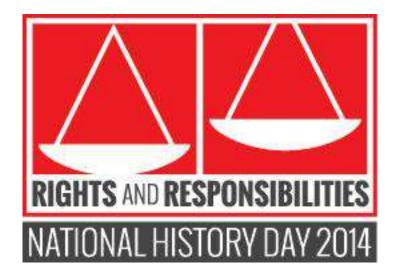
Introducing



NATIONAL HISTORY DAY!

Almost everything you need to know to get started on your History Day adventure

Adapted from Tim Hoogland, coordinator, National History Day in Minnesota

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Your History Day adventure is divided into two parts: Research and Presentation

Research

Research is the most important part of creating a History Day entry. The Research section of this guide will address these steps:

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Once you have completed your research you need to design an effective entry for your category.

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Part One

Research



Deciding on a "peach" of a topic!

Selecting a Topic

The key to an effective History Day entry is the combination of a good topic with good sources. Here are some questions to think about when you select a topic to research:

- Does it fit the theme for the year?
- Does the topic interest you? (Remember, you will spend a lot of time researching this topic.)
- Can you find sources to document the topic?
- Why is this topic important in history? (What will people learn from your presentation?)
 - Read the History Day theme I have given you. This will help you identify what the annual theme is and how topics might connect to this theme. Your topic **must** relate directly to this theme.
 - Review the list of suggested topics. Your topic must have a World History connection.
 Pick out several that interest you. If you have another World History idea that is not on the list, please see me.

Narrowing a Topic

A good way to choose a topic is to start with a general area of history you find interesting. This might be information you read about in your textbook or something related to family history. Once you define your interest, the next step is to narrow your general ideas into a more focused topic.

Here is an example for the theme "Rights in History." Your group is interested in women's history, but realizes that this topic needs to be narrowed down. Because it is an election year you decide to research "Women's Voting Rights." However, this topic is still too broad because you have not defined the who, where, and when for your study.

At this point one of your group members decided it would be best to focus on the women's suffrage movement (voting rights) in the United States. After doing some research, you find out that this happened in the late 1800's and that Susan B. Anthony was a leader. Your group decides to focus on Susan B. Anthony's impact on suffrage.

As you work on this topic you may come up with other points for analysis, such as comparing the efforts of American women to the efforts of British women, or how Susan B. Anthony inspired local women to gain voting rights in their states and communities.

This chart summarizes the topic selection process:

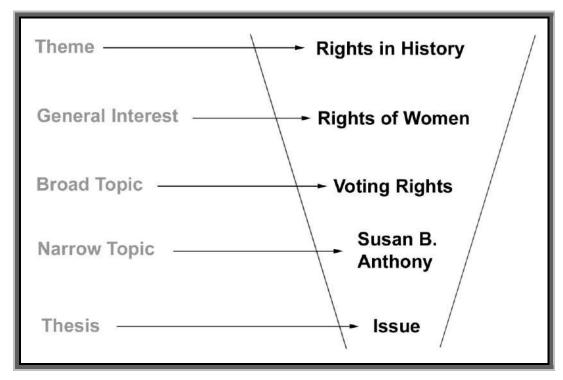


Figure 1: Topic Narrowing

Finalizing Your Topic Choice

- 1. Complete the History Day Topic Search assignment. This is a preliminary search on 3 possible topics.
- 2. Complete the Initial Proposal and Research assignment. Use the following information in your research.

Choose a topic you love! You'll be spending a lot of time on it!

Finding and organizing Information

Research Strategy

As you start to gather information it is important to have a **research strategy**. A good research strategy has two parts:

1. Finding sources of information

Textbooks, the Internet, encyclopedias, and other books you can find in your school library are a great place to start. Other sources of information may include city and college libraries, historical societies, national or local archives, and interviews.

2. **Keeping track of notes and sources** – Choose either the note card or note sheet method.

