

Special Considerations for Competition Categories

Documentaries: After research, writing the script is the first step to creating a documentary. A storyboard, which matches the script, will help you put your photographs, documents, film, illustrations, etc. in order. Using the documentary category to make a videotape of a performance does not count as a valid entry. Documentaries should incorporate photographs, historical film and materials that illustrate the event and provide an interpretation of its significance within the theme. Documentaries should be 10 minutes long—no longer and no shorter. If it's too long, it violates established rules. If it's too short, you probably didn't cover the topic thoroughly.

Exhibits: You will need to design it and acquire materials. Students should do all of the work on an exhibit unless it is physically dangerous to do so (such as sawing wood or anything that requires power tools). Prepare for building your exhibit by drawing a layout first. Be innovative! Use rotating exhibits, rough-hewn boards, metal or flexible materials as opposed to just pasting photocopies on poster board. Remember . . . you will need to transport whatever you build to state and national competitions in Fountain Hills and Washington D.C., respectively. If at all possible, design it to fold or disassemble with screws, etc. so you can take it on an airplane. *Costumes are prohibited in the exhibit category.* No more than 500 student-composed words are allowed on an exhibit. You may also add quotes, timelines and captions, but be careful not to clutter your exhibit. An exhibit should speak to the person viewing it visually and should explain itself. The rules allow exhibits to be 30"x 40" on the footprint and up to 6' tall. The best entries will push these size limits. An exhibit is NOT like a science fair entry. To be competitive, it should not be a flimsy tri-fold from a discount store.

Historical papers: This category is for individual projects only. An historical paper can be no less than 1,500 words and may not exceed 2,500 words. Successful papers demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the event, as well as the student's thoughts. This is NOT a report! The result should be fun to read and insightful. Papers are submitted prior to the competitions. This is the only category that does not require a process paper.

Performances: After doing the research, begin writing a script. Decide if you'll use costumes or props (as with exhibits, if you decide to use props, remember that they should fold or disassemble easily). Writing a script that incorporates the theme is one of the trickiest skills in NHD. Remember that you must show balanced research in your "story", while still making it entertaining and well-performed. Memorize the script. Performances are not only about good acting skills, they're also about good writing and art. You must be able to set up any props (without adult assistance) in five minutes. Performances should be exactly 10 minutes long.

Websites: Beginning in 2009/2010 NHD requires web site projects to be created using the NHD website editor. Visit the NHD website for updated information at: www.nhd.org Remember that your website is limited to 100 MB and no more than 1,200 visible, student-composed words. This means that you must be very selective in what you include. While you may use Firefox or Opera, please remember that judges will use Internet Explorer to view your project. Do not include links to other websites. The judges will not have Internet access, and therefore will be unable to connect to a live link during evaluation. Your project

should reflect your work. Additionally, make sure that your video clips do not exceed 45 seconds. Since video clips tend to be large, use them sparingly because they will consume a lot of your 100 MB.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Students unable to attend a regional or state contest due to conflict with family religious practices or academic testing might be pre-judged at both the regional and state level. Please contact the state coordinator or your regional coordinator **at least two weeks prior to the competition** to arrange this. Requests made within the week of competition will not be considered. At least one member of any group must attend Regional and State Finals for an entry to be judged.

If at all possible, students should attend each level of competition, as the experience gained from the judging process can be very important in future contests.

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?

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.

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.

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.

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.

How to Create a Historical Web Site

INFORMATION ON THE WEB SITE ENTRY SUBMISSION PROCESS FOR THE 2009-2010 CONTEST - CONTAINS DETAILS NOT INCLUDED IN THE CATEGORY RULES

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.

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.
- 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.

How to Create a Historical Web Site

NEW INFORMATION

National History Day requires all web site projects to be created using the NHD web site editor, located at <http://nhd.weebly.com>. This change occurred since the printing of this guide, so please note that certain information on software and templates is no longer current for use with your NHD project.

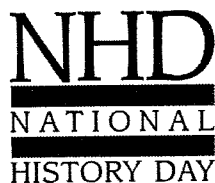
Below is some basic information about the web site editor, Weebly. Please check our website, www.nhd.org, for all up-to-date information about the web site category and rules. Be sure to review the NHD Rule Book, available on the NHD website.

To participate in the web site category, students will need to build their sites on NHD's Weebly portal. To be clear: STUDENTS MUST GO THROUGH THE NHD PORTAL TO ACCESS THE WEEBLY TOOLS – THEY CANNOT GO DIRECTLY TO WEEBLY.COM. Go to www.nhd.org to access the NHD Weebly portal.

A full suite of site-building tools will be available on the NHD Weebly portal. While third-party tools may be used to develop objects and components for an entry, the final code must be uploaded with the Weebly tools. All objects or components constructed with third-party tools (e.g. Dreamweaver, iWeb, MS Expression) must be portable to and function correctly with the Weebly editor.

All hosting will be performed by Weebly servers. The 100 MB size restriction on entries will remain. Students are free to begin building their entries as early as September, and will work on the same Weebly web site as they advance through levels of competition. With the Weebly system, students are free to access and work on their sites at any time other than judging periods, periods during which their sites will be closed to any editing.

Please note that the process paper and annotated bibliography **must** be included as an integrated part of the web site, and should be included in the navigational structure. NO printed copies are required.



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