



# STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR HISTORY FAIR PROJECTS

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## WHAT ARE FLORIDA HISTORY FAIR AND NATIONAL HISTORY DAY?

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Florida History Fair (FHF) is sponsored by the Museum of Florida History, Florida Department of State, and is part of the National History Day program. History Day was conceived with the idea of promoting history in the classroom by offering students the means and the encouragement to do original research. The Museum of Florida History has coordinated this statewide academic contest since the 1988–89 school year. Middle and high school students throughout the state compete annually at school, county, and state levels in four categories—historical papers, exhibits, documentaries, and dramatic performances—for the privilege of representing Florida at the National History Day (NHD) competition each June in our nation’s capital.

Each year, history fair addresses a broad-based historical theme. You can find this year’s theme, topic suggestions, and special awards on the NHD Web site at <http://www.nationalhistoryday.org> or the FHF Web site at <http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/museum/fhf/index.html>. Entries in the Florida History Fair may be based on Florida topics, or they can be drawn from any other area of history.

This is an opportunity for you to share the project that you have researched and to let your talents shine at your county fair, and possibly at the state competition and National History Day.

**GOOD LUCK!**



## HOW TO CREATE A DOCUMENTARY

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CREATING A HISTORY DAY DOCUMENTARY can be a very rewarding experience. You have the opportunity to combine photographic, research, and creative skills in one project by playing the role of a historian, photographer, and filmmaker. A historian studies the past using documents and may become an expert in such topics as World War II, Medieval studies, or Florida history. A photographer takes pictures of people and places, and a filmmaker tells a story through pictures that we view on a screen.

A documentary is a clear, well-conceived, creative, and visually appealing story that is much like a film that we see at a movie theater. It portrays a nonfictional, accurate account of an event, era, or life story and describes its historical significance. It can be presented in a variety of formats: a video, slide show, PowerPoint presentation, or other types of multimedia computer presentations.

A documentary must have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources. NHD defines primary sources as materials that relate to a topic by time or participation, such as letters, speeches, diaries, articles, oral histories, artifacts, or other items that provide firsthand accounts about a person or an event. Secondary sources include published books or articles by authors who based their interpretations on primary sources. Make sure the topic that you

choose has a sufficient number of primary and secondary sources.

Many students ask, "How do I choose my topic?" Selecting a topic can seem mind-boggling, but it really is fun. The most important criterion is that you are interested in the topic. First, make a list of all of the things that you like to do. Second, choose an area of interest from your list. Once you have decided on your area of interest, narrow it down until you have a manageable topic. Make sure that it relates to this year's theme. For example, you may

want to be a lawyer and decide on law as your area of interest. Narrow down the topic by choosing a specific



area such as women's rights. Your entry might be titled, "The Fight for Women's Voting Rights in Florida: May Mann Jennings and Marjorie Stoneman Douglas." Or perhaps you are interested in African-American history and select civil rights; narrow it down by choosing an event such as the Tallahassee Bus Boycott. You might title the documentary "The Tallahassee Bus Boycott of 1956: a Shift in Florida Race Relations." Then ask yourself, "Is this the best entry category for the topic that I have chosen?"

An effective History Day documentary describes, analyzes, and interprets an event or development and places it into historical context. Ask yourself the following questions suggested by NHD. They will help you to accomplish a great History Day entry.

- 1) How important is my topic?
- 2) How does my topic relate to the History Day theme?
- 3) How did my topic develop over time?

### PROJECT PREPARATION

Before you start creating your entry, you or your group should prepare an outline and a timeline to ensure that you know what you need to do, who is going to do what, and when you need to get it done. If you are working in a group, you should choose a group leader. You will need to research the topic; take detailed notes; write your thesis statement and script; schedule interviews; choose your primary source material, narrator, background sound, and graphics; design the lighting; write your process paper and annotated bibliography; and type and proofread.

- 4) How did my topic influence history?
- 5) How did the events and atmosphere (social, economic, political, and cultural) of the time influence my topic in history?

The documentary should consist of an introduction that states the thesis that you will be discussing, a main body, and a conclusion. The main body focuses on the thesis statement by providing supporting statements. In this section you can add detail by using dialogue, quotations, or an excerpt from a speech, but be sure to incorporate your own ideas, interpretations, and analysis. The conclusion reinforces and clarifies the thesis statement, demonstrates how your ideas work together, gives the documentary a sense of completeness, and leaves a final impression on the viewer.