<u>Information is only valuable if you can record it and use it later.</u> One way to organize your research is to use note cards. Use one set of cards to record **notes and quotes** that you find in your sources. Use another set of cards to record the information about your sources that you will need for your **annotated bibliography**.

You can buy index cards at office supply stores or discount stores. Look for the large cards (5 inches x 8 inches) that have lines for writing. You can buy more than one color to help keep your cards organized.

Sample Note Cards

Here are examples of index cards for a bibliographic entry and research notes about a women's rights crusader from Minnesota named Clara Ueland.

Bibliography

Secondary Source

Book

Gilman, Rhoda R. <u>Northern Lights: The Story of Minnesota's Past.</u>
St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1989.

This book contained a profile of Clara Ueland and her efforts to win voting rights for women. It also described the history of the suffrage movement in Minnesota. Illustrations in this book included a picture of Clara Ueland, a suffrage poster, and a picture of women voting for the first time in 1920.

Important Pages: 171-175

Once you have copied down the important information about your source, you can begin to take notes. Get a new card and write a brief description of the information on the top. Write the source and page number for these notes in the upper right hand corner. In order to avoid **plagiarism**, make sure you note when you have copied down the author's words exactly. In most of your notes you will **paraphrase** the author's text. This means you will write down a short summary of the author's ideas in your own words.



Stay organized by color-coding your note cards!

Use one color for bibliography cards, another for note cards, and a third (usually red) to keep track of great ideas or really important quotations.

Clara Ueland's early career and suffrage ideas

Gilman, P. 172

Clara Hampson Ueland taught school before she married Minneapolis lawyer Andreas Ueland. She started to work in the suffrage movement with other well-educated women.

"For years women had said that it was only fair for them to help to make the laws that they had to obey." (Gilman)

As president of the Minnesota Woman Suffrage Association in 1914, Clara Ueland declared that, "Mothers, from the beginning, have been the force that makes for better homes and higher civilization. This concern for home should be expressed in government." (Clara Ueland)

Figure 3: Note Card

Another way to organize your research is to source/note sheets. When you find a source, label it as primary or secondary and then write down all possible bibliographic/citation information. Then take bullet point notes in your own words. Put the sheet in a 3 ring binder or an accordion file. If you print a copy of the source, keep it next to your note sheet.

Circle One Primary Secondary
Bibliographic Information – See Example Sources Handout
Write at least 5 bullet point notes in your own words unless it is a direct quotation. (In that case write it word for word and put it in quotes.) For each bullet point, put what page it came from.

Research Sources

When historians study a topic they try to gather a wide variety of **sources** during their research. Historians use sources like lawyers use evidence – they both need information to "make their case." But not all sources are the same.

Historians classify their sources in two categories: **Primary** and **Secondary**. History Day participants are asked to separate their bibliographies into primary and secondary sources as well. The following descriptions should help you decide how to classify your sources.

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are usually published books or articles by an author who makes a personal interpretation about a topic based on primary sources. The writer is not an eyewitness to, or a participant in, the historic event. Most library books are secondary sources, as are encyclopedias and websites. Secondary sources are useful because they provide important background information about your topic. The footnotes and bibliographies of secondary sources will also lead you to primary sources.

Another thing to remember is that the "facts" of history can be interpreted many ways. Many secondary sources will present different ideas about the same topic. Just because someone has written a book does not mean that his or her interpretation is the only correct view. Use your research to draw your own conclusions.

Examples of secondary sources:

- Biographies
- Books about the topic
- Encyclopedias
- Articles about the topic

- History textbooks
- Media documentaries
- Websites
- Interviews with scholars

Primary Sources

Primary sources are materials directly related to a topic by time or participation. They provide a first-hand account about a person or an event because they:

- Were written or produced in the time period you are studying.
- Are eyewitness accounts of historic events.
- Are documents published at the time of specific historic events.
- Are later recollections by participants in historic events.

