

Week 15

Choosing a Format

By now, students should have completed a fair amount of research. It is now time to switch into project mode. Students must decide what format they want to create at this point. Many students will already have an idea about what they want to do. Some will have no idea which format is best. This lesson will help them evaluate and decide on their format. Then, they can begin to create!

This lesson is quite flexible. You can choose to do it as a whole-class presentation, a series of small group presentations, or you can assign students to work through the material individually or in groups.

Before you begin, however, you should have a discussion with your class about working as groups or individuals. (Please see the curriculum notes on the flash drive for more information about group vs. individual choices) If your students have not already made this decision, they should do so now. Discuss with your class the pros and cons of choosing group work or individual work.

Groups or Individuals?

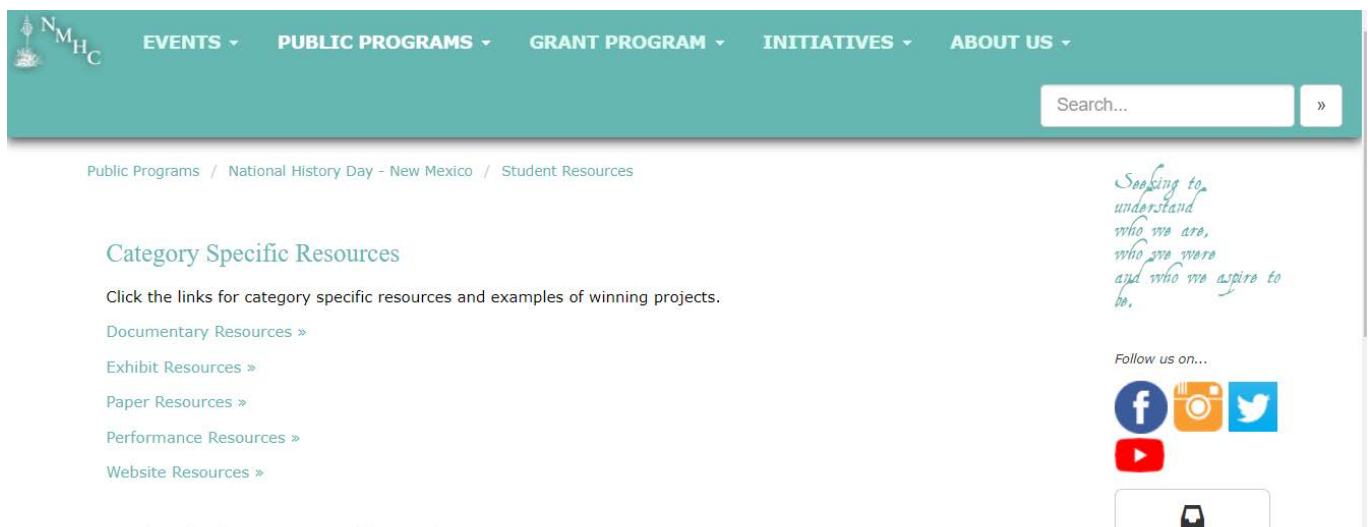
Working as an Individual	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independence• Sole decision making• Control of schedule• No tension regarding work ethic or differences of opinion• Ideal in developing writing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No collaboration• No cost sharing in project creation• No one to help brainstorm and motivate during “down times.”
Working as a Group	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fun• Collaborative• Sharing of project costs• Draw on one another’s strengths and talents• The workload can be shared: many hands make light work!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scheduling difficulties• Differences of opinion• Differences in work ethics• Increased communication demands• Student workloads can vary and cause problems

Students should understand that they are making a commitment to their partners to work fairly and see the project through to its end. It is highly recommended that students sign a contract. There are copies of a contract for both individuals and groups on the flash drive.

Now, on to the project formats...

The purpose of today's lesson is to introduce each of the project formats to your students. There are helpful resources available at <http://tinyurl.com/NHDStudentResources>. Under "Category Specific Resources," many resources are available to help your students create their projects. You might wish to present this information to your class as a whole, in groups according to format interest, or ask students to investigate it on their own.

However you choose to present the formats, this website will be helpful to your students as they create their projects, so they should become familiar with it.



Today, your students will look at the rules for each category and a "how to" guide for each category. They should also look at examples of the categories that interest them. There is a checklist included that your students can use to indicate what categories they have explored. Once they have picked a format, they should return to the website to look at the supplemental material for that format more deeply. They only need to explore formats that are of interest to them. At the bottom of the checklist there is a place for them to indicate what they have chosen to do before returning the checklist to you.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the NMHC website with links for EVENTS, PUBLIC PROGRAMS, GRANT PROGRAM, INITIATIVES, and ABOUT US. A search bar is located on the right. Below the navigation, the breadcrumb trail reads: Public Programs / National History Day - New Mexico / Student Resources / Documentaries. The main content area is titled "Documentary Resources" and includes links for "Documentary Analysis Task Card", "Guide to NHD Documentaries", and "How to Create a Historical Documentary (guidebook)". An example titled "Example: Junior Documentary" is shown, with a sub-heading "Junior documentary that advanced to Nationals". Below this is a video player for "Bataan Death March: Junior Individual ...". To the right of the video player are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, a "Subscribe" button, and a "Support NMHC" button with a dollar sign icon. A "Sign In" link is at the bottom right. A quote in cursive script is visible in the top right corner: "Seeking to understand who we are, who we were and who we aspire to be."

Once they have settled on a format, students should spend some time looking at the resources available on the website.

If you are not able to use the internet for this activity, or wish to present the material in print, the information is included for each of the five formats. Documents can be found here that you can distribute to your students about each category. If you are presenting each category to the entire group, keep your introduction to each short. Students can further investigate the formats that interest them. Here is a short description of each format:

Papers: There is only an individual category for papers ... no groups! The student will write a 1500-2500 word traditional research paper. Students must include an annotated bibliography, but they are exempt from writing the process paper. The student who will be successful here is someone who likes to write and who writes well. Topics that need lots of explanation, or topics that are not very visual work well for papers.

Documentaries: Documentaries can be done as individuals or as groups. Most students create History Channel-esque documentaries for this category. There is a 10-minute limit on the length of the documentary. Students who are good on the computer might find this category interesting. Topics that have lots of pictures and/or video are well suited to the documentary format.

Exhibits: Similar to a museum exhibit, this category can be done as individuals or groups. Students create a display that presents their research in a visually appealing way. While many students present their findings on a traditional tri-fold board, but as long as the size (not to exceed 6' high x 40" wide x 30" deep) and word (500 student-produced words*) limits are kept, there is no limit to the creativity possible in the exhibit category.

Performances: In this format, students create either an individual or group historical performance about their topic. The performance cannot exceed 10 minutes in length. This format works well for less visual topics, especially ones that are dramatic or emotional. At its essence, this category is story-telling.

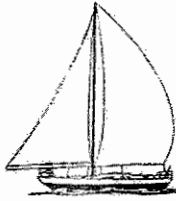
Websites: This is the most popular category, making it one of the most competitive. There are categories for both individual and groups. Students who enjoy computer work will enjoy this category. Creating a website is great for visual topics, as students can add lots of pictures and video (within limits). There is a limit of 1200 student-produced words* allowed. **Websites must be created using website.nhd.org.**

Homework:

Students should complete the checklist and return it to you. This will give you an opportunity to discuss their format choice with them.

***Student-produced words.** This means words the student composed. Quotes and other primary source documents are not included in this word count. Words used in a timeline are counted as part of the word limit. Each date is considered one word (June 6th, 1945=1 word). Names, however, are counted individually. (Martha Custis Washington=3 words).

INDIVIDUAL or GROUP?



The History Day Ship-on-the-Sea Metaphor

You are preparing to set sail on a journey in history called the National History Day Project. It is more than a one-day journey. It's one that will last for many weeks. Each of you, in a sense, is a "ship" on this journey. Before you leave the "harbor," you need to determine what will accompany your ship.

If you make a good choice, you will be bringing along extra "sails" for your ship. These sails are good partners with whom you choose to work (a group can have between two and five people in it). Sails are great to have because they represent quality people who will work hard and share the load in a way that really makes your ship fast, efficient, and comfortable. If you make a poor choice of partner or partners, instead of bringing along sails, you will carry "anchors." These anchors are people who oftentimes:

- Are lazy and don't help much, or...
- Are comedians who provide a lot of laughs but little effort, or...
- Are looking for you to carry them through the project, or...
- Are involved in so many different activities that it's difficult to find time to meet, or...
- Are control freaks who have trouble considering others' ideas or compromising.

These anchors take up room and slow down your ship. In fact, anchors can sink your ship! Also, be very careful of anchors because they sometimes beg to come on board, but once you are "out to sea," they end up holding you back. You may offend an anchor by leaving him or her behind, but it is often the best decision to make. Stand firm, mates! If you think you're bringing along a sail and find out that you've actually brought along an anchor, you can't throw him or her overboard once you're underway, so choose wisely.

Another option is to choose to sail alone. Sometimes a ship's sails can get tangled and not work very well together. If you decide to sail alone, there is only you, and you can sail the boat easily. If you choose to do your research project as an individual, it can be less complicated with fewer distractions to impede your progress. Sailing solo can be very rewarding; it can be a very fine means of travel.

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WORKING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

+ ADVANTAGES

- You will increase your independence.
- You will be the sole decision maker.
- You can work when and where you want.
- You will not face differences in opinion and work ethic.

- DISADVANTAGES

- You will be responsible for all costs.
- You won't use collaborative skills.
- You won't have a partner(s) to motivate you during "down times."

WORKING AS A GROUP

+ ADVANTAGES

- You can improve collaborative skills.
- You can share project costs.
- You can make decisions together.
- You can draw on one another's strengths and talents.

- DISADVANTAGES

- You may have scheduling difficulties.
- You may have differences of opinion.
- You may have differences in work ethics.
- You will have increased communication demands.

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History Day Self Questioning (Confidential)

1. I would rather work: (circle one) Alone In a group
Why?
2. What roles do I usually play in a group? (Describe two or more. Some examples could be: Motivator, Peacemaker, Organizer, Hard worker, Creativity specialist, Occasional slacker, Technology specialist, Fun coordinator, Finisher, and more!)
3. What type of people like to work with me?
4. What type of people do I like to work with? (Be sure to explain why!)
5. What qualities make someone a good group member? (List at least 5.)
6. What traits in people do I want to avoid when picking my partners? (List at least 3.)
7. Name some people in this class that you might consider working with for History Day. (Please give the last names too.)
8. Name anyone in this class you know you should not work with at all.

National History Day Group Contract

Student Names _____

General Topic _____

Area of Emphasis _____

Date Entry is Due _____

Students who wish to work together in a group must each sign a contract as must their parents/guardians. Once formed, the group will receive a blanket grade for the entry. No allowances will be made if one member does not participate fully. Groups should be chosen carefully.

Each member of the group agrees to share equally in all work and expenses. Money may not be spent unless all members have been consulted. All prize monies will be split evenly among the students.

Working as a member of a group consisting of the students listed above, I will do my part to complete a group entry in History Day. I have reviewed the History Day rules and regulations with my parent/guardian and understand all the requirements of this event.

Student signature: _____

I have received the History Day rules and regulation and have reviewed them with my son/daughter. He/she has my permission to enter History Day.

Parent/guardian signature: _____

Teacher signature: _____

Date: _____

National History Day Individual Contract

Student Name _____

General Topic _____

Area of Emphasis _____

Date Entry is Due _____

I will complete an individual entry in History Day. I understand that along with the freedom and independence of an individual entry, I will have to complete all aspect of the entry on my own without help from other students. I also have reviewed the History Day rules and regulations with my parent/guardian and understand all the requirements of this event.

Student signature: _____

I have received the History Day rules and regulation and have reviewed them with my son/daughter. He/she has my permission to enter History Day.

Parent/guardian signature: _____

Teacher signature: _____

Date: _____

Choosing a Category

The Rules

There are five formats for History Day projects in both the Junior (6th-8th grades) and Senior (9th-12th grades) divisions. **All categories require the same level of research and analysis.** Below is a summary of the rules for each category. Please see the NHD rule book for complete rules.

1. Paper

- 1,500-2,500 words
- Annotated bibliography (no process paper is required)
- Individual only
- Can be presented creatively or analytically

2. Exhibit

- Trifold, freestanding, or rotating
- No more than 6' high, 40" wide, 30" deep from exterior points
- 500 student-composed words—does not include quotations and other primary source material
- Printed process paper and annotated bibliography (six copies for each contest)

3. Performance

- 10 minute historical performance with student written script
- Should not be recitation of an entire speech
- Printed process paper and annotated bibliography (six copies for each contest)

4. Documentary

- 10 minute maximum with student narrated script
- Must have credits at the end
- Printed process paper and annotated bibliography (six copies for each contest)

5. Website

- Must be constructed on NHDWebCentral (website.nhd.org)
- No more than 1,200 student composed words
- All content must be on the site
- Must display the process paper and annotated bibliography within the website
- NHDWebCentral will not allow a site to exceed the 100 MB limit

	MIDDLE SCHOOL		HIGH SCHOOL	
	Individual	Group	Individual	Group
Exhibit	✓	✓	✓	✓
Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Documentary	✓	✓	✓	✓
Website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Research Paper	✓		✓	

Exploring National History Day Formats

You have five categories to choose from to complete your NHD project. They are:

	MIDDLE SCHOOL		HIGH SCHOOL	
	Individual	Group	Individual	Group
Exhibit	✓	✓	✓	✓
Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Documentary	✓	✓	✓	✓
Website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Research Paper	✓		✓	

Visit www.greaterdenvermetronhd.org, and click on the “Student Help” button, or use the materials your teacher gives you to explore the categories you are interested in.

Papers: There is only an individual category for papers...no groups! You will write a 1500-2500 word traditional research paper. You must include an annotated bibliography, but you don't have to write the process paper. If you are a good writer, this is a good category for you. Topics that need lots of explanation, or topics that are not very visual work well for papers.

- I have read “How to Create a National History Day Paper”
- I have read the rules for the paper category
- I have read a sample paper
- I have explored the information about writing a paper (only necessary if you choose to write a paper)

Documentaries: Documentaries can be done as individuals or as groups. Most students who do documentaries create History Channel-esque films for this category. There is great software available for free download or for purchase to create and burn your film onto DVD. There is a 10 minute limit on the length of the documentary. If you are good on the computer and are detail oriented, you might find this category interesting. Topics that have lots of pictures and/or video make good documentaries.

- I have read “How to Create a National History Day Documentary”
- I have read the rules for the documentary category
- I have watched a sample documentary
- I have explored the additional information about creating a documentary (only necessary if you choose to do a documentary)

Exhibits: Similar to a museum exhibit, this category can be entered by individuals or groups. You will create a display that presents your research in a visually appealing way. You can present your findings on a traditional tri-fold board, but as long as the size (not to exceed 6' high x 40" wide x 30" deep) and word (500 student-produced words) limits are kept, you can be as creative as you like with your design.

- I have read “How to Create a National History Day Exhibit”
- I have read the rules for the exhibit category
- I have looked at images of 5-10 exhibits
- I have explored the additional information about creating an exhibit (only necessary if you choose to do a documentary)

Performances: In this format, you will create either an individual or group historical performance about your topic, similar to a one-act play. The performance cannot exceed 10 minutes in length. If you like acting, this might be a great category for you. This format works well for less visual topics, especially ones that are dramatic or emotional. At its essence, this category is story-telling.

- I have read "How to Create a National History Day Performance"
- I have read the rules for the performance category
- I have watched a sample performance
- I have explored the additional information about creating a performance (only necessary if you choose to do a performance)

Websites: This is the most popular format, making it very competitive. There are categories for both individual and groups. If you enjoy working on the computer, this might be a good category for you. Creating a website is great for visual topics, as students can add lots of pictures and video (within limits). There is a limit of 1200 student-produced words allowed. **Websites must be created using NHDWebCentral (website.nhd.org).**

- I have read "How to Create a National History Day Website"
- I have read the rules for the website category
- I have viewed a sample website
- I have explored the additional information about creating a website (only necessary if you choose to do a website)

The format I have chosen for my NHD project is _____

_____ I prefer to work as an individual

_____ I want to be a part of a group

The group members I want to work with are

How to Create a Historical Paper

What is a Historical Paper?

History papers present information and analyze an event, person, place or idea from the past in writing. Although you might attach a map, chart or photograph that you refer to in your paper, you will rely mainly on words. Writing a paper is a chance to tell what you know and what you think about a part of the past.

How is a Paper Different from Other Categories?

A paper is a highly personal and individual effort, and if you prefer to work alone this may be the category for you. Papers depend almost entirely on words to tell the story, and you can usually include more information in a paper than in some of the other categories.

Getting Started

- *Conduct your research.* Examine secondary and primary sources, taking careful notes and keeping track of which source each piece of information came from. From your research, you should come up with your thesis – the argument you want to make in your paper.
- *Make an outline.* Using your notes, you can create a list of the main information you want to include in your paper, where each piece of information will go, and in what order. This will help when you sit down to write your paper.
- *Start writing.* You might begin by writing your introduction in which you state your thesis.
 - Introduction: your introduction should tell the reader where you intend to go with the rest of your paper.
 - Body: the main body of your paper is where you can make the case for your conclusion. Present your evidence, the primary sources, and your analysis of how they support your thesis.
 - Conclusion: your conclusion is like the summary of your paper. It should summarize your main points that prove your thesis.
- *Read and Revise.* A polished product takes time, so it is important to re-read and revise your paper. Check for clarity, unity, and coherence. Is it clear how your topic relates to the NHD theme? Does your conclusion flow logically from your thesis?

Information from National History Day

www.nhd.org

A. PAPER

A paper is the traditional form of presenting historical research. Various types of creative writing (for example, fictional diaries, poems, etc.) are permitted, but must conform to all general and category rules. Your paper should be grammatically correct and well written.

Part II, Rules for all Categories (except for Rule 14), applies to papers.

Rule 1: Length Requirements

The text of historical papers must be no less than 1,500 and no more than 2,500 words in length. Each word or number in the text of the paper counts as one word. The paper category 2,500 word limit does not apply to: notes, annotated bibliography, illustration captions, and supplemental/appendix material. Appendix material must be directly referred to in the text of the paper. Extensive supplemental materials are inappropriate. Use of appendices should be very limited and may include photographs, maps, charts, and graphs, but we strongly suggest no other supplemental materials.

Handwritten notes and diagrams are not permitted. All diagrams and illustrations must be typed and clearly labeled. All diagrams and illustrations must be submitted on separate sheets of paper.

Rule 2: Citations

Citations—footnotes, endnotes or internal documentation—are required. Citations are used to credit the sources of specific ideas as well as direct quotations. Refer to Part II,

Rule 17, for citation styles. Please note that an extensively annotated footnote should not be used to get around the word limit.

Rule 3: Preparation Requirements

Papers must be typed, computer printed, or legibly handwritten in ink on plain, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper with 1-inch margins on all sides. Pages must be numbered consecutively and double-spaced with writing on one side and with no more than 12 characters per inch or no less than 10-point type. Papers must be stapled in the top left corner and should not be enclosed in any cover or binder. The title page should have no illustrations.

