

# Using National History Day in Your Classroom



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# What is History Day?

National History Day is a year-long educational program sponsored in New York State by the New York State Historical Association, encourages students to explore local, state, national, and world history. After selecting a historical topic that relates to an annual theme, students conduct extensive research by using libraries, archives, museums, and oral history interviews. They analyze and interpret their findings, draw conclusions about their topics' significance in history, and create final projects that present their work. These projects can be entered into a series of competitions, from the local to the national level, where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators.



# Why History Day?

The program culminates in the Kenneth E. Behring National Contest each June held at the University of Maryland at College Park. In addition to discovering the exciting world of the past, NHD also helps students develop the following attributes that are critical for future success:

- critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- research and reading skills
- oral and written communication and presentation skills
- self esteem and confidence
- a sense of responsibility for and involvement in the democratic process

More than 5 million students have gone on to careers in business, law, medicine and countless other disciplines where they are putting their experiences with an Annual Theme to good use.

# Divisions of Competition

## Junior Division: Middle School/Jr. High School

Grades 6-8:

Content Areas: Social Studies, ELA, Science, Math, Health/Phys. Ed., Music & Art

## Senior Division: Sr. High School

Grades 9-12:

Content Areas: Social Studies, ELA, Science, Math, Health/Phys. Ed., Music & Art

# Categories of Competition

Individual or Groups (2-5 students) Entries:

- Historical Papers (Individual Only)
- Performances
- Documentaries
- Exhibits
- Web Sites

Requirements for Each Categories

1. Process Paper (Except Historical Paper)
2. Annotated Bibliography

# Levels of Competition

- Local Level; Schools and Local Districts: Usually conducted in February throughout WNY.
- Regional Level; WNY Event: Saturday March 7, 2020 at Canisius College; Science Hall
- State Level; NYSHD Event: Monday April 27, 2020 Cooperstown, NY (various locations)
- National Level; NHD Event: June 14-18 2020 College Park, MD. University of Maryland (various locations)

# WNY Regional NYSHD/NHD Event Saturday March 7, 2020 at Canisius College; Science Building

- Entries Due to WNY Region & NYSHD by March 1, 2020 !!!!
- Refine and review the project(s) with Judges comments and suggestions.

## WESTERN NEW YORK HISTORY DAY



Niagara Frontier Council for the  
Social Studies  
[www.WNYHISTORYDAY.COM](http://www.WNYHISTORYDAY.COM)

# NYS History Day April 2020 Cooperstown, NY

- Entries Due to NYSHD by TBD  
April !!!!
- Refine and review the  
project(s) with judges  
comments and suggestions.  
YES!!! AGAIN!!!





# NHD Event: June 14-18 2020

## University of Maryland College Park, MD

- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winners in each division & category and will advance to NHD Event. This will be handled by NYSHD.
- Refine and review the project(s) with judges comments and suggestions. YES!!! YET AGAIN!!!

**NHD**  
**NATIONAL**  
**HISTORY DAY**

# Why Teach with a Theme?

Every year National History Day frames students' research within a historical theme. The theme is chosen for the broad application to world, national or state history and its relevance to ancient history or to the more recent past. This year's theme is [Breaking Barriers in History](#). The intentional selection of the theme for National History Day is to provide an opportunity for students to push past the antiquated view of history as mere facts and dates and drill down into historical content to develop perspective and understanding.

The NHD theme provides a focused way to increase student's historical understanding by developing a lens to read history, an organizational structure that helps students place information in the correct context and finally, the ability to see connections over time.

# History Day Themes

2009 - The Individual in History: Actions and Legacies

2010 - Innovation in History

2011 - Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, & Consequences.