Examples of primary sources include:

- Diaries
- Manuscript collections
- Interviews with participants
- Autobiographies
- Newspapers from the era

- Historic objects
- Government records
- Letters
- Photographs
- Original film footage
- Music of the era

Finding Sources

The best place to begin your search for sources on your topic is in your school or local library. An encyclopedia is a good place to find basic information about your topic, and the articles usually list books for further reading. Searching the Internet may also lead to some primary and secondary sources. It is important to find other sources of information and not depend exclusively on encyclopedias and the Internet. One of the best resources for finding information on your topic is a **LIBRARIAN or MEDIA SPECIALIST**. Librarians and media specialists are professional information-gatherers and are very helpful in suggesting ways to go about your research.

You will also discover that the first few books you find will also help you in your search. Books containing footnotes or a bibliography can provide you with listings of many other sources, both primary and secondary, relating to your topic. Be sure to write these listings down in a notebook so that you can try to find them later.

Once you have collected the basic information and sources on your topic, you may want to try to locate some unique sources. At this stage in your research you will be looking for primary sources. Here are some places to go:

Municipal, County or College Libraries

Municipal, county and college libraries have many more resources than school libraries. These libraries are especially helpful because they have primary sources (such as old newspapers) on microfilm that you can use there or make copies to take with you. If you cannot check out books, be sure to bring money for copying!

Get started at the Lagrange College NHD mentoring page.

http://www.lagrange.edu/academics/history/nhd/students.html

Historical Societies

If your topic is on Georgia history, a historical society may be helpful. State and local historical societies specialize in collecting information about Georgia and local communities. Letters, diaries, photographs and documents are examples of the many materials available for your research. There may be special rules on how you may use these materials. It is best to check the historical society's website first to learn if the society's collections include information about your topic and to understand the rules for using the collections.

Interviews

If people connected to your topic are still living, you can conduct oral history interviews with them. Contact your interview subject to set up a time and place to meet. Write your questions in advance and be prepared to take notes or record the interview. If you cannot meet in person you can send them questions in the mail, by e-mail or over the phone.

Using the World Wide Web for History Day Research

The Internet is an extraordinary resource for research of all kinds – including History Day. The Internet provides several advantages to web-savvy students, but it is not the answer to all your History Day research challenges. A good place to start your online research is the links page of the Lagrange College NHD mentoring website:

http://www.lagrange.edu/academics/history/nhd/students.html

What the Internet can do for you...

- Along with reference books at your school library, the Internet is a great place to start your research. Use Internet searches to find basic information about your topic or even to help you narrow down a topic.
- The Internet can even make your research trips to libraries more efficient! Because many libraries provide online access to their catalogs, you can save valuable research time at the library by finding the library's available resources before you go.
- There are a growing number of sites that provide web access to primary sources. Once you narrow your topic, check to see if there are any primary sources available online.

Caution! Caution! Caution!

- Beware of questionable Internet sites—remember, anyone can post information on the web! A site hosted by the Library of Congress is more likely to have accurate information than a site hosted by "Jane the Civil War buff." Evaluate the authenticity of Internet sites just as you would other types of sources.
- Only a small percentage of source material is available on the Internet. Online research should be done in combination with more traditional historical research, not instead of it.

Process Papers

Students producing entries in the exhibit, documentary, performance and website categories* must also write a **Process Paper**. This paper introduces your topic, explains how you developed your entry, and documents your research. It is important to do a good job on this part of your entry because it is the first thing that people look at when evaluating History Day entries. The process paper contains three parts: the title page, the research description, and the annotated bibliography.

*The research paper category requires a title page and annotated bibliography, but does not include a research description. See the History Day *Contest Rule Book* for complete details.

Title Page

The title page includes the title of the entry, name(s) of the student(s) who developed the entry, and the age division and category of the entry. **Do not include any additional information or illustrations on the title page**. It is important to come up with a good title for your entry. A good title will quickly introduce your topic, but it is also important to add wording that helps the viewer understand your point of view. It also helps to include some ideas from the theme in your title.