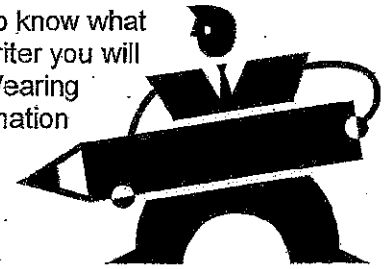
Rule 4: Number of Copies

Four copies of the paper must be submitted, prior to the contest, with the appropriate entry form by the deadline established for the contest. Winning papers are sometimes published by contest officials; you must be prepared to give permission for such publication.

Please be sure to keep a copy of your paper and all supporting documents for your records.

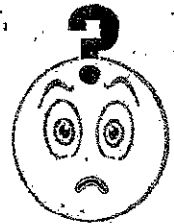
Preparing to Write: Organizing Your Information

Beginning the writing process can be very difficult because it is hard to know what information to include, and how to arrange it to tell your story. As a writer you will be acting as both a "scholar" and a "chef" to complete your project. Wearing your scholar hat will help you to decide what the most important information is to include. As a chef you must prepare your project in a way that works well for your particular topic. Below are some tips for how to navigate the writing process.



Top Tips on Writing for All Categories:

- **Break it down.** Instead of trying to write everything in one night, create an outline or guide that lets you write in smaller pieces. Using this as a guide for your project will also help viewers and judges more easily understand your project. Also, if you have divided the writing responsibilities up, make sure your writing style is cohesive in the end.
- **Use your thesis to guide you.** Everything included in your project should lead back to supporting your thesis. This should also help you divide information into smaller, more manageable pieces.
- **Seek advice.** Remember you want your project to be easily understood by anyone, so if your friends have that "huh?" look on their face, you may want to consider revising your work.
- **Keep it short and to the point.** Make sure you do the work for the viewer; no one goes to a museum to read a book. Before writing it is important to analyze your information so you know what to argue.
- **Once is not enough.** It is crucial to have at least one re-write of your information. Writing is a process, and the first draft will likely be inadequate for most projects.
- **Use an active voice.** Things rarely just "happen" in history, someone or something is usually propelling it. Instead of saying "the Berlin Wall *came* down in 1989," try, "the Berlin Wall was *taken* down in 1989."
- **Viewers can't read your mind.** You have been working on this topic for months, for some of the viewers and judges this may be the first time they encounter it. Don't assume they know anything about what you are presenting.



Strategies for the Writing Process

- **Start by identifying the most important quotes, excerpts, images, etc.** Write these on notecards that you can arrange on a table.
- **Write it out on paper first.** Writing key points on notecards and then moving them around into different configurations can help you segment your work. This can also be a good way to save drafts you may want to come back to later, rather than having just erased them on the computer.
- **The best place to start is to start.** Don't let your time go to waste because you are afraid of "getting something wrong" or not writing it perfectly the first time. Once you write something on paper it is much easier for others to advise you and help you work on your writing.

Organizing Your Information: Papers

Papers are the traditional way of organizing and presenting information. The best way to start your paper is to create an outline. It may be useful for you to physically write out your thoughts first, placing key events, points, and evidence on notecards and arranging them on a flat surface. This may give you a better idea about how exactly you would like to organize your paper.



Basic Outline:

Introduction

- Use this section to **briefly** introduce your topic. Give the reader enough information to orient them about when and where your topic is happening. Don't spend a great deal of time explaining everything (that is what the rest of your paper is for).
- Your thesis should be included in this first paragraph as well. It should help to outline the rest of your argument for the reader.

Body Paragraphs

- Each of these paragraphs should make a point that **ties back to your thesis**.
- **Tell a story** with your writing. You want the information to be segmented and arranged in a way that flows from one point to the next.
- You may want to consider tools like **subtitles** to orient the reader and make it easier to fill in your information as you write.

Conclusion

The conclusion of an effective paper **restates** (in a slightly different way than the thesis) your argument and **summarizes** your evidence. Every sentence in this paragraph needs to be powerful and use an active voice. This is your final impression- so make it a good one!

Other notes to consider when writing:

- **Physically arrange your work on a flat surface.** This often lets you see "the whole picture" which normally can't fit on a computer screen.
- **Don't throw anything away!** You may want to discard a lot of your work as you go because it doesn't seem useful to you. However, often people who read early drafts of your work may make suggestions to include a part you tossed away. Don't create more work by throwing parts away prematurely.
- **Pay close attention to grammar, writing style, and citation.** Avoid redundant sentence structures (starting sentences the same way) and use a thesaurus to spice up your writing!

General checklist for the project

- I/we have a **creative title** for my project.
- I/we have demonstrated how my project **relates to the theme** of "Revolution, Reaction, Reform In History"
I/we have a **clearly stated thesis** that unifies my project.
- I/we use both **primary and secondary source** material to support my thesis.
- I/we use a **broad amount of resources** instead of relying on one or two main sources.
- I/we have provided **historical context** for my topic.
- I/we have demonstrated the **overall significance** of my project in history.
- I/we have **analyzed and interpreted evidence** instead of regurgitating facts.
- I/we have presented **different points of view** in order to have balance.
- My/our project can **stand alone** for someone who has no idea about my topic.
- My/our project demonstrates **originality and creativity**.
- I/we have a **complete process paper**.
- I/we have an **annotated bibliography** with resources listed in proper form and divided in to primary and secondary sources.

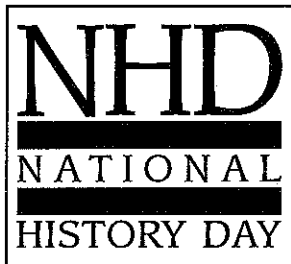
Specific checklist for a paper

- The paper meets the **word requirement** as stated in the rules – between 1,500 and 2,500 words, not including notes, bibliography, annotations, or supplemental material.
- The paper is **properly cited** using **MLA style**.
- The paper is typed on plain white paper with 1 inch margins and written in 12 point font.
- The paper is **clearly organized** and follows a logical progression.

Checklist for judging at regional competition

- I/we have four copies of our **title page, process paper and annotated bibliography**.
- I/we are prepared to **answer the judges' questions** about our project.

Read "Preparing Yourself for the Judging Process" from the NHD Curriculum Guide before the competition!



JUDGING CRITERIA (Judging criteria are explained in the <i>Rule Book</i>)	EVALUATION			
	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

COMMENTS

- Strengths
- Areas for Improvement

Historical Quality (60%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Entry is historically accurate				
• Shows analysis and interpretation				
• Places topic in historical context				
• Shows wide research				
• Uses available primary sources				
• Research is balanced				

Relation to Theme (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Clearly relates topic to theme				
• Demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions				

Clarity of Presentation (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Paper is original, clear, appropriate, organized and well-presented				
• Text is clear, grammatical and spelling is correct; entry is neatly prepared				

Rules Compliance	Yes	No
• Maintains length requirement (1500-2500 words)		
• Includes annotated bibliography		
• Other		

HOW TO CREATE A HISTORICAL DOCUMENTARY

What is a Historical Documentary?

NHD documentaries present information about an event, person, place or idea from the past through a ten minute presentation that showcases documents, images, photographs, and actual footage of the topic you are researching. Your documentary needs to have both primary and secondary research but also be an original production. Both individual entries and group entries are accepted in the documentary category.

How is a Documentary Different from Other Categories?

Creating a documentary is different from other categories because of the technology necessary. Before deciding to create a documentary, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Am I interested in using computers, cameras, and other technologies?
- Can I conduct and record interviews (for the purpose of including film clips in the documentary)?
- Can I find film clips to use in my documentary?
- Are there enough still photographs related to my topic and that I can use in my documentary?
- Do I have access to equipment that will be needed to make a documentary?
- Is creating a documentary the best way to show off my topic?

Getting Started

- Create a Documentary Notebook to write down all of your ideas and keep your research organized. Watch historical documentaries and write a list of what you think makes a great historical documentary
- Make sure you have access to
 - a computer
 - a video camera
 - editing software
 - supplies: batteries, blank DVDs or videotapes, paper, pens, props
- *Research the topic first.* One way to choose your topic is to select a commonly known story and then find a different angle that brings something new to it. Remember that there are many unknown stories that also should be told. Regardless of the topic you select, choose one that truly interests you, and remember to put it into historical context.
- *Keep a database.* It is important that you have a database where you keep track of all of the information you are gathering. A database is simply any place where you can collect and easily access your sources and production materials.
- *Create a Timeline.* Before you jump into your project, it is a good idea to create a preliminary timeline of when you want to finish important steps along the way, especially the start and end dates of pre-production, research, production, and post-production.
- *Create a budget.* On the practical side, you need to have a sense of the costs of doing this project. Remember you don't have to break the bank to make a film. Spending more money does not make a film better in quality.

D. DOCUMENTARY

A documentary should reflect your ability to use audiovisual equipment to communicate your topic's significance, much as professional documentaries do. The documentary category will help you develop skills in using photographs, film, video, audiotapes, computers, and graphic presentations. Your presentation should include primary materials but must also be an original production. To produce a documentary you must have access to equipment and be able to operate it.

Part II, Rules for all Categories, applies to documentaries.

Rule 1: Time Requirements

Documentaries may not exceed 10 minutes in length. You will be allowed an additional 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to remove equipment. Timing will begin when the first visual image of the presentation appears and/or the first sound is heard. Color bars and other visual leads in a video will be counted in the time limit. Timing will end when the last visual image or sound of the presentation concludes (this includes credits).

Rule 2: Introduction

You must announce only the title of your presentation and names of participants. Live narration or comments prior to or during the presentation are prohibited.

Rule 3: Student Involvement

You are responsible for running all equipment.

Rule 4: Student Production

All entries must be student-produced. You must operate all equipment. You must provide the narration, voice-over, and

dramatization. Only those students listed as entrants may participate in the production or appear on camera.

Rule 5: Entry Production

Your entry must be an original production. You may use professional photographs, film, slides, recorded music, etc. within your presentation. However, you must integrate such items into your presentation and give proper credit within the presentation as well as in your annotated bibliography. You must operate all editing equipment used in the production of your presentation.

Rule 6: Credits

At the conclusion of the documentary, you should provide a general list of acknowledgments and credits for all sources. These credits should be a brief list and not full bibliographic citations. All sources (music, images, film/media clips, interviews, books, web sites) used in the making of the documentary should be properly cited in the annotated bibliography.

Rule 7: Displays

Stand alone displays are prohibited.

Rule 8: Computer Entries

You must be able to run the program within the 10-minute time limit. Interactive computer programs and web pages in which the audience or judges are asked to participate are not acceptable; judges are not permitted to operate any equipment. Students must provide and be able to run their own computers and software. Internet access will not be available.

11 Helpful Tips for Making a Documentary

Tip #1: Always write the script before you start creating the documentary!

Tip #2: Make sure you have enough visuals for your documentary

- You might need more than you would think
 - Documentary= 10 minutes=600 seconds
 - Avg. length of time each picture is on the screen= 5 seconds
 - 600 divided by 5= 120 images!
- Other types of visuals: Newspaper headlines, video clips, interview clips, maps, drawings, cartoon documents, title screens, etc.
- NO FUZZY PICTURES. PERIOD!!!
- Places to go for visuals
 - Scan from books (Just like the old days!)
 - Take digital photos of books/photos
 - Google Images (Use medium or preferable large size images only!)
 - Take video from other documentaries (it is legal as long as you don't take any narration from the video. USE YOUR OWN NARRATION!!!)
 - ProQuest or other online databases

Tip #3: Do a storyboard so that you know you have the visuals to support your narration

Tip #4: Record the narration before you insert the visuals

- The story must drive the visuals, not the other way around
- Chop up your script into small chunks (1 or 2 paragraphs) to be recorded separately. This makes it easy to edit if you make a mistake
- Use a decent microphone: the one built into computers are not very good
- Talk over your microphones so you do not get "popping" noises
- Limit distracting background noises

Tip #5: Save your project frequently

- Make sure you have enough space (iMovie and Windows Movie Maker projects can take up several GB of space)
- If you need to transport the project from computer to computer, be sure you have an external hard drive

Tip #6: Do an interview (or better yet, do more than one interview)

- Interviews provide a validating outside opinion and add spice to the flow of the documentary
- Good interview subjects:
 - Eyewitnesses
 - History professors (especially experts in the topic area)
 - A person alive during the time period
 - Authors
 - Newspaper reporters

- Elected officials
- Anyone else who can speak with a unique/authoritative voice on the subject

Tip #7: Don't try to cram too much into your project

- Talking faster just makes it hard to understand your project
- Leave enough time to utilize title screens and dramatic pauses for effect and to allow your points to sink in with the audience
- Sacrifice interesting details so that you can include more historical context and/or analysis of research

Tip #8: Don't go crazy with the transitions (special effects)

- At some point, they just get annoying. And that point is usually when the audience actually starts to notice that there ARE transitions
- Mix it up, use a variety of them and concentrate on using the less noticeable ones

Tip #9: Listen to your project with a critical ear towards the audio

- Make sure narration volume levels are consistent, especially from one speaker to the next
- Add music to create flow and build intensity/emotion
 - Use instrumental music only, unless there is some lyrical music that relates to the topic and is used unobtrusively
 - Check www.freeplaymusic.com for copyright clean, instrumental music that can be tailored to the length you want
 - Classical music is also good
- Balance music volume so that it is not competing with the narration

Tip #10: Add a brief credits screen to give credit for music, research archives, interview subjects and any "special thanks" you would like to give

Tip #11: Make backup copies of your project and make sure it plays on a variety of formats and machines (DVD, VHS, Computer and LCD projector, etc.)

Creating a Storyboard: Documentary

Now that you have an outline for your documentary, it is time to get more specific and write a script. Using the structure below, you can begin to plan your script and the images you will use in it. Remember that your script should always dictate the images you use, so make sure to write it first!

In the **"Audio/Script"** section include **only** the words you are planning to use for the image you will place in the next box.

Draw a sketch of the images you will use in the **"Visual"** section.

Use the **"Notes"** section to describe the type of shot you will use or other important details not included in your script (ex: scanning from left to right, pulling back ward, etc.).

Audio/Script	Visual	Notes

General checklist for the project

- I/we have a **creative title** for my project.
- I/we have demonstrated how my project relates to **the theme** of "Revolution, Reaction, Reform In History"
I/we have a **clearly stated thesis** that unifies my project.
- I/we use both **primary and secondary** source material to support my thesis.
- I/we use a **broad amount of resources** instead of **relying on one or two** main sources.
- I/we have provided **historical context** for my topic.
- I/we have demonstrated the **overall significance** of my project in history.
- I/we have **analyzed and interpreted** evidence instead of regurgitating facts.
- I/we have presented **different points of view** in order to have balance.
- My/our project can **stand alone** for someone who has no idea about my topic.
- I/we have a **complete process paper**.
- I/we have an **annotated bibliography** with resources listed in proper form and divided in to primary and secondary sources.

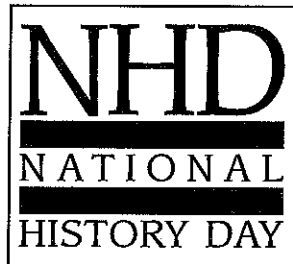
Specific checklist for a documentary

- The documentary meets the **time requirement** of ten minutes.
- The documentary **runs by itself** without and user input.
- The documentary is **visually appealing**, with **clear and crisp** images and video.
- The **images and video match the audio narration** and add to the support of the thesis.
- The **narration is all original**.
- The **audio level is a consistent and comfortable volume**.
- The **audio is clear** to the viewer.
- General credits are displayed at the end** of the documentary.

Checklist for judging at regional competition

- I/we have four copies of our **title page, process paper and annotated bibliography**.
- I/we are prepared to **answer the judges' questions** about our project.

Read "Preparing Yourself for the Judging Process" from the NHD Curriculum Guide before the competition!



DOCUMENTARY

JUDGING CRITERIA <i>(Judging criteria are explained in the Rule Book)</i>	EVALUATION			
	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

COMMENTS

- Strengths
- Areas for Improvement

Historical Quality (60%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Entry is historically accurate				
• Shows analysis and interpretation				
• Places topic in historical context				
• Shows wide research				
• Uses available primary sources				
• Research is balanced				

Relation to Theme (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Clearly relates topic to theme				
• Demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions				

Clarity of Presentation (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Presentation, written material is original, clear, appropriate, organized and articulate				
• Entry is organized, visual impact is appropriate to topic				

Rules Compliance	Yes	No
• Maintains time requirement (10 minutes)		
• Includes annotated bibliography		
• All equipment student-run		
• Other		

History Day Script Guide: Documentary

Sketch the outline for your documentary using these sections as a guide.

Introduction: Grab the viewers' attention by introducing the conflict, problem, or issue in a dramatic way.

List the main points you want to make in this section	Visuals you will need to illustrate the point

Background: What "big picture" events, issue and ideas are happening in the world/country/state that relate to your topic?

List the main points you want to make in this section	Visuals you will need to illustrate the point

Build-up: What events are happening that directly lead to your main event? Who are the people involved?

List the main points you want to make in this section	Visuals you will need to illustrate the point

Main Event: What happened? Most of your time should focus on this section.

List the main points you want to make in this section	Visuals you will need to illustrate the point

Short Term Impact: How did people react? How did things change immediate afterward? Be specific.

List the main points you want to make in this section	Visuals you will need to illustrate the point

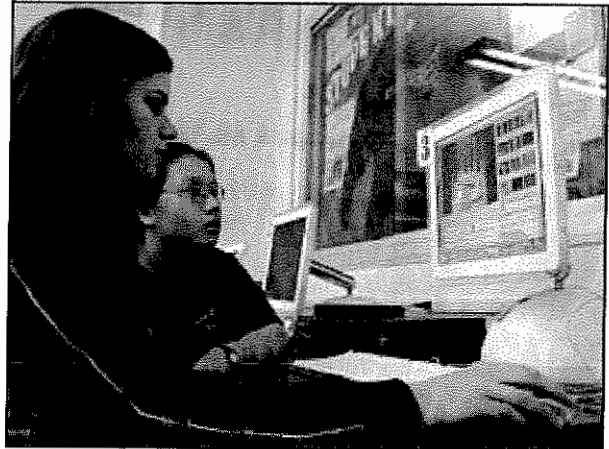
Long Term Impact/Legacy: How is this event/person remembered today? Why? How have things changed over a long period of time?

List the main points you want to make in this section	Visuals you will need to illustrate the point

National History Day Documentaries

What is a Documentary?

A History Day documentary reflects your ability to use audiovisual equipment to communicate your topic's significance. Through a documentary you will be able to incorporate still images, moving images, narration, and other types of media into a 10-minute original production.



