

## Preparing for the Help Desk

We ask that you spend a few minutes to consider the question for which you would like some assistance. In order to get the answer you are looking for, it is important to ask the question correctly.

### **Developing a Focused Genealogy Research Question**

- A focused genealogy question must be clear and specific.
- Your genealogy question must be about a documented individual.
- Your research question should ask for specific information regarding your individual.
- Your genealogy research question may seek to answer one of these three issues about your research subject, but not all three: determine relationships, clarify identity, or determine participation in a specified activity.

### **Examples of focused genealogy research questions**

- Who were the parents of the Samuel Armpriester who married Virginia Clifton in Burlington, New Jersey in 1846?
- Is the Henry Mahan listed on the tax records of Franklin County, Pennsylvania in 1793 the same Henry Mahan that married Hannah Musgrove in Burlington, New Jersey in 1805?
- What military service (if any) did Whittington Clifton, whose children were born in Lewes, Delaware in the 1790s, provide during the Revolutionary War?

Source: Sydney Cruice, course handout entitled *Foundations of Genealogy: Preparing for Research and Organization*, from *Foundations of Genealogy I*, an 8-week course – more info can be found at <https://www.sydneycruicegenealogy.com>.