For example, a title for an entry about Clara Ueland could be:

A Force for Higher Civilization: Clara Ueland and the Fight for Women's Voting Rights in Minnesota

This title explains the topic and also gives a sense of the argument that Clara Ueland and other suffragists used to argue for their right to vote.

Research Description

The research description is **not** a summary of the topic, but an essay that describes the process of how the students developed the entry. Students are to use 500 words to explain how they selected the topic, conducted the research, and developed the entry. The research description should conclude with a paragraph describing how the topic fit this year's theme and why it is important in history.

Annotated Bibliography

A **bibliography** is an alphabetized list of the sources used in developing a historical project. An **annotated bibliography** not only lists the sources, but also gives a short description of each source and how you used it in your entry. A History Day bibliography should be separated in to primary and secondary sources. For guidelines on bibliographic style refer to *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian, or the style guide of the Modern Language Association of America (MLA).

Part Two

Presentation

The second part of this guide offers suggestions on how to present your research in one of the following History Day categories:

- RESEARCH PAPER
- S EXHIBIT
- **☞ DOCUMENTARY**
- **☞ PERFORMANCE**
- S WEBSITE

Remember, the research paper category is only open to individual entries. Exhibits, documentaries, performances, and websites may be created as individual or group entries. The suggestions presented here are not complete. These ideas are only a starting point, and you are encouraged to create your own strategies for developing contest entries.

Presentation Choices

Every History Day student must answer the following three questions:

- What topic should I investigate?
- Should I work alone or in a group?
- What category should I present my research in?

Suggestions for selecting and narrowing topic ideas can be found in the Research section of this guide. Working alone or in a group and selecting a category in which to present your research are presentation choices. Below are some suggestions to help you make these decisions.

Working Alone or in a Group

When determining to work alone or in a group, think about the following points:

Working alone

There are some advantages to taking your History Day journey on your own. Working alone is less complicated and presents fewer potential distractions than you might encounter in a group. There is no confusion over who is responsible for meeting deadlines and completing your project. With no one else to depend on, the success or failure of your History Day project is your own. This situation can be very rewarding.

Working in a group

Becoming part of a group has some distinct advantages. You and your fellow group members can share the work associated with a History Day project. Because each member brings a different set of skills and interests to the group, the combination can result in a History Day project you can all be proud of. From deciding who will do what and agreeing on the interpretation of your research, to big-picture design decisions, your History Day journey will be one of compromise.

Be careful when choosing your group members. Remember, working with your best friend is not always the best idea. When selecting group members ask yourself the following questions:

- What type of people enjoyed working with me in the past?
- What type of people do I like to work with?
- What qualities make someone a good group member?
- What traits in people do I want to avoid when picking my partners?

Choosing a Category

When selecting a category it is important to consider the following:

- Which category best fits your interests and skills (or the talents of group members)?
- Will you have access to the equipment or materials you need to present your entry? (This is especially important for documentaries and websites!)
- Does your research fit one category better than another? (For example, do you have enough pictures for an exhibit?)

Once you have selected a category, try to look at examples created by other students. This may help give you ideas about the best way to present your topic. Your own creativity, in combination with good research, will make your presentation stand out.

The History Day Contest Rule Book

After choosing your category be sure to consult the History Day *Contest Rule Book* for complete information on the rules that relate to your entry. The *Contest Rule Book* will also describe the judging criteria for evaluating History Day entries. Your teacher may be able to supply you with a *Contest Rule Book*, or you can download one from our website. Go to http://www.lagrange.edu/academics/history/nhd/students.html and click on the rulebook link.



Research Paper Category

The process of the research paper is similar to the writing of articles and books by college professors. Throughout your schooling, you will be expected to write research papers.

A research paper requires three basic steps.