The Basic Framework

- **Time Limit:** Documentaries may not exceed 10 minutes in length. Timing will begin when the first visual image of the presentation appears and/or the first sound is heard. Color bars and other visual leads in a video will be counted in the time limit. Timing will end when the last visual image or sound of the presentation concludes (this includes credits).
- **Student Produced:** A History Day documentary must be produced only by the student or students who are listed as the creators of the entry. This means that only the students can work with the technology to create the documentary, record or film interviews, etc.
- **Credits:** You must also include credits at the end of the documentary and these credits will count towards the time limit.
- **Self Run:** A History Day documentary must also be self-run, which means that there is no live narration or commentary during the documentary. You should be able to hit "play" and walk away.
- **Be sure to check the NHD Contest Rulebook for complete category rules!**

Why Should I Choose the Documentary Category?



A documentary can be an excellent way to communicate the research and analysis of your topic. You need to, however, make a careful decision in selecting the documentary category.

- **You need to be a good fit for the category.** You should be interested in working with computers and documentary technology. You should have access to a computer with documentary or computer-based slideshow software (such as PowerPoint or Keynote) either at home or at school. Do you know how to use this software or are you willing to learn? You should also think about where you will have to do most of the work on your documentary. If you are working in a group, how will you arrange transportation to group members' homes?
- **Your topic needs to be a good fit for the category.** You also need to think about if your topic will lend itself well to the documentary category. A great deal of visual materials are required to fill ten minutes in a documentary. What photographs, illustrations, film footage, etc. will you be able to find about your topic?

Types of History Day Documentaries

There are two basic types for documentaries that will satisfy the requirements for a History Day documentary.

- **Video-Edited Documentaries:** Most History Day students use video-editing software to create a 10-minute documentary, much like professional documentary that you might see on PBS or the History Channel. Video editing programs often come standard on computers (Apple's iMovie or Windows' MovieMaker) but there are also many other choices for software. The advantage this approach offers is that you are able to more easily combine visual and audio elements in your presentation.
- **Computer-Based Slideshow Documentaries:** Although the popularity of this type of documentary has waned as new technology has been developed, a computer-based slideshow (such as a PowerPoint presentation) is still an acceptable way to create an NHD documentary. Students creating this type of documentary may be tempted to display their script as written text on slides, however, this is not the most effective form of presentation as viewers will want to hear the narration, not read it. Students can include audio narration through PowerPoint or synchronize an audio recording to be played simultaneously with the slideshow.

Documentary Organization

Similar to any other History Day project, your documentary should **make an argument** about your topic. In order to make a clear argument, you need to have a good organizational structure to your documentary.

- **Opening/Introduction:** As the documentary begins and you introduce the subject to your viewers, make sure that you are also making your argument clear. You want to let your viewers know what you will prove with your documentary.
- **Body:** Make your documentary more than just one fact after another. Dividing your documentary into sections that will help support and prove the argument you have laid out in the opening. Sections will make it easier for you to create your documentary and easier for your viewers to follow along.
- **Closing/Conclusion:** While squeezing everything you want to say into just 10 minutes can be difficult, it's important to make time at the end of your documentary to reiterate your conclusions and argument for your viewer.
- **Credits:** Remember that one of the History Day rules is that you include credits at the end of your documentary.

What should I include in my credits?

According to National History Day, "your credits include every source that appears in your documentary, but not every source you consulted." This means that you don't need to include your entire bibliography in the credits, but it should include a list of the general places you went for information, including: people who worked on the documentary, interviewees who appeared in the documentary, archives or institutions used to find information, music credits, filming locations, and any special thanks you would like to include. If you need a sample, check out a professional documentary to see what they include and how they format their credits.

Documentary Elements

- **Script:** The script is one of the most important elements in your documentary. The script contains your thesis, support for your argument, and demonstrates your research. You should put a significant amount of time into writing a solid script. Your script can include quotes from your research that help to support your argument. You can incorporate the words of those you may have interviewed for your research. In the end, you will record your script to create the narration for your documentary.
- **Visual Images:** The visual images are critical in a good documentary as they provide the visual support for your script. It's important to build a large image collection as you are doing your research, instead of waiting until you are putting the documentary together. You can find images online for your documentary, but you can also building your image collection by scanning or taking digital images of photographs in books. Take care to make sure that you images are at a high enough resolution to not appear pixelated on screen.
- **Music or Sound Effects:** An effective soundtrack can make for a moving and effective presentation. What music or effects would enhance your documentary? Make sure that the music is not too loud or the effects too abrupt to distract from your narration, which is the most important part of your documentary.

Equipment and Technology

Creating a documentary requires access to software and/or video editing and production equipment. This doesn't mean having to purchase pricey software programs! Apple's iMovie and Windows' MovieMaker are standard applications on the newest versions of each operating system. Talk with your parents and teacher about what resources are available at home or school and where you will plan to do the majority of your work. (This is especially important if you do not use the same program at home and school or have different programs at group members' homes.)

If you are planning on shooting your own footage or interviews, you may also need access to a video camera or recording equipment. Again, talk to your parents or teachers about what you can borrow from school, friends, or family. If equipment isn't available at your school, remember to check and see what might be available at other schools in your district.

Frequently Asked Documentary Questions

Who can operate the camera or recording equipment to create the documentary?

All entries must be student-produced, which means that group members (or the individual student) must operate all equipment. If you are creating a documentary as an individual and want to appear on camera, you will need to set the camera up on a tripod and film yourself in the scene.

Who can appear in the documentary?

Since entries must be student-produced, this means that group members (or the individual student) must be the only ones that appear on camera as a narrator or in any dramatization that you may film. Please note that this does not include interviews that you do of participants in a historical event or experts.

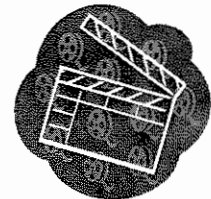
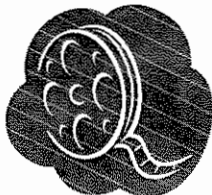
Can someone else read quotes or narrate the documentary for me?

No, only group members (or the individual student) may provide the narration and voice-over for the documentary. Students can use pre-existing narration or sound clips, but cannot have something created by others specifically for use in your entry.

Putting the Documentary Together

Organization and planning are important keys to success in the documentary category. Once you've completed your research, outline the main points of your argument and the sections you will need in your documentary, much like if you were writing a paper. From there, you will be able to write a script and develop a storyboard of images to include in your documentary. It is important to plan all of this out on paper before you even begin working with the computer program!

The **Video Storyboard** form on the following page offers you a simple template to plan out your documentary. Once you have your script written, you will want to select visuals to help explain, demonstrate, and support your argument. You may also want to keep track of the duration of each video clip or narration segment.



Documentary Storyboard

Notes/Time	Visual	Audio

Tips for Creating a Spectacular NHD Documentary

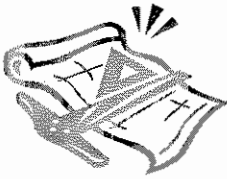
Watch other Documentaries

One of the best ways to understand the qualities of a good documentary is to watch other documentaries, both professional and those produced for NHD. What are the effective features of the documentary? How do they convey their argument? Are there any techniques you think you should avoid?



Develop Your Argument

No matter if you are working alone or in a group or in the junior or senior division, it is important to make sure that your argument (thesis) is clear **in the project** itself. Your argument should be your analysis of why your topic is significant in history. It is what transforms your documentary from just a story to an argument. It is the lens that brings everything else in your documentary into focus.



Plan It Out

Using your thesis as a guide, outline your argument and write your script. You can then use a storyboard to plan out what visuals you can use to support your narration. Planning this all out on paper before you even begin using the program will save you frustration later on.

Use Your Research

Your research is there for more than just embellishing your bibliography. Figure out ways to include your research as support in your documentary. Are there quotes that you can include in your script? Newspapers or photographs that you can use for visuals? Not only will this help to prove your argument but it will also make your documentary more interesting to your viewers.

Content is More Important than Glitz

Fancy transitions, graphics and effects can make for a flashy documentary and can be fun to create, but remember that the history is the most important part of your documentary.



The Documentary Stands Alone

When evaluating NHD documentaries, judges should be able to find all the information about your topic in the documentary itself. The documentary has to stand on its own. This means that your argument, support and theme connection need to be apparent within the documentary and not depend on your explanation in the interview. Ask someone who has never seen your documentary to watch it (a friend, teacher, neighbor, etc). Without saying anything, have them watch the documentary and then ask them a few questions to see if you have communicated your argument clearly: What am I trying to prove in my documentary? What evidence have I shown to support that argument? What do you like about my documentary? What is confusing to you?

Fair Use and Copyright

Making History: How to Create a Historical Documentary, a booklet produced by National History Day, offers a good summary of this issue for History Day students. "Because you are creating an *educational* documentary for the NHD competition and are following NHD's contest rules, your entry should fall within "fair use" copyright laws. But this means that"

- Your documentary can only be shown within NHD competitions.
- You must have proper *credits* within the film.
- You must list and credit *all* of your sources in your annotated bibliography.
- You cannot take and use verbatim the narration of another [professionally produced] documentary.

If you have questions regarding copyright issues, you should contact the NHD office or an attorney directly. In preparing your entry for NHD, you, your teacher, and your parents or guardians should be mindful of copyright issues. A helpful source to consult with respect to these issues is The Copyright Kids webpage, operated by The Copyright Society of the U.S.A. This page can be found at <http://www.copyrightkids.org/>.

Preparing for Competition with a Documentary

Available Technology at the Event

When registering for a History Day event, pay close attention to the technology that will be available. The contest registration materials should specify what types of technology will be available for documentaries. All event facilities will have TVs and VHS VCRs, but not all of them will have DVD players and very few will have computers and/or projection screens. If you have questions about the technology, be sure to contact your teacher or the contest coordinator.

Showing Your Documentary

Students will have an assigned time at which they will share their documentary with the judges. When you play your documentary, other students, teachers and visitors will likely be able to quietly watch your project. You must be able to operate all technology to play your documentary at a competition.

History Day documentary judging usually follows the order given below:

- **Process Paper and Bibliography:** Give the judges copies of your process paper and bibliography first so they can begin reading these right away.
- **Set-Up:** While judges are reading these documents, begin set-up of your documentary. Make sure that the documentary works on the equipment provided and test the volume.
- **Wait for the Signal:** Wait patiently for the judges to give the signal that they are ready for you to start.
- **Introduction:** Introduce yourselves and your documentary. Make sure to only state your name(s) and the title of your project. Any other commentary at this time is inappropriate.
- **Play:** Begin the documentary. You may also need to adjust the lights.
- **Take-Down:** When the documentary is over, remove your documentary (and any extra equipment you may have brought) so that the next student can begin set-up.
- **Interview:** Then walk closer to the judges for your interview.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Documentary Category at History Day Competitions

What happens if I go over time?

The judges won't stop your documentary if you go over time while presenting at a competition. They will, however, note that you exceeded the time limit on your comment sheets. Going over the time limit can also affect your ranking at a competition as a significant time overage gives you an unfair advantage over other students.

What happens if my documentary won't play?

Don't panic! We have all had technology problems and will work our hardest to make sure that you are able to play your documentary. If you are unable to get your documentary to play, talk to the judges and the contest coordinator. They may have access to additional equipment to play your documentary. If the documentary won't play during your assigned judging time, they will likely ask you to come back after the other documentaries are finished and try again.

What if there is a final round of competition?

Sometimes there are more documentaries in your category/division than one panel of judges can watch. When this happens, documentary judging is split into first and final rounds of competition. For example, say there are 14 junior individual documentaries at a competition. These documentaries will likely be divided into two groups of seven for the first round. First round judges will then pick their top entries to advance to a final round of competition.

In a final round, the documentaries are shown again to a new set of judges and this judge panel will select the top entries. These run-off finalists will be announced after first round judging is complete and you should check the contest program for the time and location. There are no interviews in the final round, so all you need to do is play your documentary. If you are unable to be present for the final round, you will likely be able to ask a friend or teacher to play the documentary for you.

What are the Qualities of a Good Documentary?

The qualities that a judge is looking for in your NHD documentary are written right on the evaluation sheet. Listed below are the same criteria judges will use to evaluate your project. After you create your documentary, go through this list and ask yourself if you've met the criteria or incorporated this information into your project.



Historical Quality – 60% (At 60%, the historical quality of your documentary is by far the most important part!)

- My documentary is historically accurate:** All the information in my documentary is true to the best of my knowledge.
- I show analysis and interpretation:** My documentary doesn't just recount facts or tell a story. I interpret and analyze my topic. My documentary has a strong central thesis or argument that I prove. I can point to where I state my thesis on my script.
- I place my topic in historical context:** My topic didn't take place in isolation. I made sure to place my topic into historical context – the intellectual, physical, social, and cultural setting for my topic.
- My project shows wide, balanced research and I used available primary sources:** These ideas all relate to the research behind your NHD documentary. Judges will look carefully at your bibliography to learn more about your research process. They want to see that you investigated multiple perspectives about your topic and to see that you looked at all sides of an issue. They are looking for research using both primary and secondary sources and to see that you used a variety of source types.



Relation to Theme – 20%

- I clearly relate my topic to the theme:** My theme connection is clear in my documentary itself.
- I demonstrate significance of my topic in history and draw conclusions:** My documentary does more than just describe my topic. I explain why my topic is important in history or demonstrate its significance.



Clarity of Presentation – 20%

- My documentary and written materials are original, clear, appropriate and organized:** I have an organized and well written documentary. I was careful to avoid plagiarism and I have double checked spelling and grammar in my process paper and bibliography.
- My documentary is organized, has visual impact and the documentary category is appropriate to my topic:** I thought about the overall organization to my documentary and was careful to make sure that this category was a good fit for my topic.



National History Day in Wisconsin
Wisconsin Historical Society

www.wisconsinhistory.org/teachers/historyday/
historyday@wisconsinhistory.org



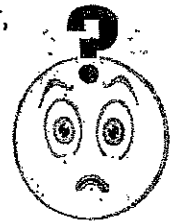
Preparing to Write: Organizing Your Information

Beginning the writing process can be very difficult because it is hard to know what information to include, and how to arrange it to tell your story. As a writer you will be acting as both a "scholar" and a "chef" to complete your project. Wearing your scholar hat will help you to decide what the most important information is to include. As a chef you must prepare your project in a way that works well for your particular topic. Below are some tips for how to navigate the writing process.



Top Tips on Writing for All Categories:

- **Break it down.** Instead of trying to write everything in one night, create an outline or guide that lets you write in smaller pieces. Using this as a guide for your project will also help viewers and judges more easily understand your project. Also, if you have divided the writing responsibilities up, make sure your writing style is cohesive in the end.
- **Use your thesis to guide you.** Everything included in your project should lead back to supporting your thesis. This should also help you divide information into smaller, more manageable pieces.
- **Seek advice.** Remember you want your project to be easily understood by anyone, so if your friends have that "huh?" look on their face, you may want to consider revising your work.
- **Keep it short and to the point.** Make sure you do the work for the viewer; no one goes to a museum to read a book. Before writing it is important to analyze your information so you know what to argue.
- **Once is not enough.** It is crucial to have at least one re-write of your information. Writing is a process, and the first draft will likely be inadequate for most projects.
- **Use an active voice.** Things rarely just "happen" in history, someone or something is usually propelling it. Instead of saying "the Berlin Wall came down in 1989," try, "the Berlin Wall was *taken* down in 1989."
- **Viewers can't read your mind.** You have been working on this topic for months, for some of the viewers and judges this may be the first time they encounter it. Don't assume they know anything about what you are presenting.



Strategies for the Writing Process


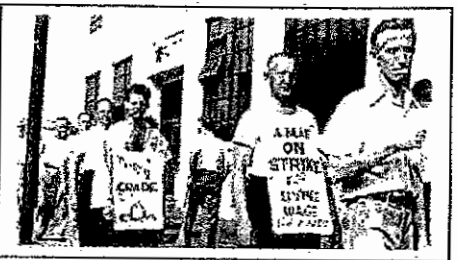

- **Start by identifying the most important quotes, excerpts, images, etc.** Write these on notecards that you can arrange on a table.
- **Write it out on paper first.** Writing key points on notecards and then moving them around into different configurations can help you segment your work. This can also be a good way to save drafts you may want to come back to later, rather than having just erased them on the computer.
- **The best place to start is to start.** Don't let your time go to waste because you are afraid of "getting something wrong" or not writing it perfectly the first time. Once you write something on paper it is much easier for others to advise you and help you work on your writing.

Organizing Your Information: Documentaries

The most important element of a documentary is a great script. Remember that **sound should always drive the visual images**. In order to organize your documentary, consider the following:

- **Segment your information.** You are telling a story, so you want to make sure that you have a clear and distinct:
 - Introduction: Make sure people understand where and when this is happening and include your thesis
 - Background Information: What will people need to understand your main argument and the importance of your topic?
 - Main argument: Fully explain your topic and argument.
 - Conclusion: Address the impact your topic has had in history and sum up its importance.
- **Write your script first.** Trying to put images together first often results in disaster and despair. If you know where you are going with your project, it is much easier to find images that fit your ideas than ideas to fit your images. Use a storyboard to add images that fit later on. It is likely that you will need between 60-75 images in total.

Example of a Storyboard:

Script	Image
<p>During the Great Depression the Wagner Act created the National Labor Relations Board or NLRB, a federal agency. The goal of the Act was to allow workers greater rights, including the right to create labor unions.</p>	
<p>Many unions were soon formed and workers struck for better wages throughout the nation.</p>	
<p>However, the Act created controversy as some felt it worsened the Depression. It also created conflict between the two major union organizations.</p>	

HOW TO CREATE A HISTORICAL EXHIBIT

What is a Historical Exhibit?

Historical exhibition presents information about an event, person, place, or idea from the past by physically displaying documents, images, or objects. We often see such exhibits at museums, but they are also presented at many other places such as archives, historic sites, park visitor centers, classrooms, and even airports and train stations. For your National History Day project, you will tell the story of your research through historic photographs, maps, drawings and other interesting objects. Both individual and group entries are allowed in this category.

How is an Exhibit Different from Other Categories?

The exhibit category is three dimensional and is displayed on a physical structure. Exhibits use color, images, documents, objects, graphics, and design, as well as words, to tell your story. Exhibits can be interactive experiences by asking viewers to play music, solve a puzzle, look at a video, or open a door or window to see more documents or photos.

Getting Started

- Brainstorm topics that are of interest to you and are related to this year's NHD theme.
- *Research the topic first.* Do your secondary research first. Reading secondary resources will help you understand your subject more completely, point you to primary sources, and assist you in selecting the important themes you want to investigate and the key questions you want to ask.
- *Select items to put on the exhibit.* You won't be able to use all the materials you find while doing your research. As you think about what to put on the exhibit, ask yourself the following questions:
 - Does the item fit in with the NHD theme and the theme of your exhibit?
 - Does the item advance the story you are trying to tell?
 - Is a document you are thinking of displaying too long or too wordy? Is it easy to read and understand? Will it take up too much space in your exhibit?
 - Is the item visually interesting?
 - What images best tell your story?
 - Do you want to include artifacts in your exhibit?
 - Will your exhibit contain audiovisual materials?
- *Prepare the script.* Writing your titles, text, and labels is often referred to as writing the script. Like all good writing, your exhibit script needs to be grammatically correct, use good sentence structure, make wise word choices, and contain no spelling errors. You should expect to write several drafts. Exhibit labels are brief, so they need to be clear and concise.

