

Kinship and Family Folklore Activity

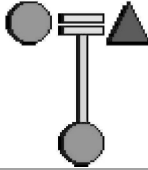
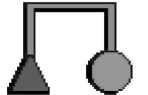
1. On a blank piece of paper, draw a kinship diagram for your family, off the top of your head. Label this “Kinship diagram #1.” Please use standard symbols as provided in the kinship symbols handout and improvise other symbols as needed. Be sure to make a clear key for your symbols and make your generational spacing apparent and organized. Make a copy of this family tree, so you can preserve the original, but make notes on it when you do your interview (see #2). Note: you only need to go as far as you and your family member can remember. In your original diagram, you should draw both sides of your family. But, the person you interview may only have information about one side of your family, and that is fine.
2. Make an appointment with a family elder, someone who is a kinship expert for your particular family: a grandparent, parent, aunt/ uncle, etc. You will be conducting “fieldwork” with that individual, collecting oral history information about your family tree. You may use the family tree you made as a point of reference or conversation starter in this interview, but do not refer to previously created genealogies or family Bibles—information should be gathered during your ethnographic interview only. The aim of this encounter is to gather qualitative information of interest from your family member, so you may want to prepare some open-ended questions in advance about the stories, controversies between kin, family lore, contested areas of family history, how world events impacted your family’s history etc:
3. Draw a second kinship diagram...new/ expanded material should be drawn in a different color than the original material. Label this diagram “Kinship diagram #2” and follow the same careful standards as mentioned above. You can make a copy of your original diagram and add to that for this second diagram.
4. Write a reflective essay, at least 750 words long, about your interview. You should include the following in a cohesive, well organized paper: a) how your interview helped you learn about your family, b) at least one piece of family folklore, and c) an analysis of how broader world events—such as the Great Depression, wars, migration, or 9/11, for example—affected your family. These particular historical examples are merely examples – they may not apply to your family. But, you should discuss relevant historical events from your country/region.

In sum, you will turn in two kinship diagrams and a 750 word essay.

Kinship Diagrams

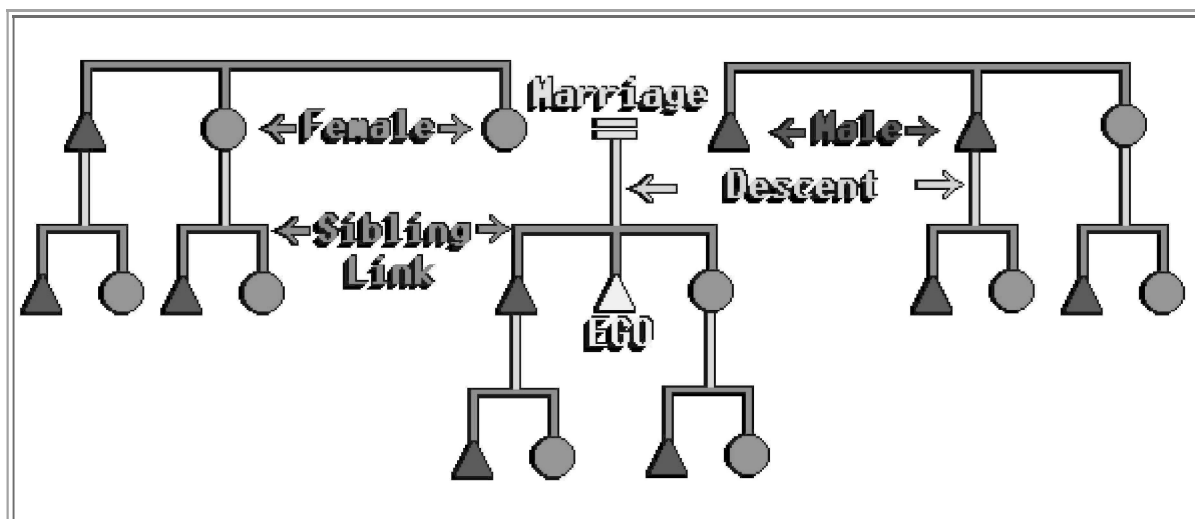
Basic Elements

Before we begin to understand kinship, we need to define some basis symbols that are used in constructing kinship diagrams, the fundamental tool for defining concepts and representing case studies.

Kinship Symbols		
A circle	●	represents a female
A triangle	▲	represents a male
An equal sign	●=▲	represents a marriage
A vertical line		represents descent or parentage
A horizontal line		represents a sibling bond.

Relationships are traced through a central individual labelled **EGO**.

These various elements are joined to produce a **kinship diagram** as follows:



Can you identify all of Ego's relatives depicted above?