

2019-6-22 FIRST DNA SIG for TNGS

Following are the written questions from our first DNA SIG. We didn't have time to go through these during the meeting because everyone, so enthusiastically, had TERRIFIC "off the cuff" questions. We went with the flow today and used our time as a question and answer period also discussing other possible times for smaller single subject SIGs. We had more people attend who consider themselves as midlevel in DNA expertise. The rest labeled themselves as beginners and many didn't feel comfortable rating their DNA knowledge level. Excellent questions were asked by all and members of the group chimed in with their knowledge, which is what we hope to have with our DNA SIG. Thanks for being such a great group!

1. Y-DNA – Help determining which matches are closest when genetic distance is the same.

Since Genetic Distance (GD) simply means the number of markers different between two people, this is where actual genealogical research starts. You can use the TIP report (click the orange box, labeled TIP, right below the person's name) to get an expected number of generations between the two people. It must be noted that all people with the same GD number may end up with different percentages in the TIP reports because some markers have different mutation rates. Your paper trail is where you begin to find these people.

2. Has anyone had experience with the use of Y-DNA in applications to genealogical societies; e.g. DAR, SAR.....?

PZ answered this one in the session as he works with the SAR group. DNA is not accepted as "proof" without the complete paper trail, because you might narrow it down to two brothers who might share almost identical Y-DNA or to two William Smith's in an area. The DNA might end up being an arbiter in the second case AFTER testing multiple descendants of each person. In the first case, the paper trail should identify the correct person and then DNA testing multiple descendants can also help.

3. Help in using the DNA results.

Using an autosomal test, the first place you should look on your results are the shared matches between you and the other person who matches you. It's important to do your genealogical work first so you might recognize some of the surnames. If not, concentrate on those matches with trees (remember they're not always accurate) and attempt to find common relatives. If you can at least identify whether the match is maternal or paternal, you have a good start. Some testing companies call the shared matches "in common with" matches. If you can figure it out, take their tree and start researching THEIR family, just like you did yours – census, birth, death etc. You can message (or email on some sites) the person who matches you, giving them your theory of the match, and maybe work together to find the common relative.

4. Interpreting Y-DNA on FTDNA: My 2(H?)C1R is in Group 7 of the FTDNA Morgan Project. How do we determine at what point these lines converge? Also, what is "triangulation"? A match mentioned doing this.

See question 1 on Y-DNA matches. As to triangulation, it means at least THREE people who share the same segment on the same chromosome. If person A matches person B and person B matches person C, it does NOT always follow that person A and C are a match. Person A could match person B through their father and B could match person C through their mother. You need three who share the SAME SEGMENT on the SAME CHROMOSOME.

5. I'm a beginner with DNA. I did not realize it was a special interest group. I can't figure out how a granddaughter of my sister figures that she is a cousin of mine.

My guess is that she's looking at the relationship estimate given by the testing company and not realizing that relationships are a RANGE of centimorgans and not just one number. Two people may also look to be closer than expected because of endogamy (marriages of multiple lines of a family, multiple times over a few generations). I believe we addressed this one today. Bring specific cM values etc to the next SIG and we can tie it down a little better.

6. From a past beginner who has solved the mystery of a bio-father!!! If Ancestry shows a person as, say, 3C1R, what is the quickest way to “drill down” to show path to that relationship?

First cousins share a set of grandparents. Second cousins share a set of great grandparents, so third cousins would share great great grandparents. A third cousin once removed would be the child of a second cousin. Look at the chart that was discussed in class (from DNAPainter.COM) and look at all possible relationships. To “drill down” look at shared matches to figure out which side of your family to look at (maternal or paternal) and start with those sets of great great grandparents and do your genealogical work to bring them down to present day to find the relationship.

7. How do I determine my relationship to my DNA matches?

Click on a match, then click on “shared matches” and see if you can determine from this whether they are a maternal or paternal match. Check the chart at DNAPainter.COM to get a list of possible relationships.