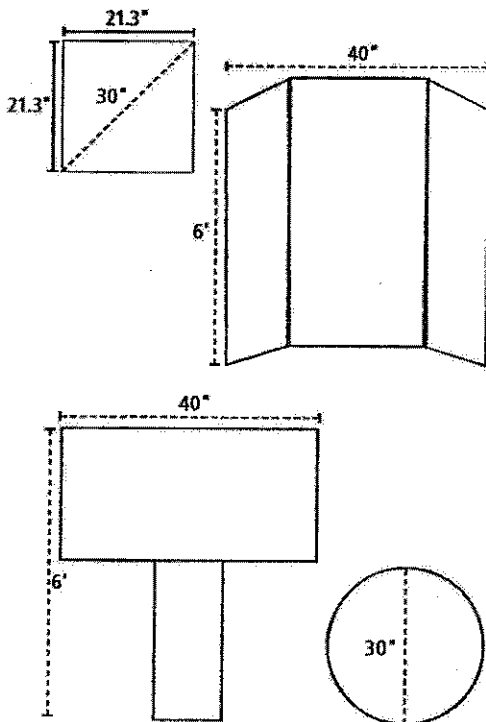
B. EXHIBIT

An exhibit is a visual representation of your research and interpretation of your topic's significance in history, much like a small museum exhibit. The analysis and interpretation of your topic must be clear and evident to the viewer. Labels and captions should be used creatively with visual images and objects to enhance the message of your exhibit.

Part II, Rules for all Categories, applies to exhibits.

Rule 1: Size Requirements

The overall size of your exhibit when displayed for judging must be no larger than 40 inches wide, 30 inches deep, and 6 feet high. Measurement of the exhibit does not include the table on which it rests; however, it would include any stand that you create and any table drapes. Circular or rotating exhibits or those meant to be viewed from all sides must be no more than 30 inches in diameter. (See diagram below.)



Rule 2: Media Devices

Media devices (e.g., tape recorders, projectors, video monitors, computers) used in an exhibit must not run for more than a total of 3 minutes and are subject to the 500-word limit (Rule 3). Viewers and judges must be able to control media devices. Any media devices used must fit within the size limits of the exhibit. Any media devices used should be integral to the exhibit—not just a device to bypass the prohibition against live student involvement.

Rule 3: Word Limit

There is a 500-word limit that applies to all text created by the student that appears on or as part of an exhibit entry. This includes the text you write for titles, subtitles, captions, graphs, timelines, media devices (e.g., video, slides, computer files) or supplemental materials (e.g., photo albums, scrapbooks, etc.) where you use your own words.

Words such as "a," "the" and "of" are counted as one word each.

Brief citations crediting the sources of illustrations or quotations included on the exhibit do not count toward the 500-word limit.

Elements of an Effective Exhibit

Orientation

Make sure the title and subtitle of the exhibit are prominent features of the design.

Make the main idea or thesis clear to the viewer.

Segmentation

Organize the exhibit into subtopics.

Use design elements to make subtopics clear to viewer.

Explanation

Use clear and concise captions and text to:

1. Identify pictures, objects, or documents, or
2. Interpret information for the viewer.

Levels of Text:

Introduction to the use of labels on historical displays

A TOWN BUILT ON IRON

The main title introduces the topic and attracts viewer interest

*"The Evolution of
Hibbing, Minnesota, 1880
- 1980"*

The subtitle focuses the topic and limits what the project will interpret

Moving the Town

A subject label breaks down the topic into smaller parts for explanation and organization. These labels guide the viewer around the display.

The original townsite of Hibbing was located over a rich lode of iron ore. Because the ore was more valuable than the town, the buildings of Hibbing were moved to a new site in 1919.

Captions are the most detailed label and provide the opportunity for interpretation. These should be short, active, and clear.

Exhibit Checklist

General checklist for the project

- € I/we have a **creative title** for the project.
- € I/we have demonstrated how the project **relates to the theme** of "Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History"
- € I/we have a **clearly stated thesis** that unifies my project.
- € I/we use a **broad amount of resources** instead of relying on one or two main sources.
- € I/w have provided **historical context** for the topic.
- € I/we have demonstrated the **overall significance** of the project in history.
- € I/we have **analyzed and interpreted evidence** instead of regurgitating facts.
- € I/we have presented **different points of view** in order to have balance.
- € My/our project can **stand alone** for someone who has no idea about my topic.
- € My/our project demonstrates **originality and creativity**.
- € I/we have a **complete process paper**.
- € I/we have an **annotated bibliography** with resources listed in proper form and divided into primary and secondary sources.

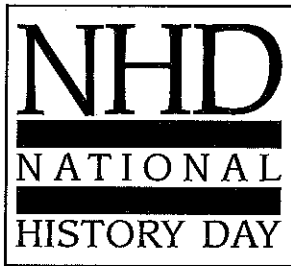
Specific checklist for an exhibit

- € The exhibit meets the **size requirements** as stated in the rules—no larger than 40 inches wide, 30 inches deep, and 6 feet high.
- € The exhibit meets the **word requirements** as stated in the rules—500 student composed words.
- € If used, the **media device** follows the requirement of no longer than 3 minutes.
- € The exhibit is **visually appealing**, with clear and crisp images.
- € The **title** is clear and visible
- € The **subtopics** are obvious and organized.
- € All **text** is readable and consistent in size and font.
- € There are a **wide variety** of visual materials.

Checklist for judging at regional competition

- € I/we have four copies of our title page, process paper and annotated bibliography.
- € I/we are prepared to answer the judges questions about our project.

Read "Preparing Yourself for the Judging Process" from the NHD Curriculum Guide before the competition.



JUDGING CRITERIA <i>(Judging criteria are explained in the Rule Book)</i>	EVALUATION			
	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

COMMENTS

- Strengths
- Areas for Improvement

Historical Quality (60%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Entry is historically accurate				
• Shows analysis and interpretation				
• Places topic in historical context				
• Shows wide research				
• Uses available primary sources				
• Research is balanced				

Relation to Theme (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Clearly relates topic to theme				
• Demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions				

Clarity of Presentation (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Exhibit, written material is original, clear, appropriate and organized				
• Exhibit is organized, has visual impact, correctly uses maps, photos, etc.				

Rules Compliance	Yes	No
• Maintains size requirement (40" x 30" x 72")		
• Media device maintains time limit (3 minutes)		
• Maintains word limit (500 words)		
• Includes annotated bibliography		
• Other		

National History Day Exhibits

What is an exhibit?

An exhibit is a visual representation of your research and interpretation of your topic's significance in history. Your exhibit will look a lot like a small version of an exhibit you might see in a museum. You may have already made something similar to an exhibit if you have ever created a poster to display your research.

Creating an exhibit gives you the opportunity to use a variety of visual materials to make your argument. In addition to text, you can use things like timelines, maps, graphs, charts, photographs, paintings, or artifacts. You can also incorporate primary sources into your exhibit – including quotations, letters, newspaper articles, and more. Using these visual elements will help you create a rich and informative exhibit.



The Basic Framework

- **Size Limit:** the overall size of your exhibit when displayed can be up to 40 inches wide, 30 inches deep and 6 feet high.
- **Word Limit:** There is a 500 word limit to all text that you create that appears on or as part of your exhibit. All the text that *you write* counts toward the 500 word limit. If you didn't write it, it doesn't count towards the limit. This means that you can use quotations from other sources and it won't count towards your limit.

Examples of things that count...	Examples of things that don't count...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Titles and subtitles• Captions• Graphs, charts, or timelines that you create yourself• Text that you write that is on your exhibit, is included in a scrapbook, or narration in a media device	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quotations• Graphs, charts, or timelines that you don't create yourself• Brief citations crediting the source of an illustration or quotations

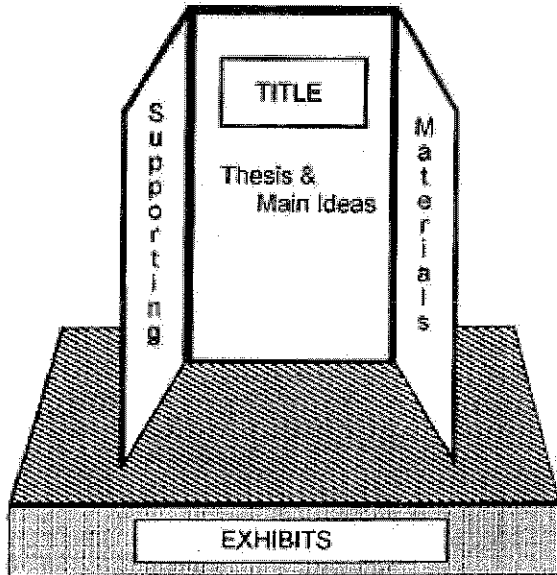
- **Media:** Media devices (such as tape recorders, projectors, computers or video monitors) can be used in your exhibit. They must not run for more than a total of 3 minutes and the viewer must be able to control the media device. Remember, media devices must fit inside the size limit and if you write narration for your media clip, it will count towards your 500 word-limit.
- **Be sure to check the *NHD Contest Rulebook* for complete category rules!**

Why Should I Choose the Exhibit Category?

The exhibit category is great for people who enjoy working with their hands and physically building an argument. If you've ever gone to a museum and wondered how they put an exhibit together and thought you might want to give it a try—now is your chance. You should make sure that you have access to exhibit building supplies, including exhibit or poster board, construction paper, a printer, scissors, adhesives, etc. While many topics can be effectively conveyed using the exhibit category, this category is especially suitable for topics that have a variety of visual materials that can be used to support the argument, including photographs, illustrations, maps, graphs, newspaper articles, letters, etc.

Exhibit Shapes and Sizes

Exhibits are designed to display visual and written information on a topic in an easy-to-understand and attractive manner. Exhibits are not simply collections of material. They are carefully designed to make an argument about your topic. To be successful, an exhibit must create an effective balance between visual interest and historical explanation.



Three-Panel Display

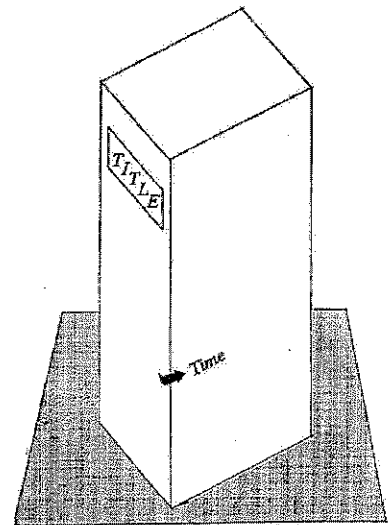
The most common form of an exhibit is a three-panel display, similar to the one on the left. This style is the least complicated to design and build, but is still a very effective way to present your information. Here are some tips for this style:

- Be sure your title is the main focus of the center panel.
- Use the center panel to present your main ideas and argument.
- Use the side panels to provide supporting evidence for your argument.
- Divide the exhibit into sections to give it an organizational structure that makes sense to the viewer.
- If your topic is presented chronologically, make sure the sequence works visually on the panels.
- You have a limited number of words; use them sparingly and let the quotations, documents, artifacts, drawings, and photographs demonstrate your thesis.
- Artifacts or other materials may also be placed on the table between the side panels, but remember that it should be directly related to the topic and necessary to support your argument.

Three-Dimensional Exhibit

A three-dimensional exhibit is more complicated to construct, but can be especially effective for explaining topics where change over time is important. Like the three-panel display, one side should contain your title and main theme. As you move around the exhibit, the development of your topic can be explored. It is not necessary for the project itself to be able to spin. You may set it on a table (or the floor) so people can walk around it.

When making a three-dimensional exhibit, good organization is especially important. Because your exhibit has so many sides, viewers may be more easily confused about how to follow your exhibit's narrative. Make sure that each side is clearly labeled, cleanly organized, and that there is a logical flow of ideas as the viewer moves about your exhibit.



This is just a start to the creative ways that History Day students have expressed their arguments in the exhibit category. Think about ways to connect the content of your project with the look of your exhibit. The only limit is your imagination and ability to transport your project to a competition!

A Closer Look at History Day Exhibits

A good design doesn't just jazz up your exhibit; it helps express your ideas. Can you guess what this exhibit is about without even reading the text? The cut-out of Rosie the Riveter lets the viewer immediately know the project's topic. The student took the theme a step further by using a red, white, and blue color scheme to convey the patriotic aspects of her topic.



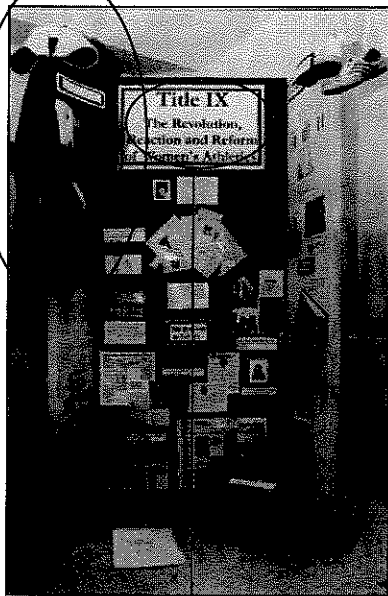
History Day exhibits come in all shapes and sizes, but there are several common characteristics you can see in many good exhibits. Check out these exhibits from other Wisconsin students!

The thesis and main argument are very clear to the viewer in this project. The student used a larger font and a bold border to immediately attract your attention

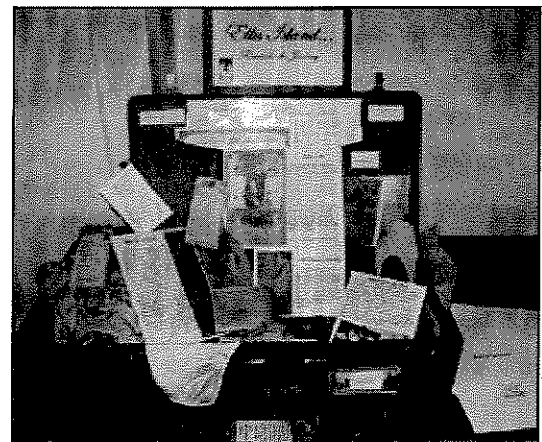
History Day isn't about glitz. The student has a simple, effective design for a project with a clear argument and solid research.

Photographs, newspapers, and sheet music are just a few of the primary sources that the student was able to incorporate into the project to prove her argument.

This exhibit incorporates a variety of interesting artifacts for the viewer to examine.



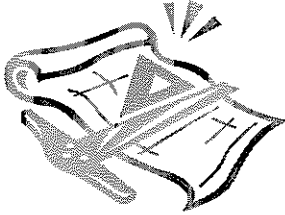
The theme for the year this project was created was "Revolution, Reaction, Reform." To show the topic's connection to the theme, the student used words from the theme in the title and section headings.



This project was about the journey that immigrants took through Ellis Island to their new lives in America. To connect the project to the topic, the students used an old suitcase as the frame for their exhibit. They made sure their argument stood out and divided up the space to give the exhibit an organizational structure in the same way they would have if they had used an exhibit board.

Tips for Creating a Spectacular NHD Exhibit

Planning



Getting Started

After you finish your research, try making an outline for your exhibit—just like you would before you write a paper. Make sure to include the main arguments and points that you would like to make in the exhibit. Using this outline, you'll be able to see what the main sections of your exhibit need to be in order to support your argument and convey it to the viewer.

Plan It Out

Plan out your exhibit with a simple sketch before you start to create the full-scale project.

Connect Content to Design

Let the topic of your project inspire the design of your exhibit. What visual look can you give your exhibit that will connect the appearance of your project to your topic? This can be as simple as using appropriate colors. A project about women's suffrage, for example, would be striking using purple and gold, colors commonly associated with the movement. In the past, students have been able to connect the look of their project with the content on even larger scales. Students have created projects about conservation that look like trees, projects about education reform that look like school houses and exhibits about wars that have included dioramas of battle scenes. No matter what you decide to do, remember that your project doesn't have to be fancy to be effective.

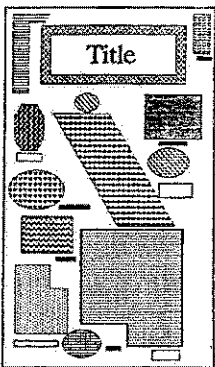
Divide and Conquer

Just like writing a research paper, before you begin creating your project you should first create an outline by dividing up all your information into sections and putting them into a logical order. You should do the same thing before you create your NHD exhibit. Organizing your exhibit into logical sections will make it easier for you to assemble and easier for your viewer to understand what you are trying to say. What sections might you need in your exhibit? Background? Significance? Historical Context? Outcomes? Relation to Theme?

What's Your Point?

No matter what type of exhibit you decide to create, what topic you choose, or what division you are in, it is important to make sure that your argument (thesis) is clear **in the project itself**. Your argument should be the first thing the viewer looks at so they know right away what you will be proving in your exhibit. It should be concise and well-written. Usually students do this by making sure the argument is located where the viewers' eyes will look first, usually in the center in a larger font.

Putting It All Together

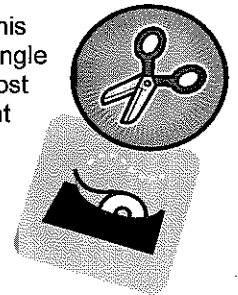


Avoid Clutter

It is always tempting to try to get as much on your exhibit panels as possible, but this usually makes for a cluttered and confusing display. You don't have to put every single photo, drawing, and map that you found onto your exhibit. Try to select only the most important items for your project boards. Clarity and organization are most important goals for this project. Everything should have a reason for being on your exhibit.

Content is More Important Than Glitz

Fancy exhibits are nice to look at and can be a lot of fun to create—but remember that your historical argument is the most important part of your exhibit.



A cluttered exhibit can leave your viewers feeling overwhelmed and unsure about the argument you are trying to make.

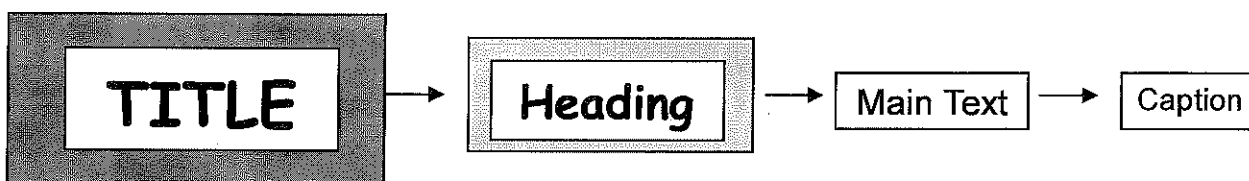
A Note on the Quote

Quotations can be an effective way of using historical evidence to support your argument. Sometimes, a quote from the historical figure just says it better than you could say it yourself.