Whether you work in a group or individually, research preparation is very important. It will help you organize your project, manage your time, and, if you are working in a group, it will ensure that all members do their fair share of the work. Once you have gathered an adequate amount of research material, you can write your thesis statement, storyboard, and the script; begin shooting your footage; and write your annotated bibliography and process paper (see *NHD Contest Rule Book*, Rules For All Categories, p. 7, Rule 11, 12, 13, and 14). See “Filming a Documentary,” pp. 5–6; “Planning an Oral History Interview,” p. 30; and

#### STORYBOARD

After your research is complete, you will need to create a storyboard. This is a visual sketch of each scene that includes narration, music, sound, visual images, and any other items that will be used in each scene. Write your script following your storyboard and run through the script before you begin shooting. See “Storyboard,” p. 4.

“Writing About History: Helpful Hints,” pp. 31–32, in this booklet.

Students often ask, “Once I have done my research, how do I choose the images, text, and write my script?” When you are deciding what pictures and text to use, remember that the video has to explain itself. It needs to be easy to follow, and the viewer has to be able to connect your images together to understand your theme. All of the pictures and text in your documentary should

on the thesis statement, supporting statements, and the conclusion. If they do not, remove them. This is important since you will not be able to explain the documentary to the judges and public while they are viewing it. In addition, in run-off competition, judges do not interview students.

The *NHD Contest Rule Book* states on p. 6, Rule 5, that “You are responsible for the research, design, and creation of your entry. You may receive help and advice from teachers and parents on the mechanical aspects of creating your entry: 1) you may have help typing your paper and other written materials; 2) you may seek guidance from your teachers as you research and analyze your material, but your conclusions must be your own; 3) you may have photographs and slides commercially developed.”

Reviewing your documentary is essential. See “Reviewing a Documentary,” p. 7, in this booklet. If you choose the documentary category, make sure that you have access to the proper equipment listed in “Suggested Materials.” If you decide to make a computer-based presentation or incorporate computer graphics into your entry, you should be familiar with and have access to the proper software and hardware. The *NHD Contest Rule Book* states on p. 13, Rule 5, that “You must operate all editing equipment used in the production of your presentation.” Be sure to read all of the Rules for all Categories and documentary rules in the *NHD Contest Rule Book*.

GOOD LUCK!

#### SUGGESTED MATERIALS

**Research:** primary and secondary sources

**Photographs, slides, film or video footage:** 35 mm, digital, instant camera, or video camera; tripod; batteries; VCR; LCD or slide projector; slides; extra lightbulbs; videotapes; and editing equipment or computer software

**Graphics and text:** computer-generated text and images

**Narration, music, or background sound:** microphone, tape recorder, audio tapes, speakers, and script

**Other materials:** extension cord

# Storyboard

Notes	Visuals/Pictures	Audio
1		
2		
3		
4		



# FILMING A DOCUMENTARY

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There are many ways to film a documentary—using an eye-level angle, a low angle, and a high angle. You also should take into consideration camera movement, such as a pan, tilt, zoom, or reverse zoom shots. When you are filming, the composition and the framing of these shots is very important and will provide aesthetic qualities to your documentary. The following points will help you with the filming of your documentary.

## Camera Angles

The angle of the camera is important and will affect how the subject is perceived by the viewer.

- **Eye-level angle:** this shot is taken at eye level. If you are filming a person, make sure to get the shot at their eye level rather than yours. This is a good shot to use when you are filming an oral history, but make sure to use talking/walking room and head room. See p. 6, “Framing of the Shot.”
- **Low angle:** this shot is taken looking up at a subject and will make it seem important and larger than life. You would take this shot while kneeling or sitting down.
- **High angle:** this shot is taken looking down at a subject, which will make it look smaller and less important. You would take this shot while standing on a chair, table, or bench.

## Camera Movement

Use shots with movement sparingly. You do not want your viewers to get confused or to be prevented from understanding your presentation because the footage is constantly moving around.

- **Pan:** a shot taken moving on a horizontal plane (from left to right and/or right to left).
- **Tilt:** vertical movement of the camera (up or down). The camera lens is tipped up and down from a stationary position.
- **Zoom:** a shot that brings you closer to the subject. If you are looking at a lake, you might want to zoom in on an area so that you can see only a turtle or one or two ducks up close.
- **Reverse zoom:** the opposite of a zoom shot. It gives you a wider view. You would choose this type of shot to see the entire lake.