- 1. Collection of information
- 2. Organization of information
- 3. Presentation of the topic in an interesting way

There are many books available on how to write research papers and you may find it helpful to look at one or more of them before you begin. Ask your history or English teacher to suggest some useful guides. Here are some of the most common questions about research papers:

What is a footnote?

Footnotes are explanations provided by writers about ideas or quotations presented in the paper are not their own. Footnotes not only give credit to the originators of ideas, but also serve as "evidence" in support of **your** ideas. Usually footnotes occur in three situations:

- 1. **Quoting a Primary Source**-- An example of this would be including a selection from a speech or interview.
- 2. **Quoting a Secondary Source** -- If you take a direct quotation from someone's book, you must footnote it.
- 3. **Paraphrasing a Secondary Source** -- Even if you change an author's ideas into your own words, you must footnote where you found this information.

How long does this paper have to be?

History Day papers are 1,500 to 2,500 words in length (approx. 6-10 pages). Each word or number in the text counts as one word. The word limit does not apply to: notes, annotated bibliography, illustration captions, and supplemental appendix materials.

Must the paper be typed?

No, but typing is always best, and you may have someone type your paper for you.

Be sure to refer to your *Contest Rule Book* for more information about title pages, footnote style, and entry requirements.

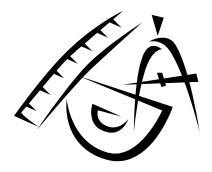


Exhibit Category

Exhibits are designed to display visual and written information on a topic in an easy-tounderstand and attractive manner. They are similar to exhibits in a museum. To be successful, an exhibit must create an effective balance between visual interest and historical explanation.

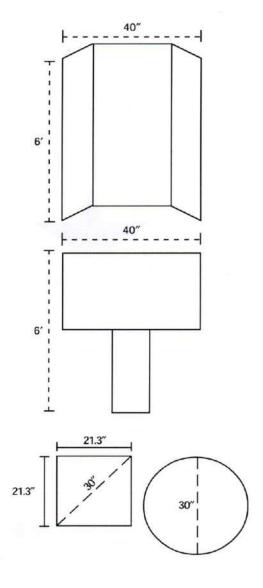
Size Requirements

The overall size of your exhibit when displayed for judging must be no larger than 40 inches wide, 30 inches deep, and six 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.

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 or computer files) or supplemental materials (e.g. photo albums, scrapbooks, etc.) where you use your own words. If you use a media device, you are limited to three minutes of audio or video.



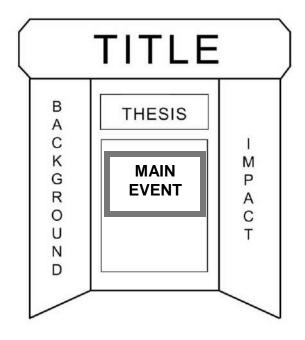


Common Exhibit Types

Three-panel Exhibit

The most common form of exhibit entry is a three-panel display similar to the illustration at right. 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.
- Also use the center panel to present your main ideas.
- Remember that you read from left to right, so your exhibit should be in chronological order, beginning with the left panel.
- Artifacts or other materials may also be placed on the table between the side panels. Make sure they relate directly to your topic.

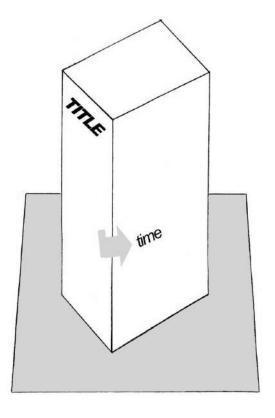


Three-dimensional Exhibit

A three-dimensional exhibit is more complicated to construct but can be especially effective for explaining themes 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.



Be sure to design your exhibit so people know where to begin reading.



Labeling

The labels you use for your title and main ideas are very important because they direct the viewer's eye around your exhibit.

One way to make your labels stand out is to have the writing on a light-colored piece of paper with a darker background behind it. This can be done with construction paper, tag board, or mat board. Black lettering makes your labels easier to read. Photographs and written materials will also stand out more for the viewer if you put them on backgrounds as well.

