <b>3<sup>rd</sup> September, 1934</b> – sister Luisa is born</li> <li>➤ Between 1936 &amp; 1946 his brothers &amp; sister are born</li> <li>➤ <b>1952</b> - Nino is conscripted into the army. He is based in Treviso.</li> <li>➤ <b>1956</b> - Nino leaves Italy for Australia. Lives and works in Carlton, Melbourne. Works in Mildura picking grapes. Moves to North Queensland to cut cane.</li> <li>➤ <b>1963</b> – returns to Italy to visit parents. Becomes engaged to Giulia from his home town. Returns to Australia after his brother Antonio dies in a car accident</li> <li>➤ <b>1964</b> – Giulia, future bride arrives in Sydney             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nino &amp; Giulia marry on 4<sup>th</sup> November in North Queensland</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <b>1965</b> – birth of daughter Antonia</li> <li>➤ <b>1967</b> - birth of son Roberto</li> <li>➤ <b>1972</b> - Nino takes his family to Italy with the intention of possibly remaining for good. After 8 months the whole family returns to Australia They visit Melbourne to see Nino's brother, Paolo</li> <li>➤ <b>1979</b> - Nino and his family re-locate to Melbourne to give his children more opportunities for study &amp; work and also to be nearer to his brother. Begins work at the Ford Motor Company in Broadmeadows</li> <li>➤ <b>1986</b> – Nino returns to Italy to see his father</li> <li>➤ <b>1993</b> – develops renal failure and is committed to dialysis for the remainder of his life</li> <li>➤ <b>1995</b> – death of his wife</li> <li>➤ <b>2003</b> – birth of his only grand-child, Natalia</li> <li>➤ <b>2005</b> – Nino passes away aged 72</li> </ul>

## *What's in a name? ~ Che cosa c'è in un nome?*

- ❖ How popular is your surname in Italy? Check out the websites below, write your surname in the search and see in how many places they pop up in Italy.

<http://www.gens.labo.net/it/cognomi/genera.html>

<http://www.cognomix.it/mappe-dei-cognomi-italiani.php>

- ❖ How did your parents decide on your name? Were you named after an ancestor? Who was it? Why were you named after that ancestor? Find out about this person. Were your parents/ grandparents named after an ancestor?



Antonio



Tania



Giovannina

I'm called Tania. I was named after an uncle, Antonio. In 1963 he died in a car accident. I was born in 1965 and my parents decided to name me after him. My mother wanted a more modern name, not Antonia or Antoniette, so I was named Tania. Zio Antonio came to Australia in 1960 with one of his brothers, from Abruzzo when he was 22 years old. He came to join his older brother in North Queensland who was cutting sugar cane in Innisfail. My middle name is Gianna, and this was chosen after my maternal grandmother who was called Giovannina. She was left in Italy to raise and educate her four daughters while her husband was in Detroit, America, working and sending money back to Italy.



Francesco



Frank



Lino

My brother's name is Franco (but everyone calls him Frank). He was named after my paternal grandfather, Francesco. He was a farmer who grew grapes, cultivated the land and collected firewood in the forest. His constant companion was his mule. He was a man who worked hard to provide for his family of 6 children. Frank's middle name is Lino. Lino was the youngest of my father's brothers. He died in a car accident in Northern Queensland, the year before Frank was born. Lino arrived in Australia in 1962 and joined his three brothers.

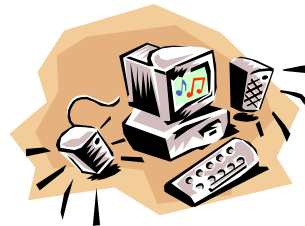
## *Let's see...~ Vediamo ...*

The sharing of your family history with family members and relatives is an important part of genealogy and may encourage them to assist you in continuing your research. Your family history and family tree can be recorded or presented in various ways. You may need assistance from an adult with some of the following ideas:

*Family history display book* – you can collect all the documents, photos, maps, letters, certificates etc. and place them in a large folder with plastic (archival) display pages in which you can arrange in family groups, from the oldest document to the most current. You can keep adding to the display as you keep researching.



*Multimedia scrap book* - you can document your family findings, documents, timelines etc. into a Power point presentation



*Family Website* – create a family website where you can upload photos, documents, the family tree and maybe also excerpts of audio & video files (with permission). Other family members can contribute to this along the way.



*Family newsletter* – you can share your findings via a newsletter with photos, interviews, documents, stories etc. You can email it to your family and relatives and also ask for any contributions that may assist you with your investigations.






*Family Reunion* – if you are really keen, you could organise a family reunion where you can share your discoveries including the family tree. It's a great way for other family members to share their stories and discoveries and possibly create other leads for you to follow.

# Genealogy for Children

## Websites:

-  <http://www.genwriters.com/children.html>
-  [http://genealogy.about.com/od/children/Genealogy for Children.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/od/children/Genealogy_for_Children.htm)
-  <http://www.howtofindyourroots.com/teachingaboutroots>
-  <http://www.genealogyspot.com/features/kids.htm>
-  <http://www.familytreemagazine.com/article/genealogy-activities-for-kids/>
-  <http://www.kidsturncentral.com/topics/hobbies/kidsgenealogy.htm>
-  <http://www.squidoo.com/genealogy4kids>
-  <http://genealogysoup.com/blog/genealogy-a-hobby-children-can-enjoy/>
-  <http://genealogy.about.com/od/children/a/detective.htm>
-  [http://www.genealogy.com/67\\_taylor.html](http://www.genealogy.com/67_taylor.html)
-  [http://www.genealogy.com/familyexplorer/1\\_HowtoStart.html#](http://www.genealogy.com/familyexplorer/1_HowtoStart.html#)
-  <http://www.myplaceinhistory.com>
-  <http://www.workman.com/familytree>
-  <http://www.naa.gov.au> National Australian Archives
-  <http://www.victoriags.org/school/>

## References:

-  Chambers, Margaret *Finding Families- The Guide to the National Archives of Australia for Genealogists* National Archives of Australia with Hale & Iremonger 1998
-  Nelson, Lynn. *A Genealogist's Guide to Discovering Your Italian Ancestors* Betterway books, Cincinnati 1997
-  Waddell, Dan. *Who Do You Think You Are? Be a Family Tree Detective* Walker Books, Sydney 2010
-  Wolfman, Ira. *Climbing Your Family Tree- Online and Off-line Genealogy for Kids* Workman Publishing, New York 2002