Only original words (i.e. words written by you) count toward the word limit, so quotations do not take away from your 500 words. Quotations should not, however, be used just to “get around” the word limit. Using quotations this way and covering your exhibit with tons of quotes can easily make your exhibit cluttered and overwhelming for the viewer. The important aspects of your NHD project, your argument, analysis and interpretation, should stand out. It is important, therefore, to make sure that there is a reason for everything you put up on your exhibit and that it is well organized.

Labels

Once you’ve divided up your information into sections, you should make sure to label those sections. The labels you use for your title and main ideas are important because they direct the viewer’s eye around your project. Remember—**Big Idea=Big Font**. You will want to put your title in the largest font on your exhibit and then scale the rest of your fonts down according to their importance.



One way to make your labels stand out is to have the writing on a light colored piece of paper with a darker background or matting behind it. This can be done with construction paper, tag board, or mat board. Dark black lettering makes your labels easier to read. Photographs and written materials will also stand out more on backgrounds.

Captions



Captions can be very useful in showing how a particular illustration or item you’ve included in your exhibit helps prove your point. Which of the following captions do *you* think would work best with the political cartoon on the right about former Wisconsin Governor Robert La Follette? Why?

- A. Political Cartoon about Governor La Follette
- B. Governor La Follette’s supporters championed his reforms as beneficial for citizens of the state.

Keep it Neat

You’ve spent a lot of energy researching and creating your exhibit. Take the time to give it some extra polish. Make sure you’ve checked your spelling and grammar. Use your best handwriting or print text using a computer. Make sure you’ve cut and glued things to your exhibit board as neatly as possible.

Look It Over

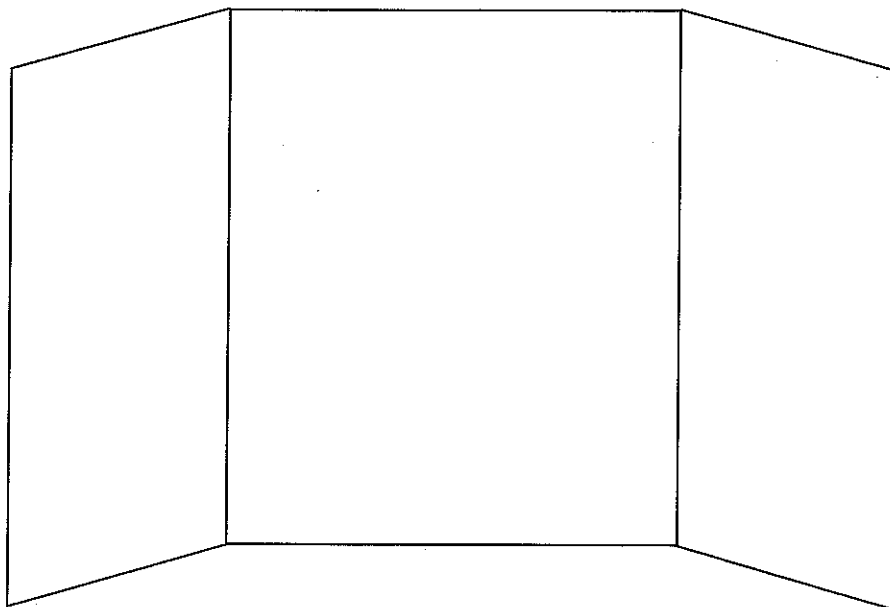


The Exhibit Stands Alone

When evaluating NHD exhibits, judges should be able to find all the information about your topic in your exhibit itself. *The exhibit has to stand on its own*. Have someone who has never seen your exhibit look at it (a friend, teacher, neighbor, etc). Without saying anything, let them read through the entire exhibit. Then, ask them a few questions to see if you have communicated your argument clearly: What am I trying to prove in my exhibit? What evidence have I shown to support that argument? What do you like about my exhibit? What is confusing to you?

History Day Exhibit Planning

Title:	
Thesis:	
Connection to Theme:	
Design and Color Ideas:	
Main ideas that support my thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none">••••••	Main sections to organize my exhibit: <ul style="list-style-type: none">••••••
Possible illustrations to use:	



What are the qualities of a good exhibit?

The qualities that a judge is looking for in your NHD exhibit are written right on the evaluation sheet. Listed below are the same criteria judges will use to evaluate your project. After you create your exhibit, go through this list and ask yourself if you've met the criteria or incorporated this information into your project.



Historical Quality - 60% (At 60%, the historical quality of your exhibit is by far the most important part!)

- My exhibit is historically accurate:** All the information in my exhibit is true to the best of my knowledge.
- I show analysis and interpretation:** My exhibit doesn't just recount facts or tell a story. I interpret and analyze my topic. My exhibit has a strong central thesis or argument that I prove. I can point to where I state my thesis on my exhibit.
- I place my topic in historical context:** My topic didn't take place in isolation. I made sure to place my topic into historical context – the intellectual, physical, social, and cultural setting for my topic.
- My project shows wide, balanced research and I used available primary sources:** These ideas all relate to the research behind your NHD exhibit. Judges will look carefully at your bibliography to learn more about your research process. They want to see that you investigated multiple perspectives about your topic and to see that you looked at all sides of an issue. They are looking for research using both primary and secondary sources and to see that you used a variety of source types.



Relation to Theme - 20%

- I clearly relate my topic to the theme:** My theme connection is clear in my exhibit itself.
- I demonstrate the significance of my topic in history and draw conclusions:** My exhibit does more than just describe my topic. I explain why my topic is important in history or demonstrate its significance.



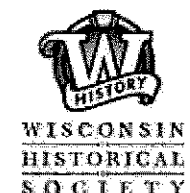
Clarity of Presentation - 20%

- My exhibit and written materials are original, clear, appropriate and organized:** I have an organized and well written project. I was careful to avoid plagiarism and I have double checked spelling and grammar in my exhibit, process paper and bibliography.
- My exhibit is organized, has visual impact, correctly uses maps, photos, etc:** I thought about the overall design and organization to my project. I chose my visual illustrations carefully to help prove my argument.



National History Day in Wisconsin
Wisconsin Historical Society

www.wisconsinhistory.org/teachers/historyday/
historyday@wisconsinhistory.org



Title

Background Information

Give background information about some of the big ideas that lead into your main event. For example: segregation, World War II, The Great Depression

Thesis

1-3 sentences that argue a main point and includes all or most of the 5 W's, the significance of your topic in history and connect to the theme.

Impact

Give the short term impact of the main event. What happened in the weeks, months or maybe even years after?

Main Argument

The heart of your project and center of the project. Focus on the main event, how it happened, who was involved and why. Often times, this is a great place to support relation to the theme.

Build Up

More specific information people will need to know to understand your thesis. Include events that directly lead to your main set of events.

"So What?" / Legacy

What is the long term impact? Why do we still talk about this today? This is a good place to include something about how your topic ties to today.

"Less is More!"

Achieving clarity of text in an exhibit

When writing text for an exhibit it is necessary to take complex ideas and explain them in short, clear paragraphs. The paragraph below contains 103 words. In the space provided, try to communicate the most important elements of the paragraph using 40 - 50 words.

Throughout the 1930s and 40s Jewish doctors faced discrimination at Minneapolis hospitals. They found it virtually impossible to get hired and serve their patients. This situation created a health care problem for the Jews of Minneapolis. Community leaders continued to press for equal employment opportunities for Jewish doctors, but also sought an interim solution to provide needed medical resources. In 1951 Mount Sinai Hospital was constructed near downtown Minneapolis. Mount Sinai provided employment for Jewish doctors who were not allowed to practice in most Minneapolis hospitals. This is an example of a compromise in response to the ongoing prejudice against Jews in Minneapolis. (103 words)

A key example of compromise in response to discrimination was the construction of Mount Sinai Hospital in 1951. Its creation was a successful effort to provide employment for Jewish doctors who were not allowed to practice in most Minneapolis hospitals.* (40 words)

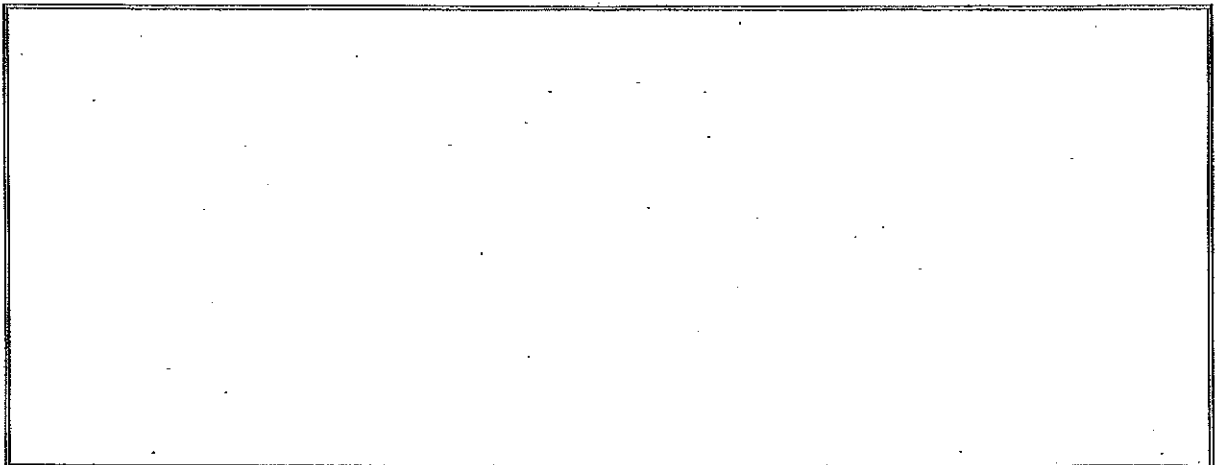
*This text was taken from a Sr. Individual Exhibit entitled, "Restricted: The Struggle Against Anti-Semitism in Minneapolis," by Hannah Steinberg of South High School in Minneapolis. This exhibit was completed in 1996 when the National History Day theme was, "Conflict and Compromise in History."

“Less is More!”

Achieving clarity of text in an exhibit

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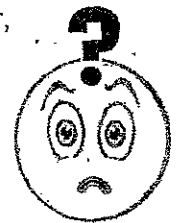
Preparing to Write: Organizing Your Information

Beginning the writing process can be very difficult because it is hard to know what information to include, and how to arrange it to tell your story. As a writer you will be acting as both a "scholar" and a "chef" to complete your project. Wearing your scholar hat will help you to decide what the most important information is to include. As a chef you must prepare your project in a way that works well for your particular topic. Below are some tips for how to navigate the writing process.



Top Tips on Writing for All Categories:

- **Break it down.** Instead of trying to write everything in one night, create an outline or guide that lets you write in smaller pieces. Using this as a guide for your project will also help viewers and judges more easily understand your project. Also, if you have divided the writing responsibilities up, make sure your writing style is cohesive in the end.
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Strategies for the Writing Process

- **Start by identifying the most important quotes, excerpts, images, etc.** Write these on notecards that you can arrange on a table.
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Organizing Your Information: Exhibits

There are 3 basic elements to consider when organizing an effective exhibit:

1. Orientation

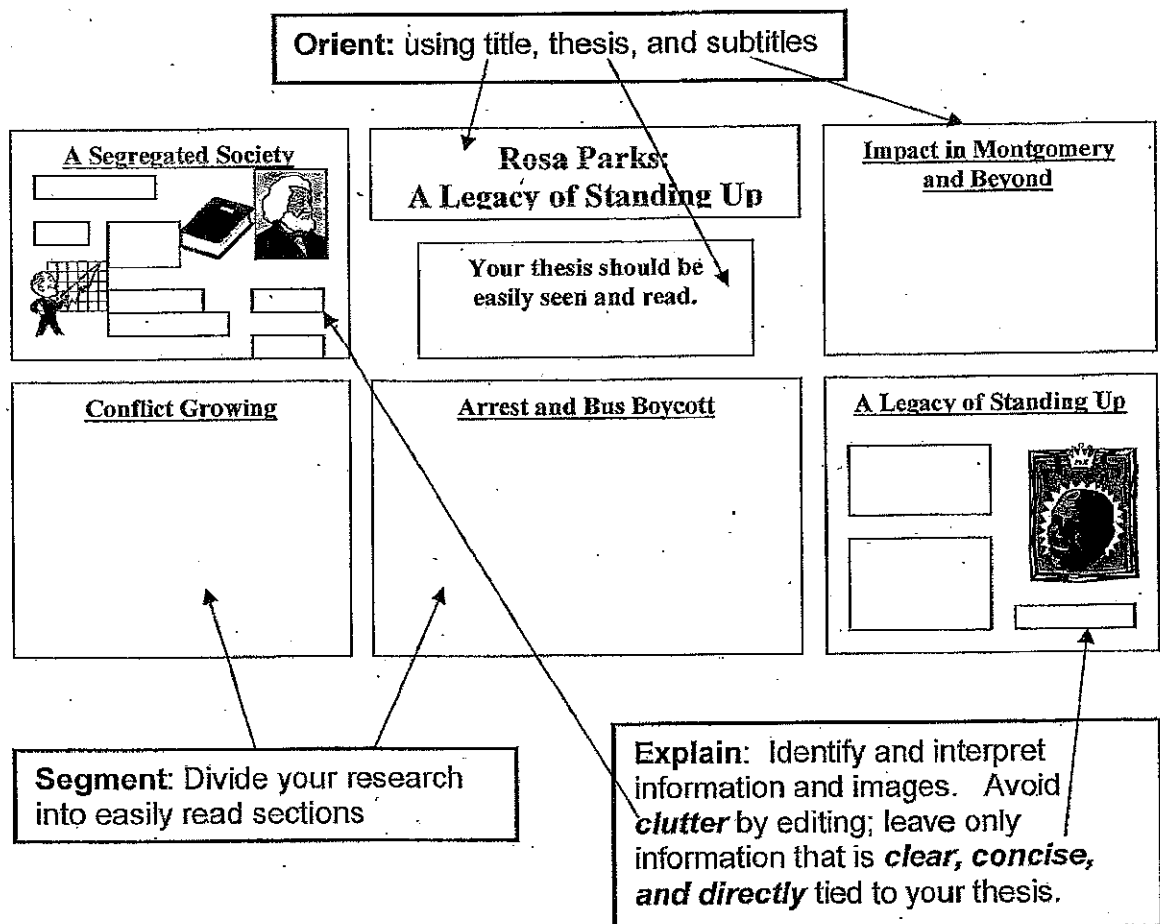
- Make sure the title and subtitle of the exhibit are prominent features of the design
- Make the main idea or thesis clear to the viewer

2. Segmentation

- Organize the exhibit into subtopics
- Use *design elements* (color, background, font, etc.) to make subtopics clear to the viewer

3. Explanation

- Use clear, concise, captions and texts to:
 - Identify pictures, objects, or documents *and*
 - Interpret information for the viewer- don't pad your board with unnecessary pictures, charts, or other information that doesn't directly relate to your point



HOW TO CREATE A HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE

What is a Historical Performance?

A performance is a live, dramatic presentation of your topic's significance in history. You may perform individually or as part of a group. A performance should be a scripted portrayal based on research of your chosen topic. Your script should be structured on a thesis statement, supporting statements, and a conclusion. Your performance should have dramatic appeal, but not at the expense of historical information. Both groups and individuals may enter this category.

How is a Performance Different from Other Categories?

The performance category is the only one that is presented live. Developing a strong narrative that allows your subject to unfold in a dramatic and visually interesting way is important. Memorizing, rehearsing, and refining your script is essential, so you should schedule time for this in addition to research, writing, costuming and prop gathering.

Getting Started

- Decide whether the chosen topic will be most effective as a group or as an individual performance.
- *Research the topic first.* Write down important facts or quotes that may be important to the performance. Write a thesis statement, supporting statements and a conclusion. Think about how these might become part of your performance.
- *Prepare a script.* Brainstorm with general ideas and how they might be presented. If a group is performing, each member should describe different ways in which characters might interact.
 - Make sure your script contains references to the historical evidence found in your research.
 - Using actual dialogue, quotations, or brief excerpts from speeches are good ways to put historical detail into your performance.
 - Remember that your script should center on the thesis statement, supporting statements, and the conclusion that you developed from your research.
- *Prepare the set.* Think about different types of sets that might help depict your topic. Is there a prop that is central to the story?
- *Prepare the blocking.* To "block" a performance is to determine where the actors will stand, move, and/or relate to the set. You should think about these movements when deciding what type of set to design.
- *Prepare the costuming.* Good costumes help make a performer convincing, but make sure they are appropriate to the topic. You do not need to purchase or make an elaborate costume - sometimes simple works best (e.g. white shirt and dark pants/skirt can fit almost any time period).
- *Practice, practice, practice!* Work on speaking clearly, pronouncing all words correctly, and projecting your voice so that the judges and the audience can hear every word. Rehearse with the set and full costumes as often as possible.



C. PERFORMANCE

A performance is a dramatic portrayal of your topic's significance in history and must be original in production.

Part II, Rules for all Categories, applies to performances.

Rule 1: Time Requirements

Performances may not exceed 10 minutes in length. Timing starts at the beginning of the performance following the announcement of the title and student name(s). Any other introductory remarks will be considered part of the performance and will be counted as part of the overall time. You will be allowed an additional 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to remove any props needed for your performance.

Rule 2: Performance Introduction

The title of your entry and the names of the participants must be the first and only announcements prior to the start of the performance.

Rule 3: Media Devices

Use of slides, tape recorder, computers, or other media within your performance is permitted. You must run all equipment and carry out any special lighting or sound effects.

Rule 4: Script

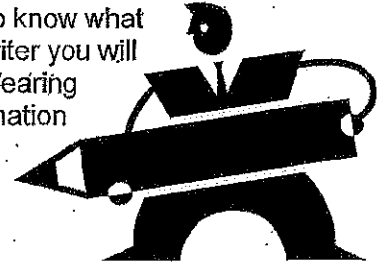
The script for the performance should not be included with the written material presented to the judges.

Rule 5: Costumes

You may have a costume produced for you, but the design, choice of fabrics, etc. must be your own. Or, you may rent a costume. Remember: simple is best.

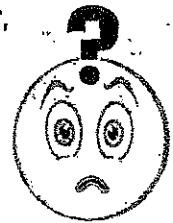
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Organizing Your Information: Performances

Writing a script is the essential first step in creating a performance. It will guide how you structure your acting, props, and costumes. Below are some tips for beginning to write your script.



