# Gemini and Claude: Quick Start for Genealogists

## 1. Get Started and Protect Your Privacy

**Gemini:** Go to https://gemini.google.com. Sign in with your Google account. To protect your data, go to **Gemini Apps Activity** in your Google account settings and toggle activity **OFF**.

**Claude:** Go to https://claude.ai. Create a free account. Review **Settings > Privacy** to manage how your data is used. Claude does not use free-tier conversations to train its model by default.

**The Golden Rule:** Always treat AI output as a **draft**. It is never evidence. Verify every fact against original sources.

# 2. Set Up Your Genealogist Persona

Both tools work better when you tell them who you are. Paste this at the start of any new conversation, or save it in Custom Instructions (Claude) or Gems (Gemini Advanced).

| Field | What to enter |
|---|---|
| **About you** | "I am a genealogist researching families in [your region] from [time period] to present. I follow the Genealogical Proof Standard." |
| **How to respond** | "Be precise. Identify names, dates, places, and relationships. Format citations in Evidence Explained style. Flag uncertain readings. Do not invent information." |

# 3. Five Ready-to-Use Prompts

Copy these directly into Gemini or Claude. Replace bracketed text with your details.

**Summarize a record**

```
Summarize this [census/vital/church] record in a narrative
paragraph. Identify each person, their age, relationship,
occupation, and birthplace. [Paste record]
```

**Draft a biography**

```
Act as a professional genealogist. Using only these facts, write a
3-paragraph biography for a family history book. Do not add facts
I have not provided. [Paste your notes]
```

**Translate a record**

```
Translate this [Spanish/German/Latin] church record into English.
Identify names, dates, places, and relationships. Flag uncertain
words. [Paste record]
```

**Create a research plan**

```
Act as a professional genealogist. Create a research plan to
locate [record type] for [name] in [location], approximately
[dates]. Include repositories and likely challenges.
```

**Format a citation**

```
Format this as an Evidence Explained citation by Elizabeth Shown
Mills. Include all required elements. [Paste record details]
```

# 4. Privacy: Four Things to Never Do

1. **Never upload** documents containing Social Security Numbers, full addresses, or medical records
2. **Never share** information about living people without their explicit consent
3. **Never paste** raw DNA data or match lists into any AI tool
4. **Never trust** AI output without independent verification against original sources

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# 5. The Golden Rules

1. **AI assists; you decide.** AI is a research assistant, not a replacement for your judgment.
2. **Verify everything.** Always check AI output against original sources.
3. **Be specific.** Better prompts produce better results.
4. **Protect privacy.** Do not upload documents with living persons' information.
5. **Cite real sources.** Your conclusions must trace back to original records, not AI output.

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# 6. GPS Reminder

AI cannot complete Genealogical Proof Standard elements for you. Use AI to assist with:

- Organizing and summarizing information
- Suggesting research avenues and record types
- Drafting narrative text
- Formatting citations

You must still:

- Evaluate source quality (Original, Derivative, or Authored)
- Assess informant reliability (Primary, Secondary, or Indeterminate)
- Weigh conflicting evidence
- Reach reasoned, documented conclusions

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*Want more? The full* **Teaching Genealogists AI** *curriculum covers prompt crafting, AI safety, hallucination, bias, and GPS-compliant research workflows. Contact Sylvia Vargas.*