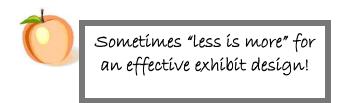
Make sure the font size increases as you move from text, to subtitles, to main titles!

Title Labels

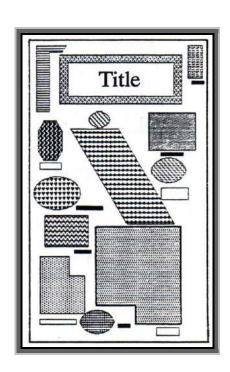
Exhibit Design

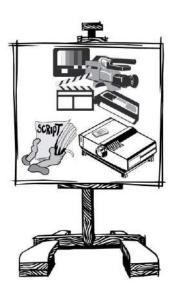
Although you will be able to answer questions about your exhibit during the initial judging, a successful exhibit entry must be able to explain itself. It is important that you design your exhibit in a way that your photographs, written materials, and illustrations are easy to understand and to follow.

It is always tempting to try to get as much onto your panel boards as possible, but this usually makes for a cluttered and confusing display. Try to select only the most important items for your project boards. Clarity and organization are the most important goals for a project.



Be Careful of Clutter!If your exhibit panels look like this – they are too cluttered!





Documentary Category

The documentary category allows you to create a ten-minute film like the ones on PBS or the History Channel. Two popular technologies used in the documentary category are: computer-generated slide presentations and digital video presentations. Whichever technology you choose, keep the following pointers in mind:

- Make a storyboard of the types of images you want to use to explain your topic.
- Collect a large number of images to avoid too much repetition.
- Use appropriate music as an important addition to your recorded script.
- Write your script or narrative first and then add images.
- Make sure that the script fits with the image on the screen.
- Preview early and re-edit at least once.

Computer-generated Slide Presentations

Many students are using computers to develop slide-show documentaries. Computer slide-show software programs, such as PowerPoint, provide excellent tools for combining the audio and visual aspects of a documentary. When using computers to develop slide shows, don't rely on screen after screen of text to tell your story. Images driven by a recorded audio track are much more effective than bullet points or text pages. If you plan to run your slide show from a computer, be sure to bring all the necessary equipment with you to the History Day event; the room you will be judged in will not have a computer or projector for student use. Many students record their computer presentations on DVD to show at History Day events.

Video Presentations

The availability of home video cameras and easy-to-use digital video editing computer software, such as iMovie or Windows MovieMaker, has increased the popularity of this category. Here are some suggestions for video entries:

- Remember -- a student must operate the camera and the editing equipment.
- Be sure to draw up a storyboard of the scenes you will be shooting. This will keep you organized.

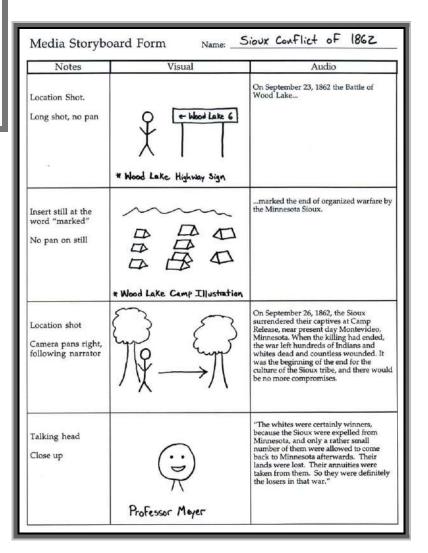
- Try to present a variety of panning shots, interviews, original footage, and still photographs.
- Keep track of your scenes in a notebook to make editing easier.
- Appropriate music is an effective addition to your soundtrack, but remember that the music must match your presentation. Do not let it overshadow the verbal presentation.
- Watch professional documentaries for ideas.
- At events, be sure to test the available equipment so that your DVD works correctly.