Quick Tips for Writing Scripts:

- **Identify the key information first.** Find the quotes, speeches, characters etc. that you know you must include and work the performance around these.
- **Balance drama with historical evidence.** Using quotes, speeches, or excerpts from sources like newspapers can be an excellent way to incorporate evidence and detail that a great performance requires.
- **Prepare a performance.** Don't prepare an oral report that simply states facts. You need characters to come alive and interact with each other and the audience. Try to engage the audience by asking questions or creating dramatic scenes.
- **Choose the type of voice you want to use.** You can use 1st person and 3rd person perspectives to tell your story. In some cases you may want to use both to convey your points.
- **Choosing characters.** Select characters that can tell the most in your story. Don't overcomplicate the storyline with too many.
- **Block.** As you write your script, include the actions and placement of your characters.
- **Avoid clutter.** Too many props, costumes, or characters will overwhelm your performance.
- **Length.** Scripts are usually 4-5 pages.
- **Your research is still central.** You want each piece to tie back to your main argument and thesis.
- **Practice, practice, practice.** You won't use your scripts on stage, so make sure to practice your performance.

General checklist for the project

- I/we have a **creative title** for my project.
- I/we have demonstrated how my project **relates to the theme** of "Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History"
I/we have a **clearly stated thesis** that unifies my project.
- I/we use **both primary and secondary source** material to support my thesis.
- I/we use a **broad amount of resources** instead of relying on one or two main sources.
- I/we have provided **historical context** for my topic.
- I/we have demonstrated the **overall significance** of my project in history.
- I/we have **analyzed and interpreted evidence** instead of regurgitating facts.
- I/we have presented **different points of view** in order to have balance.
- My/our project can **stand alone** for someone who has no idea about my topic.
- My/our project demonstrates **originality and creativity**.
- I/we have a **complete process paper**.
- I/we have an **annotated bibliography** with resources listed in proper form and divided in to primary and secondary sources.

Specific checklist for a performance

- The performance meets the **time requirement** as stated in the rules - no longer than 10 minutes
- All **props and equipment** are supplied and run by the students.
- The props can be **set up** in five minutes and **taken down** in five minutes.
- The performance is **rehearsed and memorized**.
- The performance is **acted and not simply spoken**.

Checklist for judging at regional competition

- I/we have four copies of our **title page, process paper and annotated bibliography**.
- I/we are prepared to **answer the judges' questions** about our project.

Read "Preparing Yourself for the Judging Process" from the NHD Curriculum Guide before the competition!

National History Day Performances

What is a performance?

The History Day performance category allows you to create a play that conveys a historical argument with dramatic appeal. Innovative performances have made this category the highlight of many History Day events.

In creating a performance, it's important to remember that entries in this category are not oral reports about a topic. You will create a script, with characters, lines and costumes in order to convey your argument to the audience. Use your imagination and have fun!



The Basic Framework

- **Time Limit:** Your performance may not be longer than 10 minutes. This does not include your performance introduction (including only the title and participant names). Timing will begin after you introduce your project. You will have five additional minutes to set up your performance and five additional minutes to take it down.
- **Media:** You are able to use media in your performance, including CD players, computers, etc. However, only group members are allowed to run this equipment and you will have to provide the equipment yourselves.
- **Costumes:** Performers can find costumes in a variety of places. You can create your own or have one produced for you. You can also rent a costume from a store or borrow one from your school drama department. No matter what you do, the choice of pieces in the costume, choice of fabrics used and choice of design of the costume must be your own. You do not have to buy or rent expensive historically accurate costumes, but you are expected to consider the appropriateness of your clothing in relation to the time period and the script. For example, a student might wear a plain grey shirt and slacks to represent a Confederate soldier in the Civil War, understanding that a dark blue shirt and slacks wouldn't be appropriate.
- **Script:** You should bring an extra copy of your script to a competition in case you want to review your lines, but you should not include your script with the other written materials presented to your judges.
- **A Live Performance:** The very nature of the performance category means that performance are not pre-recorded. You will have to perform in front of an audience of judges and other viewers. Don't be afraid! The people watching your performance will be other students, teachers or family members and will all be there to support you.
- **Be sure to check the NHD Contest Rulebook for complete category rules!**

Why Should I Choose the Performance Category?



If you enjoy being on stage and performing in front of an audience, this is the category for you! You should enjoy creative writing and producing scripts. It's also important to have access to costumes and props and have the ability to transport them to competitions.

In choosing this category, it's important to think about the appropriateness of your topic for a performance. Is there a character or event that is related to your topic that you can turn into an effective argument about your topic? Are there various types of historical evidence that you can include in your performance, such as quotes, music, photographs, maps, etc?

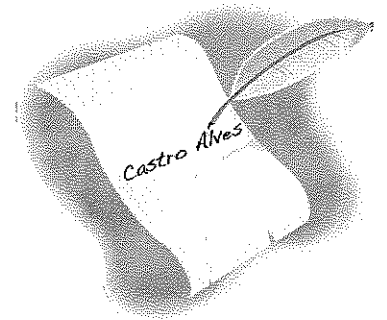
Elements of a History Day Performance

The Script

Your script is the most important element of your performance. It is the culmination of all your research and conveys your argument to the audience. The script must be an original creation of the student(s) working on the project.

History Day scripts are similar to other types of performances or plays. If you've never seen a script before, check your library or ask your teacher for an example to see how scripts are formatted.

Remember, this isn't a Broadway drama! Since your performance can only be 10 minutes long, you don't have a lot of space to write your script. You will be able to include about 5 pages (double-spaced) of script in a History Day performance.

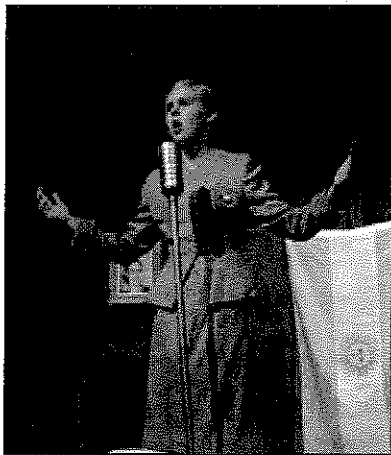


Blocking & Stage Directions

In preparing your performance, it's important to think about how you will present your words to the audience. In addition to your lines, write stage direction for the actors. How should they deliver certain lines? Is the character angry? Happy? Sad? Where should they pause for dramatic effect or to let the character's words sink in? Where should each character be on the stage while delivering their lines? How do the characters interact with each other? Thinking about these elements before will help your performance to appear polished and consistent.

The Stage

The stage you will use to present your performance will vary at different History Day competitions. Most likely, you will have a classroom to share your performance. An area will be cleared at the front of the classroom and the desks will be set into rows for the audience. At other competitions, you may find that there is a stage or a platform in a lecture hall. No matter where you are, there will be room for group members to move around comfortably. You may or may not be able to operate the lights in your performance room.



Props & Set

History Day sets don't have to be elaborate. (In fact, elaborate sets can cause problems when it comes time to move them during competitions. You only have five minutes to set-up and an additional five minutes to take down your set.)

Every prop should have a use, and you should use every prop. When you have your script written, make a list of every object that a character **must** use, including furniture. If your list is huge, think about whether all the props are really necessary, or whether you can get away without certain items. Let the audience use their imaginations!

Costumes

An effective costume will help your audience understand who you are as a character and the time period in which your performance takes place. You can make your costume yourself, rent your costume or have one produced for you. However, according to NHD rules, the student(s) in the performance must make all the decisions about the costume, including the selection of materials, patterns or costume selection. Look at photographs, paintings or costume design books about the time period for inspiration.

Remember, effective costumes do not have to be elaborate. Plain clothing, with simple hats or coats can easily show an audience a change of character.

Media

You are allowed to include media in your performance, including the use of CD or tape players. Remember, you will need to provide all additional equipment to play these media elements and only group members may operate them.

Tips for Creating a Spectacular NHD Performance

Planning

Remember the NHD Criteria

Especially in the performance category, it's easy to get caught up in telling a story through drama. It's important to remember the purpose of your performance and the elements that the judges will be looking for:

Argument: A performance should clearly express an argument, just like a written paper. Incorporate it at the beginning to let your audience know what you will be proving. Make sure to incorporate it again at the end to reiterate your argument for the audience.

Historical Context: When researching and creating your performance, you should consider more than just the narrative of the topic. Think about what took place before or during the time period. How did these people, place or events influence your topic? This historical context is important to understanding your topic and making an argument.

Evidence: Just like other presentation categories, it's important to incorporate historical evidence that supports your argument. What lines can you include in your script that will show this evidence or support? For example, let's say that you are creating a group performance about Susan B. Anthony and the women's voting rights movement in the United States. A pro-voting rights character might give reasons that he or she thinks women should have the right to vote. These don't necessarily have to be quotations from the past, but should be the same arguments that women from the movement gave for demanding the right to vote.

In addition, are there quotations from primary sources, such as letters or diaries, which you can use in your script? Are there photographs or other visual elements that you can incorporate into your performance?



Putting It All Together



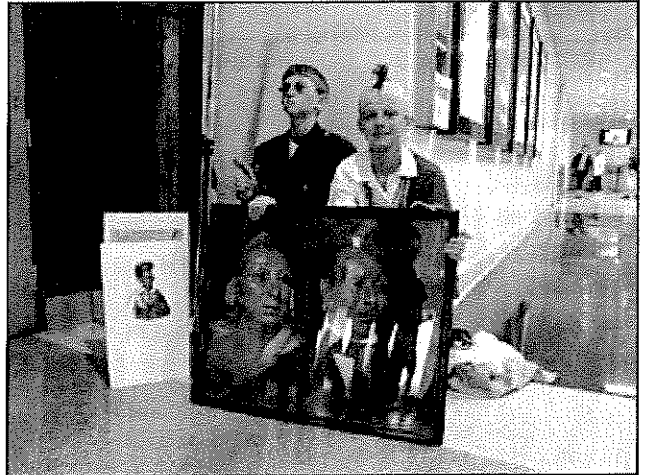
Be Historically Accurate

Your performance should appeal dramatically to the audience, but this shouldn't be at the expense of historical accuracy. Be creative when you make up characters, imagine scenes or write dialog. However, make sure there is a historical basis for the narrative of your performance. It's okay to imagine what Susan B. Anthony might have said to her supporters as she fought for women's right to vote, but it's not appropriate to contend that she fought against the vote. That wouldn't be based on historical fact.

Tips for Creating a Spectacular NHD Performance

Focus on Certain Characters During a Moment in History Rather Than Narrating an Entire Biography or Timeline

The characters depicted in your performance can be real or fictional, as long as they're supported by evidence. Before writing your script, brainstorm a list of people – famous or unknown – who were affected in one way or another by the historical topic you are researching. Consider each person's unique perspective on events. What scenes do you imagine for them as characters in a performance? How could different characters help express your argument?



Establish the Scene Right Away

Who are you? Where are you? What time period are you in? Who is your character talking to? Communicate the "who, what, where and when" early in your script. This will not only help you give a stronger performance, but will also let the audience tune in to your argument and ideas instead of trying to identify your topic and setting.

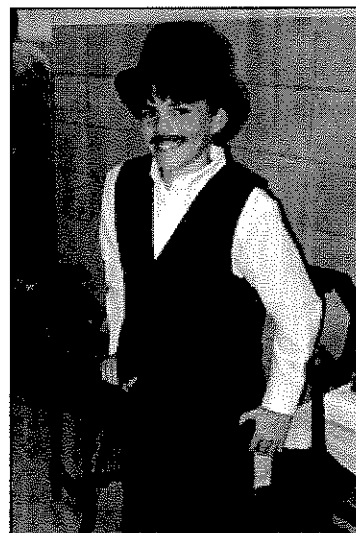
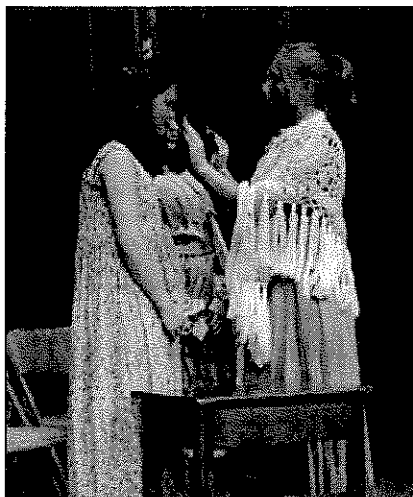
Less Can Be More

Remember the purpose of your History Day performance before getting too involved in elaborate scenes, props, character changes and costumes. Most of your effort should be put into your research, argument and a solid script.

Look it Over

The Performance Stands Alone

When evaluating NHD performances, the judges should be able to find all the information about your topic in the performance itself. The performance has to stand on its own. Have someone who has never seen your performance watch it (a friend, teacher, neighbor, etc.). After they have seen the performance, ask them a few questions to see if you have communicated your argument clearly: What am I trying to prove in my performance? What evidence have I shown to support that argument? What do you like about my performance? What is confusing to you?



Planning Your Performance

Research First

Since your research is the basis for your performance, it's only fitting that you should have a strong basis of research *before* you begin writing your script. No matter how tempting it is to dive in and begin writing a script, it's best to have your research done to understand the full range of possibilities open to you.

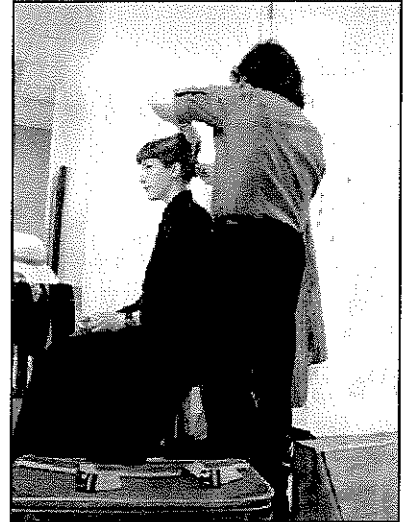
Brainstorm Your Options

Having a strong foundation of research will allow you to write a brief description of your topic. Then, think about all the possible answers to the following questions:

- What events, both major and minor, are connected to my topic?
- What characters, both famous and not, are connected to my topic?
- What scenes, both real and imagined, might I use in my performance?

Get Inspired

Check out other types of historical dramas or NHD performances to get inspired about what you might do through your performance. You can borrow sample performances from the NHD in Wisconsin office, or check out samples online through the national office at <http://www.nhd.org/ProjectExamples.htm>



Develop Your Characters

Once you've decided on your characters, it's time to "get into your character's head," whether you're portraying a real or fictional person.

- How does the character dress? How does the character speak?
- What is the character's personality or mood?
- What was life like for someone like this character?
- What does the character think about events in his or her time period?
- What kinds of social behavior would someone in this character's time or situation portray?

Outline the Basics of Your Performance

Before you begin writing your script, take the time to outline the basics of your performance. You don't want to get too far into your writing and then realize that a certain aspect of your performance won't work. This is also a great time to think about how you will make transitions in time and characters in your performance, if applicable.

- What sections are you going to break your performance into?
- Where are you stating your argument?
- How does each part of your performance support your argument?
- What evidence or primary source might you be able to incorporate and where?
- Where do you show how your topic is connected to the them?
- How do you address historical context through your performance?

Edit It Down

About five pages of double space script will be enough to fill 10 minutes of performance. You may have to make some difficult decisions as to what you are and are not able to include. Remember that your historical argument and evidence are the most important parts of your performance. When you have finished a draft of your script, highlight the parts that express your argument in one color and specific supporting evidence in a different color. If it looks like there's not enough of one color on the script, it may be time for some editing! It should be easier to see what parts of your performance you may be able to edit out.

Practice, Practice, Practice!

Having a working script done is just the beginning. Keep rehearsing to learn your lines and to practice speaking at the right speed, volume and tone. As you go through your lines, take time to block out where your characters will stand, how they will move and what props they might need to use. If possible, ask someone to tape record your performance. You can watch it later to see how the performance looks from the audience's perspective.

Going to a NHD Competition with a Performance

Presenting a project in the performance category at a History Day competition is similar to presenting projects in other categories. At your assigned time, you will have the chance to share your work with the judges. This is how a presentation in the performance category usually works:

- **Set-Up:** You have five minutes to set up your set and props for your performance. Your judges will ask for your process paper and bibliography before you set up so that they can begin looking at it. Remember, only group members should set up the props and any background. Once you are set-up, wait for the judges signal begin your performance.
- **Performance**
- **Take-Down:** Take down your set and move your props to the side of the room or into the hallway. Make sure to be as quiet as possible while you are doing this as there may be other presentations going on in the same area.
- **Interview:** Don't be afraid of the interview! This is your chance to help your judges understand your argument and highlight any cool research that you have done. Remember, the interview isn't a memorized presentation for the judges. You will respond to the questions they ask, such as "How did you choose your topic?" or "Why do you think your topic is significant in history?"

Frequently Asked Questions About Performances

Does my performance have to be memorized?

There isn't a rule that says that your performance has to be memorized, but it's best if it is. Memorizing your script will help you focus on *how* you say your lines versus just reading a script to your audience. Finally, memorized lines contribute to good stage presence, which is part of clarity of presentation on the History Day evaluation sheet.

What props might be available at the competition?

To be safe, it's best to bring all the props necessary to a competition. You're likely to find a chair or table at a competition, however, these are not guaranteed. If you have questions, be sure to check with the contest coordinator.

What happens if I go over the time limit?

Going a few seconds over the time limit with your performance isn't the end of the world. Judges will understand that you may be nervous and that this may happen. What isn't appropriate is to go *significantly* over the time limit, as this would give you an unfair disadvantage over other projects. If you do go significantly over time, the judges will take this into consideration in your final ranking. When planning and rehearsing your performance, try to plan extra time to allow for audience response or forgotten lines at a competition.

What do I give judges at the competition?

Before you begin your performance, your judges will ask for copies of your process paper and annotated bibliography. You should not give them a copy of your script or copies of your research.

A Few Final Reminders:

- **Be Confident!** You're the expert on your topic. You've spent a lot of time researching and creating your performance and should be proud of all your hard work.
- **Speak Slowly and Loudly:** It's easy to get nervous and rush through your lines, but take a breath and slow down. This is the first time your audience has seen your performance and they need to be able to hear and understand your words.
- **Have Fun!** The History Day event is your opportunity to share your research with other scholars. Take the time to learn from the other projects you see, meet new people and enjoy yourself!



What are the Qualities of a Good Performance?

The qualities that a judge is looking for in your NHD performance are written right on the evaluation sheet. Listed below is the same criteria judges will use to evaluate your performance. After you create your performance, go through this list and ask yourself if you've met the criteria or incorporated the information into your project.



Historical Quality - 60% (At 60%, the historical quality of your performance is by far the most important)

- My performance is historically accurate:** All the information in my performance is true to the best of my knowledge.
- I show analysis and interpretation:** My performance doesn't just recount facts or tell a story. I interpret and analyze my topic. My performance has a strong central thesis or argument that I prove. I can point to where I state my thesis in my script.
- I place my topic in historical context:** My topic didn't take place in isolation. I made sure to place my topic into historical context – the intellectual, physical, social, and cultural setting for my topic.
- My project shows wide, balanced research and I used available primary sources:** These ideas all relate to the research behind your NHD performance. Judges will look carefully at your bibliography to learn more about your research process. They want to see that you investigated multiple perspectives about your topic and to see that you looked at all sides of an issue. They are looking for research using both primary and secondary sources and to see that you used a variety of source types.