2012 - Revolution, Reform & Reaction in History

2013- Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events

2014- Rights and Responsibilities in History

2015- Leadership & Legacy in History

2016 - Exploration, Encounter, Exchange in History

2017 - Taking a Stand in History

2018 - Conflict and Compromise in History

2019- Triumph and Tragedy in History

# Paper Category

## 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.

Paper Category Criteria

# Connection to the Standards

All 5 NYS learning Standards for this course will be targeted, including all performance indicators. In addition, the following standards from the NYS P12 Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12 for: **Key Ideas and Details Standard**

- RH.11-12.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- RH.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- RH.11-12.3. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

<http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards/history-social-studies/introduction/>

# Performance Category

## 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

[Performance Category Criteria](#)

# Connection to the Standards

All 5 NYS learning Standards for this course will be targeted, including all performance indicators. In addition, the following standards from the NYS P12 Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12 for: **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas Standard**

- SL.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
- SL.11-12.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- SL.11-12.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

<http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards/history-social-studies/introduction/>

# Website Category

## 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.

[Website Category Criteria](#)



# Connection to the Standards

All 5 NYS learning Standards for this course will be targeted, including all performance indicators. In addition, the following standards from the NYS P12 Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12 for: **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas Standards**

- RH.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- RH.11-12.8. Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources

<http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards/history-social-studies/introduction/>

# Exhibit Category

## 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.

[Exhibit Category Criteria](#)

# Connection to the Standards

All 5 NYS learning Standards for this course will be targeted, including all performance indicators. In addition, the following standards from the NYS P12 Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12 for: **Craft and Structure Standard**

- RH.11-12.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).
- RH.11-12.5. Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.
- RH.11-12.6. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

<http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards/history-social-studies/introduction/>

# Documentary Category

## 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.

### Documentary Category Criteria

# Connection to the Standards

All 5 NYS learning Standards for this course will be targeted, including all performance indicators. In addition, the following standards from the NYS P12 Common Core Learning Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12 for: [Integration of Knowledge and Ideas Standards](#)

- RH.11-12.7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- RH.11-12.8. Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources

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# Five Steps to Historical Research

1. Getting Organized for Research
2. Selecting a Topic
3. Historical Research
  - ▣ Background Reading
  - ▣ Gathering and Recording Information
  - ▣ Analyzing and Interpreting Sources
4. Developing a Thesis
5. Developing a History Day Final Project

# Five Steps to Historical Research

- Don't have to be followed in a specific order; research is messy and requires revisiting earlier copies.
- Can make research seem overwhelming.; encourage students to just take it one step at a time.

# Step #1: Getting Organized

- Develop a paperwork management system.
- Decide to work as a group or an individual.
- Decide on a Category.
- Put together a support team.
  - Social Studies Teachers
  - ELA Teachers
  - Librarians/Media Specialists





# Step #2: Selecting a Topic



- Understand the Theme
- Review strategies: Interest, Theme, and Narrow Focus
- Consider three common mistakes: Too Broad, Too Recent, Too Complex.

# 3 Common Topic Mistakes

- **Too Broad:** Topics must be narrow so that everything about the topic, including its historical context, can be covered in one product. Ex) World War II
- **Too Recent:** Students should pick a topic that is at least 30 years old. Topics newer than that do not have enough historical perspective. Ex) iPhone X
- **Too Complex:** Students need to pick topics that aren't too difficult to understand. Ex) Thermo Nuclear Dynamics

# Step #3: Historical Research

## Background Reading

- How to begin background reading that connects the topic to historical context?
- Help students frame research questions to determine whether the topic fits with the theme.
- Come up with a working title.



# Gathering Background Information

- Purpose: Gathering general sources that provide a good overview of your topic
- Appropriate background sources include:
  - Encyclopedias (Wikipedia is a directional resource)
  - Children's Books
  - Magazines
  - Newspapers
  - History Textbooks
  - History Books on a Specific Topic (i.e. Civil War, World War II, Biography)
- Important to look at several different sources to learn about the topic and the time period in which it took place.