Storyboards

Regardless of what type of documentary you decide to create, a storyboard is a great tool that helps you combine the audio and visual elements of your project.



You can make a storyboard form by creating a threecolumn table similar to the one shown on the right. Label the columns *Notes*. Visual and Audio. Use the Visual and Audio columns to match your narrative with the images you intend to use to illustrate your points. Use the *Notes* column to add any information about the section that will help you during the production stage. Having your script, images and notes organized into a storyboard will save you valuable time when you get to the production stage of your documentary adventure.





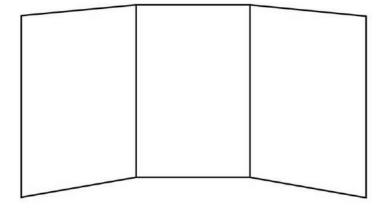
Performance Category

The Performance category allows you to create a historical play. Entries in this category must have dramatic appeal, but not at the expense of historical information. Creativity is the key here, and students must make effective use of their ten-minute time allowance. Innovative performances have made this category the highlight of many History Day competitions!

Here are some suggestions:

- Do good research first, don't jump right in and start writing a script. Take time to brainstorm about general ideas and the ways they might be presented.
- When you do write your script, make sure it contains references to the historical evidence, particularly the primary source material you found in your research. Using actual dialogue, quotations, or taking excerpts from speeches are good ways to put historical detail into your performance.
- Be careful of presenting an oral report on a character that begins with when they were born and ends with when they died. Become the historical figure and write your script around an important time or place that will explain your ideas.
- Don't get carried away with props! Content is the most important factor and any props you use should be directly related to your theme. Props should help you to emphasize the key concepts of your performance. Remember, you only have five minutes to put up and take down your props.
- Good costumes help make you convincing, but be sure they are appropriate to your topic. Consult photographs or costume guides if you are unsure about appropriate dress.
- See examples of historical plays to get ideas about stage movements, use of props, etc.
- Practice! Practice! Practice!







Website Category

The website category allows you to create an interactive, educational site similar to those on the Internet. The keys to the website category are clear movement from page to page, simple navigation tools to lead the viewer on the path you have chosen for your website, and interactivity without glitz.

Students competing in the website category must construct their site using Weebly, a free, online web-building tool. **Students MUST access the web builder through the NHD website at www.nhd.org for full participation.** Weebly is open for web-building in early September. Students can save and edit their website throughout their History Day participation, though editing functions will close when the project is locked for judging.

Weebly will allow judges to view the completed projects online; however, students are still required to submit four copies of the homepage and the process paper and annotated bibliography. Be sure to watch program materials for submission deadlines.

Here are some suggestions:

- Do good research first; don't start building pages right away.
- Consider how you want viewers to navigate through your website and map out your pages before you start writing code or designing pages in Weebly.
- Create a toolbar that allows viewers to move from page to page. It is a good idea to have a button on every page that will take viewers back to the homepage.
- Use sharp, high-quality images and clear audio or video, but be aware that you have a size limit of 100 MB of file space.
- Do not use any external links.
- Beware of using too many fancy transitions or moving clip art and choose your colors wisely. The key to effective websites is readability!
- Use multimedia clips, images, and primary sources within your website that relate most directly to your argument. Using too many can make it difficult to view your site.
- Use your 1,200 student-composed words wisely. Websites that are too text-heavy are difficult to read. Including primary source quotes and/or support documents (these do not count toward the word limit) is also a good idea.
- After your website is built, be sure to test it on a number of browsers (Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox) to ensure that it has the visual impact you desire.
- Contest participation does not mean live publishing due to copyright regulation. Be sure to work through Weebly so your project is on the secure, judge-ready server. Keep track of your project's assigned web address as you will need this to register!

Category Rules UPDATE: The website category is being divided this year. Individual students will be judged against individuals, and groups against groups, just like the other categories.