Relation to Theme - 20%

- I clearly relate my topic to the theme:** My theme connection is clear in my performance itself.
- I demonstrates significance of my topic in history and draw conclusions:** My performance does more than just describe my topic. I explain why my topic is important in history or demonstrate its significance.



Clarity of Presentation - 20%

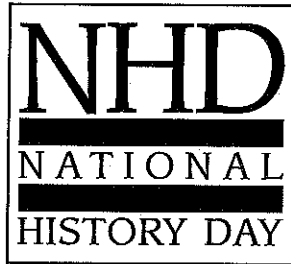
- My performance and written materials are original, clear, appropriate and organized:** I have an organized and well-written project. I was careful to avoid plagiarism and I have double-checked spelling and grammar in my performance, process paper and bibliography.
- Performers show good stage presence; props, costumes and historically accurate:** I have used the performance category to effectively communicate my historical argument. My lines are memorized and I deliver them in a manner that is easy for my audience to understand. I have carefully chosen my staging, props and costumes to best represent my topic and its time period.



National History Day in Wisconsin
Wisconsin Historical Society

www.wisconsinhistory.org/teachers/historyday/
historyday@wisconsinhistory.org





PERFORMANCE

JUDGING CRITERIA <i>(Judging criteria are explained in the Rule Book)</i>	EVALUATION			
	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

COMMENTS

- Strengths
- Areas for Improvement

Historical Quality (60%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Entry is historically accurate				
• Shows analysis and interpretation				
• Places topic in historical context				
• Shows wide research				
• Uses available primary sources				
• Research is balanced				

Relation to Theme (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Clearly relates topic to theme				
• Demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions				

Clarity of Presentation (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Presentation, written material is original, clear, appropriate, organized and articulate				
• Performers show good stage presence; props and costumes are historically accurate				

Rules Compliance	Yes	No
• Maintains time requirement (10 minutes)		
• Includes annotated bibliography		
• All equipment student-run		
• Other		

HOW TO CREATE A HISTORICAL WEBSITE

What is a Historical Web Site?

A historical web site is a collection of web pages, interconnected with hyperlinks, that presents primary and secondary sources, interactive multimedia, and historical analysis. Your web site should be an accumulation of research and argument that incorporates textual and non-textual (photographs, maps, music, etc.) description, interpretation, and multimedia sources to engage and inform viewers about your chosen historical topic.

How is a Web Site Different from Other Categories?

Web sites can display materials online, your own historical analysis as well as primary and secondary sources. These can be photographs, maps, documents, or audio and video files. Web sites are interactive experiences where viewers can play music, solve a puzzle, or look at a video or click on different links. Viewers can move through the web site in various undirected ways. Web sites use color, images, fonts, documents, objects, graphics and design, as well as words, to tell your story. The website category is open to both individual entries and group entries.

Getting Started

- Decide whether you want to create your web site as part of a group or on your own.
- *Research your topic first.* Examine secondary and primary sources. From this research, create your thesis. This will be the point that you want to make with your historical web site.
- *Narrow in on the content of your web site.* Decide what information you want to incorporate in your web pages, including any photos, primary documents, or media clips you may have found. You should be sure to have plenty of supporting information for your thesis.
- Create your website with NHDWebCentral. This must be done online at website.nhd.org. You must use the website builder designed especially for NHD. You must register for a new website address each year. When you register a website, you will be given the opportunity to customize your address. **DO NOT DO THIS.** Sometimes this interferes with the judges' ability to open your website.
- Organize and Design
 - Keep It Simple: don't waste too much time on bells and whistles. Tell your story and tell it straight.
 - Borrow Ideas from Other Web Sites: find design elements that work and imitate them on your web site. Just remember to give credit where credit is due.
 - Make sure every element of your design points back to your topic, thesis, and/or time period. There should be a conscious reason for every choice you make about color, typeface, or graphics.
- In most regions, websites must be pre-submitted. Check with your regional coordinator for the deadline.

Rules for Websites

E. Web Site

The web site category is the most interactive of all NHD categories. Therefore, a web site should reflect your ability to use web site design software and computer technology to communicate the topic's significance in history.

Your historical web site should be a collection of web pages, interconnected by hyperlinks, that presents primary and secondary sources, interactive multimedia, and historical analysis. It should incorporate textual and non-textual (photographs, maps, music, etc.) descriptions, interpretations, and sources to engage and inform viewers.

To construct a web site project, you must be able to operate, and have access to, the Internet, appropriate software and equipment.

Part II, Rules for all Categories, applies to web sites.

Rule E1: Entry Production

All entries must be original productions constructed using the NHD web site editor beginning at the school level. You may use professional photographs, graphics, video, recorded music, etc., within the site. Such items must be integrated into the web site, and proper credit must be given within the site as well as in the annotated bibliography. You must operate all software and equipment in the development of the web site.

NOTE: Using objects created by others for specific use in your entry violates this rule. For example, using a graphic that others produced at your request is not permitted; however, using graphics, multimedia clips, etc., that already exist is acceptable.

Rule E2: Size Requirements

Web site entries may contain no more than 1,200 visible, student-composed words. Code used to build the site and alternate text tags on images do not count toward the word limit. Also excluded are: words found in materials used for identifying illustrations or used to briefly credit the sources of illustrations and quotations; recurring menus, titles, and navigation instructions; words within primary documents and artifacts; and the annotated bibliography and process paper that must be integrated into the site. The entire site, including all multimedia, may use no more than 100MB of file space.

Rule E3: Navigation

One page of the web site must serve as the "home page." The home page must include the names of participants, entry title, division, and the main menu that directs viewers to the various sections of the site. All pages must be interconnected with hypertext links. Automatic redirects are not permitted.

Rule E4: Multimedia

Each multimedia clip may not last more than 45 seconds. You may record quotes and primary source materials for dramatic effect, but you may not narrate your own compositions or other explanatory material. All multimedia must be stored within the site; you may not use embedded material hosted elsewhere (e.g., YouTube, Google Video). There is no limit to the number of multimedia clips you may use but you must respect the file size limit. If you use any form of multimedia that requires a specific software to view (e.g., Flash, QuickTime, Real Player), you must provide on the same page a link to an Internet site where the software is available as a free, secure, and legal download. Judges will make every effort to view all multimedia content, but files

that cannot be viewed cannot be evaluated as part of the entry.

Rule E5: Required Written Materials

The annotated bibliography and process paper must be included as an integrated part of the web site. They should be included in the navigational structure. They do NOT count toward the 1,200-word limit. Refer to Part II, Rules 15–17, for citation and style information.

Rule E6: Stable Content

The content and appearance of a page cannot change when the page is refreshed in the browser. Random text or image generators are not allowed.

Rule E7: Viewing Files

The pages that comprise the site must be viewable in a recent version of a standard web browser (e.g., Microsoft Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari). You are responsible for ensuring that your entry is viewable in multiple web browsers. Entries may not link to live or external sites, except to direct viewers to software plug-ins, per Rule E4.

Rule E8: Submitting Entry for Judging

You must submit the URL for the site in advance by the established deadline, after which you will be blocked from editing your site to allow for judging. Because all required written materials from Part II, Rule 12, are integrated into the site, NO printed copies are required. For access to the NHD web site editor and up-to-date submission procedures, please visit www.nhd.org.

NHD Web Site Category

Quick Guide for Students & Teachers

The basics of the web site category break down as such:

- Students create web site entries no larger than 100MB.
- Students must use the development tools available at the **NHD Web Portal**.
- Entries are entirely online, even during the construction process.
- Entries are judged in this online environment.

Students must use the **NHDWebCentral** ([found at website.nhd.org](http://website.nhd.org)), to build their web sites. This is the only website students can use to build websites for NHD.

Once on NHDWebCentral, students (or teachers) must create an account for EACH entry to be entered into competition and establish a username and password for that account. Students and teachers should provide an email address when setting up the account, as that is the only way a password can be recovered should the student forget it. (A teacher or coach may use the same email address for multiple entries. This means that password recovery for all entries will go through that email address.) A unique web address (URL) will be assigned to each entry. This is the URL that judges will use to access a web site for judging. Students and teachers must keep this URL noted for reference.

Group Entries: Though accessed by more than one student, will call for only a single account to be created. All students working on that particular entry will use the same login to access their site.

What if students and teachers have questions?

At **NHDWebCentral**, participants have access to a variety of resources to help them start on their entries. Support for use of NHDWebCentral tools and examples of entries are available. Participants can contact their affiliate NHD Coordinator with questions. NHD staff can also be contacted at info@nhd.org for more help.

At NHDWebCentral

Participants should find the tools available at **NHDWebCentral** to be powerful and intuitive. These tools were designed to make web site construction easy while still being able to meet more advanced user needs, including advanced editing tools and custom HTML features.

Site URL and 8-digit ID

When web site entry accounts are set up at **NHDWebCentral** (website.nhd.org), a unique URL is assigned. The URL will be formatted as such: <https://72598259.NHDWebCentral.org>. The bold part of the URL is the unique 8-digit ID for the web site entry. Students and teachers should be sure to note this 8-digit ID because they will need to fill out this information when registering for the NHD contests. Be sure that the web site is published before the registration deadline of the contest.

Contest Registration and Judging

When registering for the NHD contests, the site URL, and/or the 8-digit ID will be requested. Be sure to double check that this information is correct when filled out, as an incorrect URL could mean the judges have difficulty evaluating the web site. During judging periods, editing capabilities on the web sites will be locked. Once judging periods end, sites will be unlocked and those entries to advance can be modified

before the next level of competition. Those entries that do not advance to the next contest will have the option of transferring to www.weebly.com (where they will be hosted free of charge) should participants wish to preserve their entries.

A Note on Registration for the National Contest

When students register for the NHD National contest, within their “Entry Information” section they will need to indicate not only their web site ID/URL, but also list their username and password. This information is collected to insure that should the web site be unavailable or unpublished, NHD staff can correct this before judges evaluate the web sites.

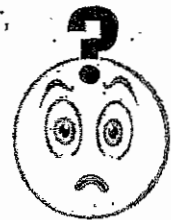
Preparing to Write: Organizing Your Information

Beginning the writing process can be very difficult because it is hard to know what information to include, and how to arrange it to tell your story. As a writer you will be acting as both a "scholar" and a "chef" to complete your project. Wearing your scholar hat will help you to decide what the most important information is to include. As a chef you must prepare your project in a way that works well for your particular topic. Below are some tips for how to navigate the writing process.



Top Tips on Writing for All Categories:

- **Break it down.** Instead of trying to write everything in one night, create an outline or guide that lets you write in smaller pieces. Using this as a guide for your project will also help viewers and judges more easily understand your project. Also, if you have divided the writing responsibilities up, make sure your writing style is cohesive in the end.
- **Use your thesis to guide you.** Everything included in your project should lead back to supporting your thesis. This should also help you divide information into smaller, more manageable pieces.
- **Seek advice.** Remember you want your project to be easily understood by anyone, so if your friends have that "huh?" look on their face, you may want to consider revising your work.
- **Keep it short and to the point.** Make sure you do the work for the viewer; no one goes to a museum to read a book. Before writing it is important to analyze your information so you know what to argue.
- **Once is not enough.** It is crucial to have at least one re-write of your information. Writing is a process, and the first draft will likely be inadequate for most projects.
- **Use an active voice.** Things rarely just "happen" in history, someone or something is usually propelling it. Instead of saying "the Berlin Wall *came* down in 1989," try, "the Berlin Wall was *taken* down in 1989."
- **Viewers can't read your mind.** You have been working on this topic for months, for some of the viewers and judges this may be the first time they encounter it. Don't assume they know anything about what you are presenting.



Strategies for the Writing Process

- **Start by identifying the most important quotes, excerpts, images, etc.** Write these on notecards that you can arrange on a table.
- **Write it out on paper first.** Writing key points on notecards and then moving them around into different configurations can help you segment your work. This can also be a good way to save drafts you may want to come back to later, rather than having just erased them on the computer.
- **The best place to start is to start.** Don't let your time go to waste because you are afraid of "getting something wrong" or not writing it perfectly the first time. Once you write something on paper it is much easier for others to advise you and help you work on your writing.

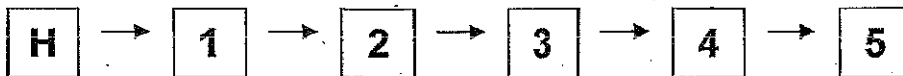
Organizing Your Information: Website

Websites can be organized in many ways, use your judgment to decide how this will work best for your particular topic.

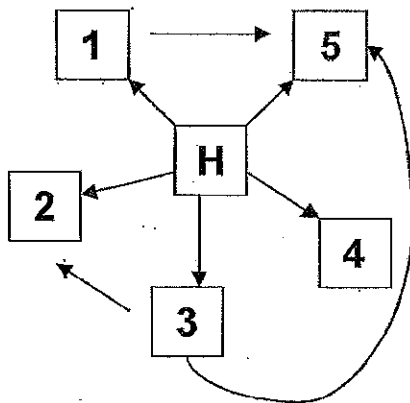
- **Segment your information in a logical way.** This can be done in multiple ways, for example: chronologically, topically, by location, etc. You may use any or all of these to divide your information into different pages.
- **Homepage:** Include all of the most important information here- your argument, title, names, and introduction. All pages must link to this page.
- **Unify your pages.** Use a common text, color, template/ layout, font, etc. to establish a flow that makes it easy for the viewer to understand your information.
- **Avoid visual clutter.** Don't include all the funky widgets you can find, this will overwhelm your viewer. Viewers will quickly see through the glitz if there is little substance.
- **Pay attention to structure.** Use the diagrams below to help you think about how your information is best presented.
- **Know the rules.** The website category has changed a bit this year. Don't make a "live website," (a www website), use a program that will let you save your work to a CD such as iWeb or Dreamweaver and check it on multiple browsers. New this year, all websites must list an annotated bibliography as one of the pages.

These diagrams offer some ideas about how to structure your web site.

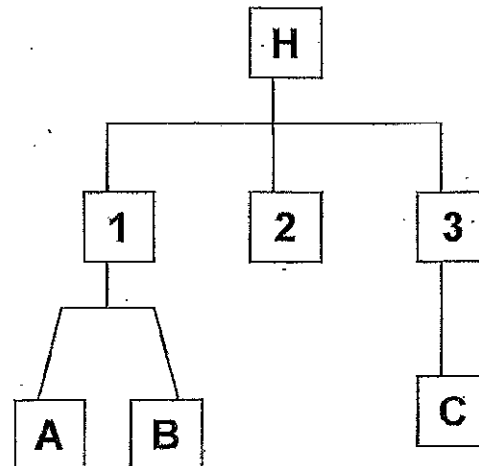
Linear Organization: This allows you to sequence the exact order your viewer goes from page to page.



Spider Web: This organization allows the viewer to explore the website in any way they choose. Viewers will assume that all of the information is equally important because it is only one step away from the homepage. Not all pages must link together.



Hierarchical Organization: Viewer may look at this type of website in multiple ways. By layering the information you show the viewer that some is more important than the rest. The closer the page is to the homepage, the more essential the information will be assumed to be.



This information is taken from the National History Day website, for more info and tips please visit www.nationalhistoryday.org.

Website Checklist

General checklist for the project

- € I/we have a **creative title** for the project.
- € I/we have demonstrated how the project **relates to the theme** of "Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History"
- € I/we have a **clearly stated thesis** that unifies my project.
- € I/we use a **broad amount of resources** instead of relying on one or two main sources.
- € I/w have provided **historical context** for the topic.
- € I/we have demonstrated the **overall significance** of the project in history.
- € I/we have **analyzed and interpreted evidence** instead of regurgitating facts.
- € I/we have presented **different points of view** in order to have balance.
- € My/our project can **stand alone** for someone who has no idea about my topic.
- € My/our project demonstrates **originality and creativity**.
- € I/we have a **complete process paper** integrated into my website.
- € I/we have an **annotated bibliography** with resources listed in proper form and divided into primary and secondary sources integrated into my website.

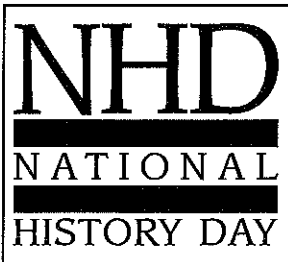
Specific checklist for a website

- € The website meets the memory requirement of no more than 100 MB.
- € The website is published on Weebly, and the URL has been submitted.
- € The exhibit meets the **word requirements** as stated in the rules—no more than 1200 student composed words.
- € Multimedia clips are no more than **45 seconds long**.
- € The website is **visually appealing**, with clear and crisp images and video.
- € The **title** is clear and visible, and the home page contains the names of the students, the category of the entry, and the title of the entry.
- € The websites links function successfully on two different computers.
- € The website actively involves the user.

Checklist for judging at regional competition

- € My/our process paper and annotated bibliography have been integrated into the project.
- € I/we are prepared to answer the judges questions about our project.
- € I/we are prepared to give the judges a tour of our website.

Read "Preparing Yourself for the Judging Process" from the NHD Curriculum Guide before the competition.



WEB SITE

JUDGING CRITERIA (Judging criteria are explained in the <i>Rule Book</i>)	EVALUATION			
	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

COMMENTS

- Strengths
- Areas for Improvement

Historical Quality (60%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Entry is historically accurate				
• Shows analysis and interpretation				
• Places topic in historical context				
• Shows wide research				
• Uses available primary sources				
• Research is balanced				

Relation to Theme (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Clearly relates topic to theme				
• Demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions				

Clarity of Presentation (20%)	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
• Web site, written material is original, clear, appropriate, organized and articulate				
• Web site has visual impact, uses multi-media effectively and actively involves viewer				

Rules Compliance	Yes	No
• Maintains word limit (1200 words)		
• Maintains size limit (100 MB)		
• Multimedia clips maintain time limit (45 seconds)		
• Includes annotated bibliography		
• Other		

National History Day Web Sites

What is a web site?

A History Day web site is a computer-based representation of your research and argument that incorporates both textual and non-textual content (e.g. images, songs, interviews, videos, and other media) to engage and inform your viewer about your topic. A web site is more than just an electronic paper or an exhibit on a computer. Through a web site you are able to incorporate non-textual elements with which a viewer can interact. These elements help to differentiate web sites from other categories.

The web site category is the newest National History Day category, first appearing at the national contest in 2008.



The Basic Framework

- **Size Limit:** The overall file size of your web site can be no more than 100MB of file space, including all multimedia.
- **Word Limit:** The web site may contain no more than 1200 visible, student-composed words. This means that the words that you write that are visible to the viewer count towards your word limit. If you didn't write it, it doesn't count towards the limit. You can use quotations from other sources and it won't count against your 1200 words. Words that are not visible to the viewer – code used to build the site and alternate text tags on images – do not count against the limit, either.