# Step #3: Historical Research

Gather and Record Info

- Finding quality sources
- Selective highlighting
- Note taking
- Source citation systems:
  - Turabian and MLA



# Historical Sources

- Primary: A piece of information about a historical event or period in which the creator was an actual participant in a historical moment. A primary source can be a written document, photograph, object, piece, song, or other cultural artifact created by someone in the past.
- Secondary : A source that was not created first hand by someone who participated in the historical era. Secondary sources are usually written decades if not centuries after the event occurred. Secondary sources are usually created by historians, but based on the historians reading and use of primary sources.

# Analyze and Interpret

Learn something new about the past

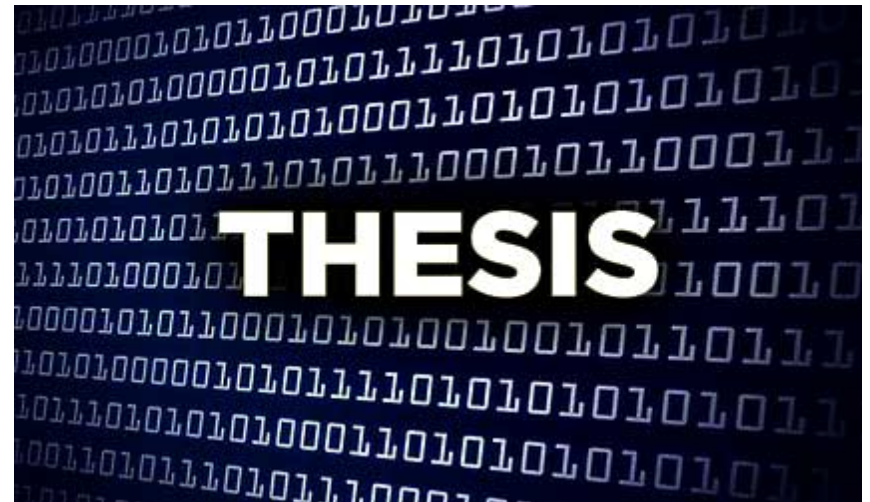
- As a historian, you are entitled to your own opinion, as long as you can back it up with evidence

Help your audience learn something new about the past.

- Your goal is to help your audience learn something new; something your research and interpretation can teach about the past

# Step #4: Develop A Thesis

- Thesis statements present an informed opinion (or argument)
- Thesis statements do more than inform the reader about your topic; they explain why the topic is important in history.





# Step #5: Develop a Final Project

- ❑ Complete steps 1-5
- ❑ Develop preliminary outline
- ❑ Finish research
- ❑ Complete rough draft of project(s).
- ❑ Revise draft(s)
- ❑ Complete process paper & annotated bibliography
- ❑ Proofread final draft(s) and check rule compliance.



# Top 10 Reasons to participate in NHD

## 10. Activates Civic Engagement

Encourages students to become involved in their communities

## 9. Recognizes the Student Strengths

Allows students to become experts on a topic.

## 8. Inspires Curiosity

Ignites student interest in learning about history by integrating social studies, art, sciences, literature, language, and music into their presentations

# Top 10 Reasons to participate in NHD

## 7. Teaches Critical Thinking

Promotes life skills, analytical skills, comparative perspectives and models of critical judgment—essential for work in any field

## 6. Enhances Assessment

Provides a multilayered performance-based assessment tool

## 5. Encourages Literacy

Adjusts their reading for different types of print and non-print texts (including fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works)

# Top 10 Reasons to participate in NHD

## 4. Promotes High Academic Standards

Assists teachers and schools in meeting educational standards by offering a portfolio-building and outcome-based activity

## 3. Energizes the Curriculum

Provides a framework for hands-on, student-centered learning

## 2. Engages Students

Excites students by asking them to choose a topic and explore resources

# Top 10 Reasons to participate in NHD

## 1. Teaches History

Builds an understanding that history is not static and contains multiple perspectives

# Thank You!!!

Congratulations on embarking on your National History Day journey! It is sure to be a memorable one. You never know what information you might find, or whom you may get to meet. And the skills you will learn along the way will last a lifetime.

Any Further Comments, Questions? Contact Us:

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