8. How to find “out of wedlock” son born in 1900-1901 probably in Texas or California. Name of mother is not known.

So you know who the father was but not the mother? If so, then see if you can find another direct male descendant of that father. That male would share Y-DNA with the “out of wedlock” son.

9. How to find cousins who don’t have a tree.

Sometimes you just have to message/email them. Sometimes your genealogical work will help a surname appear for you.

10. Beginner who feels she/he doesn’t know enough to ask a question!!

Hopefully you got something from all the questions asked in class today and will have plenty of questions next time!!

11. Beginner would like help learning how to start and find information; DNA terminology; how to prove others are in family.

Proving others are in the family was probably answered in previous questions, above. I suggest the following book for getting started in DNA and with DNA terminology: “The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy” by Blaine T Bettinger. It is available on Amazon. A new version of this book is shipping in July. If you order, make sure you’re ordering the new version.

Another useful book might be this workbook style book: “Genetic Genealogy in Practice” by Bettinger and Wayne

12. How to find relatives who match but have unknown connections. Help in tracing family members who have been “adopted out” and tracing the biological family of those who have joined the family as adoptees.

I believe some of these questions were addressed above. Tracing adoptees requires looking at their DNA matches and expanding possible trees, looking at ages and locations.

A book that might be helpful is “The DNA Guide for Adoptees” by Kirkpatrick and Combs-Bennet.

13. What to do next after you find a segment which is shared by five people. DNAPainter?

If the segment is of significant length the people are most probably related to a common ancestor. If they’re all brothers and sisters, it doesn’t help you as much as if they were from different branches. After about 4 or 5 generations, the segments get smaller and the likelihood of sharing segments of a significant length gets less realistic. Start working their trees and contacting them.

14. Why am I not getting any surname matches on my Y-DNA test? This is also true on my father-in-law's DNA kit.

I would like to know at what level of Y-DNA you tested. Several reasons are possible here. Either no one else from that family has tested. Someone might also have multiple DNA matches with several surnames but include the surname of interest at Y-37, but have NONE at Y-111. This could mean no one tested above the Y-37 level. The other issue could be an NPE (not parent expected) – there was an adoption or affair that changed the parental line. Testing other males from the same Y line might help figure it out.

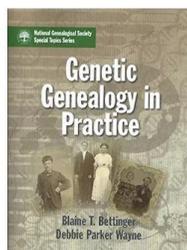
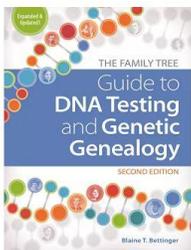
15. DNA test completed, uploaded to GEDMatch. Few matches. Now what?

Since you uploaded to GEDMatch, it means you did an autosomal test. It could mean that no one else related to you has tested or has just not uploaded to GEDMatch. It might mean that your ancestors are from a country not highly represented in the GEDMATCH database. Did you have shared matches at your original testing company. AncestryDNA.com has the largest database of the four main companies.

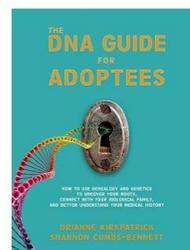
16. Y-testing – Trying to find father of my great grandfather who was illegitimate.

See the answer to other Y-DNA questions above. If you are male and you can find someone with an unbroken Y-DNA line from that great grandfather who is willing to do a DNA test, you'll have a good start.

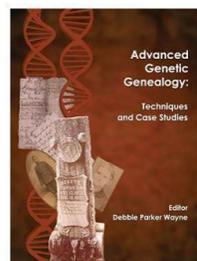
Books recommended for Beginners:



Books recommended for those researching adoptees:



Books for advanced researchers:



Topics suggested for future sessions by those attending THIS meeting:

Ethics/Privacy

Analysis Procedures & Strategies

X-Chromosome Uses

Researching Adoptees – a couple of our members have been doing this already and are willing to share their knowledge in future group sessions – Sue Hollebrand & Angie Roberts!