Examples of things that count...	Examples of things that don't count...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Captions• Text in graphs, charts, or timelines that you create yourself• Words that you write that appear on your web pages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reoccurring menus, titles, and navigation instructions that are used as an integral part of the web site.• Quotations• Text in graphs, charts or timelines that you do not create yourself• Brief text crediting the source of an illustration, quotation, or piece of media• Code used to build the site, and alternate text tags on images

- Be sure to check the most recent version of the *NHD Contest Rulebook* for complete category rules!

Why Should I Choose the Web Site Category?

The web site category is great for people who enjoy working with computers and the web. If you've ever wanted to learn how to build a web site, now is your chance. While many topics can be effectively conveyed using the web site category, this category is especially suitable for topics that have a variety of non-textual materials (media, photos, documents, timelines, illustrations, newspaper articles, etc.) that can be used to support your argument.

Since this category requires additional equipment and supplies, you should make sure you have access to this equipment before you start. Do you, at home or school, have access to a computer with internet access? You will need to use the **NHD web site editor**, available online, to build and submit your website and you must have a computer with internet access to do this.

Interactivity

A good History Day web site is not just a paper translated into HTML and viewed in an internet browser. Your site should actively teach viewers about your topic. Imagine that the viewer has just arrived at your site. How did you catch their attention and curiosity? How do you get them involved in learning about your topic? Your site should incorporate some interactive elements to help accomplish this.

What are interactive elements?

There are many different interactive elements that you can include in your web site to engage your viewer in learning about your topic, such as image maps, pop-up windows, sound, videos, timelines, or databases.

Not all interactive elements are created equal

Make sure your interactivity helps interpret your topic. Interactive elements should give the viewer a better understanding of the information and ideas that you're presenting. For example, if your topic was a particular Civil War soldier, an interactive map that follows the path of the soldier's regiment would help the viewer understand where the events you're describing took place. On the other hand, a quiz that simply reviews factual information found elsewhere in the site would not interpret your topic because it would not provide the audience with a new understanding.

Interactive elements don't have to be high-tech!

You don't have to be a professional web designer or have years of experience to incorporate interactive elements into your web site. Look at other history web sites to see how they engage their viewers.

- Think about the example above, the interactive map that follows the path of the Civil War soldier's regiment. You could design an image map that would allow the viewer to click on battle locations. Maybe a window pops up giving you a historic photo of that location. Maybe the pop-up window includes a letter that soldier wrote while at that site.
- Or, let's say you're creating a web site about the Black Hawk War. You want to include portions of the 1804 treaty between the government and two representatives of the Sauk nation. This treaty set the stage for the conflict to occur 25 years later and is an important part of the story. Links on key words in the document could take viewers to a more detailed explanation of the word or idea.

Non-Textual Content

Non-Textual Content

Interactive elements, media, and other non-textual context woven with text make the web site category unique. Depending on your topic, there's a variety of non-textual elements that you could include in your web site: documents, artifacts, oral history selections, quotations, photographs, paintings, video clips, songs, newspaper articles, or a recording from an interview. (Remember: A single multimedia clip can be no longer than 45 seconds and you have an overall size limit of 100 MB for your entire site.)

Incorporating Non-Textual Content into your Web Site

Non-textual content should do more than just illustrate or decorate a page. Brainstorm what photographs, documents, maps, etc. will help the viewer better understand your argument. How will each element do this? Incorporate historical evidence for your viewer to examine and discover. Documents, photographs, or newspapers are good way to do this. Consider lower resolution, smaller thumbnails with links to larger resolution, easily legible versions. Think about ways to use non-textual primary source elements as proof for your argument.

- You will have to edit photos, songs, videos, and other media outside of the NHD Website Editor before uploading!

Add Your Interpretation

Pages of illustrations, media clips, or documents without a purpose for being on the web site will not help you prove your argument. Adding interpretive captions, rather than just descriptive, will help the viewer understand how that element builds your overall argument and gives it a purpose for being on your web site.

Similarly, putting all of your photos or media clips in a separate "photo gallery" page doesn't help tie this support to your argument. Integrate the text and non-textual elements. (Putting all the illustrations on a separate page would be similar to a documentary only having text for the first five minutes and only photographs for the last five. It would be boring and not make much sense!)

Web Site Organization and Variation

After completing your research, your next step is to begin planning your web site. You will have to decide:

1. How you want to divide your information into different web pages.
2. How you want to organize those pages within your site.

These are important decisions that need to be made before you even begin constructing your site on the computer. The way you organize and present your information gives physical form to your argument.

Dividing Your Information into Web Pages

You have a lot of choices as to how you can divide your research and argument into different pages on your site. Time, location, or topic are just a few of the general categories into which you can sort information. Different categories will help you to make different arguments through your web site. For example, a web site about the Black Hawk War could be organized chronologically, sorted by battle or by groups of people involved in the conflict. How would each of these organizational formats help or hinder a viewer's understanding of the topic?

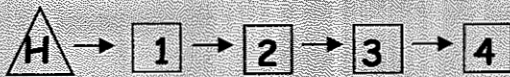
To get started, think about your information as if you were writing an outline for a paper. How would you divide up your material into major sections? How does each section support your argument? Now, think of another way you could divide the information (chronologically, topically, by location, etc.). Which system do you think will make more sense to your viewer?



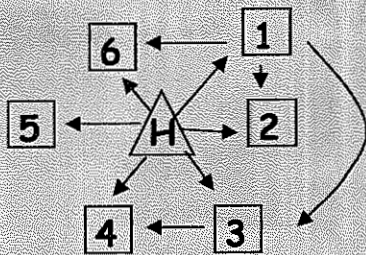
No matter how you choose to divide your information up—each page should fit together to support your thesis. How do the ideas on each page connect to the others?

Web Site Organization

You're not just building different *web pages*, you're building a *web site*. You have to give your site an overall organization that is logical and easy to navigate. There are many ways to do this and building your site on paper first will give you a chance to play with these organizational structures before you put time and energy into construction. Here are a few examples:

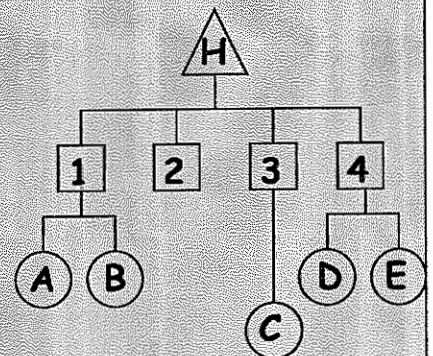


Linear organization assumes that a viewer is going to go from one page to the next in a very specific order.



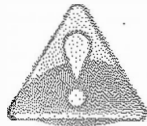
Spider web organization is designed to let the viewer explore the web site in a variety of ways. Since the pages are one level deep, it assumes that information is equally important. Note: Not all pages have to link together

Hierarchical organization is also designed to let the viewer explore the web site in a variety of ways. However, since there are multiple levels of pages, you can organize the more important

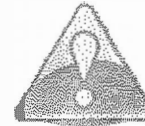


information to be closer to the homepage and the supporting information to be deeper in the site.

NHD Web Site Category Rules



Website category rules were updated in for the 2019-2020 school year. Be sure to double check the rulebook for the most recent version of the rules!



Individual and Group Categories Split for Competition

Individual and group projects will be split for the purposes of NHD competitions. Individual entries will only compete against other individual entries in each division. Group entries will only compete against other group entries in each division.

Important Rule Changes Implemented in 2011

Rule 4: Multimedia

Each multimedia clip may not last more than 45 seconds and may not include student composed narration. All multimedia must be stored within the site, you may not use embedded material hosted elsewhere (i.e. YouTube or Google Video). There is no limit to the number of multimedia clips other than the file size limit. Voiceover of material not composed by students is allowed. If an entry uses any form of multimedia requiring a plug-in (for example, Flash, QuickTime or Real Player), you must provide on the same page a link to an Internet site where the plug-in is available as a free, secure, and legal download. Judges will make every effort to view all multimedia content, but files that cannot be viewed cannot be evaluated as part of the entry.

- All content used in the web site must be uploaded through and hosted by the NHD Website Editor.
- Students may continue to use content that they find elsewhere, but they must download it, edit it to fit time limits, and then re-upload it through the NHD Web Site Editor.
- This rule clarification was included to make sure that total file size counts were accurate.

Rule 5: Required Written Materials

The annotated bibliography and process paper must be included as an integrated part of the web site. They should be included in the navigational structure and does NOT count toward the 1,200-word limit. Refer to Part II Rules 15-17, for citation and style information.

- Students must include BOTH their process paper and annotated bibliography as part of their web site.

Rule 8: Submitting Entry for Judging

The URL for the site must be submitted in advance by the established deadline, after which participants will be blocked from editing their sites to allow for judging. Since all required written materials from Part II Rule 12 are integrated into the site, NO printed copies are required. For access to the NHD web site editor and up-to-date submission procedures, please visit www.nhd.org/WebSite.htm.

- Students must include BOTH their process paper and annotated bibliography as part of their web site.
- Students must have their website completed in the NHD Web Site Editor by the competition registration deadline. At this point students will be locked out of editing their in order to allow judges to view sites in advance of the competition.

Be sure to read the complete general and category-specific rules before creating your NHD website, available online at www.nhd.org/ - search "Rulebook."

10 Tips for Creating a Spectacular NHD Web Site

Tech Check

Creating a web site involves different resources than other categories. To create and submit an NHD website, you will need to use the **NHD website editor**, which is available online. This means you will need access to a computer with an internet connection. Check with your teacher and/or parent to see if technology is available at home or school. Where will you have to do the majority of your work?

Research Comes First!

Research is the most important part of a successful History Day project. Don't begin playing with the software until you have a solid foundation of research and analysis.

Organize, Organize, Organize!

Before putting your thoughts into HTML, put them onto paper. How do you want to break up your information into various pages? Will it be sorted by topic area? Around a timeline? How will you emphasize your thesis? What kinds of visual materials and multimedia would you like to have, and what can you manage technically? How can you get your audience actively involved in learning about your topic?

- **Make Your Argument Clear:** Don't hide your argument! Put your thesis on the first page as part of an introduction to the web site.
- **A Cohesive Web Site:** Remember, you're not making separate web pages—you're making an **entire web site**. A clear cohesive argument should unite everything. Don't just put something on a page "just because it's cool" or fill a page with random facts. All pages and elements should support your argument and have a purpose for being there.

Develop Your Template

Designing your template is an important step in deciding how you are going to convey your information to your audience. The choices you make about style, fonts, colors, etc. make an impression upon your viewer even before they read a word. The NHD website editor offers you many template pages that you can use to create a web site, but think carefully about the template. Does the format of the template fit with your design and organization ideas?

Through the NHD website editor, you also have the option of customizing the template and layout you are using. Don't be intimidated by this option—the help documents within this program can offer you more information! Creating your own template for a web site doesn't mean that you have to reinvent web formats. Look at other history web sites to see what formatting they have used to communicate their information. (You can always look at their code to see how they built their site.) Taking time to create your own basic layout – header, footer, colors, fonts, etc. – that can be duplicated for the entire site.

- **Your Color Scheme: Not just your site's pretty face:** Pick colors for your background, text and links that are not just attractive, but also help your audience understand what your project is about. Your design should connect to your topic.
- **Use a Common Font:** Use a "browser safe font" like Times New Roman or Arial for your body text. This ensures that your font will be the same for each viewer. Fancy fonts can be great for highlights and titles, but they can be difficult to read and probably won't work on your viewer's computer. If you download a cool font to use in your web site, keep in mind that your viewers' computers will translate it into another font unless the text is saved within a .jpg or .gif image that you create.
- **Use the Same Basic Layout on Every Page:** Your site will be easier for viewers to use if each page has navigation buttons and content in about the same places. It's always helpful to have a header with your web sites' title on each page.
- **Strive for Clarity:** You want your viewers to understand the content of your web site, and not struggle to read it. Remember that background images can make text difficult to read and long paragraphs or blocks of text can be difficult to read on computer screens.

The Homepage

One page of the web site must serve as the "home page." To create this page, keep in mind the following:

- Your homepage must include the names of the participants, entry title, division, and a main web site menu that directs viewers to various sections of the site.
- Don't hide your thesis! The homepage is a great place to give an introduction to your project, including your thesis. Let your viewer know right away the argument you will be making.
- Your homepage does not have to include a description of why you are creating the web site or of National History Day. Since this web site is not for the general public, your viewers will already be aware of the program and the purpose of the site. Save your words for your subject!
- Your process paper and annotated bibliography should be included as an integral part of the web site (but will not count towards the word limit).

Content is More Important Than Glitz

Computers can do a lot of cool things, but think about the NHD criteria and remember the most important elements of your web site: analysis, interpretation, historical context and connection to theme. In order to make sure these ideas are clear for your viewer, make sure your web site design is easy to read and understand. Keep decorative animation and clip art to an absolute minimum and avoid "busy" background images and other clutter. It's also a good idea to include some blank space in your pages so the viewer isn't overwhelmed.

Give Credit Where Credit is Due

As in all NHD categories, you must give credit for and make apparent which materials are not yours, such as illustrations, media, movies, applications, scripts, forms, etc. These materials should have a complete citation in the annotated bibliography. It is also a good idea to give a brief text crediting the source on the site, such as "Photo from the Wisconsin Historical Society." Remember these brief credits do not count against your word limit.

When borrowing or using someone else's coding or scripting, you must give them credit just as you would with other materials. Please note that the credit for these materials must be given in a manner that is visible to the average user, not just in the code itself. If you are using a credits page, please be specific as to what each script or code does and its author.

When using quotations, either from primary or secondary sources, it is your job to make it clear to the judges that these are not your words. Judges will need to know this to obtain an accurate word count for your project. Furthermore, including other people's work under the impression that it's yours is plagiarism.

Test It Out

Before you are finished with your site for judging, triple-check your site to make sure it works! Make sure that your site has been "published" (is viewable on the internet) and is NOT password protected.

Submitting Web Sites to Competition.

Contact your contest coordinator for the most current registration materials for registering and submitting your web site for competition. A few points to keep in mind:

- You will have to create your web site through the NHD website editor beginning at the school level. Creating your web site within the NHD program will allow it to be submitted for competition online.
- Your website will need to be submitted in advance of the competition in order for the judges to have adequate time to review the project before the competition. This means that your final version of the site will need to be ready by the registration deadline, usually two weeks before the competition. Once the registration deadline passes, you will be unable to make further changes to your site for that competition.

The Web Site Stands Alone

When evaluating NHD web sites, judges should be able to find all the information about your topic in your web site itself. The web site has to stand on its own. Have someone who has never seen your web site look at it (a friend, teacher, neighbor, etc.). Without saying anything, let them read through the entire web site. Then, ask them a few questions to see if you have communicated your argument clearly: What am I trying to prove in my web site? What evidence have I shown to support that argument? What do you like about my web site? What is confusing to you?

History Day Web Site Planning

Professional web designers think about building a web site like building a house. First the architect decides the important features of the house (such as how many bedrooms the house will have and how many square feet it will be). Next they draw the house on paper, plotting out the kitchen, bathroom and living room and making sure these elements are arranged in a way that will be comfortable for the family living there. Only after plans are finished and double checked does anyone pick up a hammer to begin construction. Prior planning and building your web site in the right order will save you a lot of time, energy and frustration.

Research

As in all other History Day categories, good research is the first step and foundation for your web site. After completing your primary and secondary source research, you will have the following pieces of information ready for the web site:

- Thesis
- Connection to theme (remember, it's your job to show how your topic connects to the theme!)
- Project title

Figure Out What You Need in Your Site

As the web designer, it's your job to decide what you want your audience to learn from your web site and to brainstorm ways that you can teach them. Using note cards or pieces of paper, write down the major ideas you have about your topic. You can layout these cards and rearrange them to understand how the ideas fit together. What categories do they fall into? What logical order should they be arranged in? How do these ideas relate to my thesis? Once you feel comfortable with these categories, they will become the pages of your web site.

- Page titles

Create Your Blueprints

You can create the blueprints for your web site by using unlined paper to draft what will go on each page and how it will be organized.

1. **Site Design:** What is the template for the web site? Are you going to create one yourself? What colors, fonts and general style will you use on the site? How will all the pages link together to create the entire site?
 - Page template
 - Diagram of the organization web pages created
2. **Page Content:** What are the headings for each of the pages? What information should go on each page? Remember, drafting your text during this step in a word processing program will be much easier than writing it in the web design program.
 - First draft of text for pages
3. **Non-Textual Content and Interactive Elements:** As you draft your site on paper, you will also have to decide what non-textual content (illustrations, media, etc.) and interactive elements you will include. What photos or multimedia are available? How will each piece help the viewer understand your argument and topic? How can you engage the viewer through interactive elements?
 - Non-textual content selected and edited *before* uploading into NHD Website Editor
 - Captions written
 - Interactive elements identified and planned

Look It Over

Once you have your first paper draft of the web site ready, look it over to see how all the elements fit together. Have a teacher, friend or a family member look it over to get feedback from an outside observer before you begin.

Begin Construction

After taking these initial steps, you're ready to begin constructing your web site. Become familiar with the NHD web site editor and start translating your ideas into reality!

What are the Qualities of a Good Web Site?

The qualities that a judge is looking for in your NHD web site are written right on the evaluation sheet. Listed below is the same criteria judges will use to evaluate your web site. After you create your web site, go through this list and ask yourself if you've met the criteria or incorporated the information into your project.



Historical Quality – 60% (At 60%, the historical quality of your web site is by far the most important)

- My web site is historically accurate:** All the information in my web site is true to the best of my knowledge.
- I show analysis and interpretation:** My web site doesn't just recount facts or tell a story. I interpret and analyze my topic. My web site has a strong central thesis or argument that I prove. I can point to where I state my thesis in my web site.
- I place my topic in historical context:** My topic didn't take place in isolation. I made sure to place my topic into historical context – the intellectual, physical, social and cultural setting for my topic.
- My project shows wide, balanced research and I used available primary sources:** These ideas all relate to the research behind your NHD web site. Judges will look carefully at your bibliography to learn more about your research process. They want to see that you investigated multiple perspectives about your topic and to see that you looked at all sides of an issue. They are looking for research using both primary and secondary sources and to see that you used a variety of source types.



Relation to Theme – 20%

- I clearly relate my topic to the theme:** My theme connection is clear in my web site itself.
- I demonstrates significance of my topic in history and draw conclusions:** My web site does more than just describe my topic. I explain why my topic is important in history or demonstrate its significance.



Clarity of Presentation – 20%

- My web site and written materials are original, clear, appropriate, and organized:** I have an organized and well-written project. I was careful to avoid plagiarism and I have double-checked spelling and grammar in my web site, process paper and bibliography.
- My web site has visual impact, uses multimedia effectively and actively involved the viewer:** I thought about the overall design and organization of my web site. I chose multimedia and interactive elements to help viewers understand my topic and prove my argument.



Rules Compliance

- My site has no more than 1200 student composed **words**.
- My site is no larger than 100 MB.
- My media clips are no longer than **45 seconds**.
- My **process paper** and **bibliography** are included in my website.