## Composing and Framing Your Shots

How you compose and frame your shots is very important. They will help to keep the viewer's attention and add aesthetic qualities to your documentary.

- **Screen composition:** the composition of a shot is created from the organization of the parts of a picture. For example, a picture might have two people, a landscape as the background, and a car. The way that these objects are positioned can make a shot more dynamic or beautiful, and it can draw emphasis to one subject over another.
- **Shot sizes:** this refers to how much of a shot is filled by the subject. When a subject fills most of the frame, it is a closer shot. When the subject is just a small part of the picture, it is a longer (farther away) or wider shot. The size of your shot affects the overall composition of the picture.
- **Framing of the shot:** this refers to the placement of the edges of the shot. You can compare it to the framing of a picture on a wall. If the framing is tight, there is not much space between the edges of the frame and the subject. If the framing is loose, the edges of the picture are a little farther out from the subject.
  - 1) **Head room:** shots of people usually are framed with a little space above their heads. Do not give the person too much head room, or the subject will be too low in the picture.
  - 2) **Eyes:** the subject's eye level should be about two-thirds of the way up the picture.
  - 3) **Mouth:** the mouth should be completely in the shot. It should not be filmed partway off the screen.
  - 4) **Looking/talking room:** this is often used when a person is talking to the camera in an interview or to another person. If a person is talking to the camera, there should be some space on either side of the person. If two people are talking to each other, there should be a little space between them.
  - 5) **Walking room:** this is used when you are shooting footage of a person walking or in motion. This shot should be filmed with some space for the person to walk into. This is important because it leaves space in the shot for the action. This technique also should be used when you are filming activities such as people swimming or a dog running.

*The Challenge 2000 Multimedia Project.* "Project-Based Learning with Multimedia." <http://pblmm.k12.ca.us/>.

Millerson, Gerald. *Video Production Handbook*. Woburn, Mass.: Focal Press, 2001.

Mollison, Martha. *Producing Videos: A Complete Guide*. Australia & New Zealand: Allen & Unwin, 1997.



# REVIEWING A DOCUMENTARY

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The following will help you to create a well-designed documentary that is easy to follow and aesthetically pleasing. Remember that your research is the most important part of your documentary. Your presentation should be well made, but it also should have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Did I incorporate my own ideas, interpretations, and analysis of the historical data, or did I merely describe my topic?
2. Are there enough primary sources to support my topic?
3. Does the written material demonstrate an understanding of the historical context?
4. Are the grammar and spelling of the written material correct?
5. Do the visual images, narration, sound, and music support a common theme?
6. Is the narration clear and easy to understand?
7. Does the music, sound, or narration match the visual images?
8. Are the images in focus?
9. Is there a variety of interesting images that keep the viewer's attention?
10. Are the scenes repetitious? If so, how can I change the images or narration to make them more varied?
11. Are the visual transitions too fast or too slow, making it difficult for the viewer to follow the presentation?
12. Does the conclusion emphasize my topic and supporting statements?
13. Does the annotated bibliography demonstrate a well-researched topic?





# DOCUMENTARY CHECKLIST

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**Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student or Group Leader** \_\_\_\_\_

Florida History Fair and National History Day suggest that you check the following points after your documentary has been completed.

- \_\_\_ The documentary strongly relates to this year's theme.
- \_\_\_ The presentation has been reviewed.
- \_\_\_ At least one other person has read the process paper for clarity, punctuation, and grammar.
- \_\_\_ The bibliography is separated into primary and secondary sources, and citations are annotated.
- \_\_\_ The main idea or thesis is clear to the viewer.
- \_\_\_ The documentary is aesthetically pleasing.
- \_\_\_ The presentation requires no more than 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to remove equipment.
- \_\_\_ The documentary is no more than 10 minutes.
- \_\_\_ Special equipment needed during the judging has been obtained (a television and VCR are provided, but you must supply all other needed equipment).
- \_\_\_ Four copies of the process paper have been prepared (three copies for the judges and one copy for yourself). Contents include the title page (title, student(s) name(s), category, and division); a 500–word essay describing your research methods, how you created and developed your entry, and a concluding paragraph that explains the relationship of the topic to the contest theme; and an annotated bibliography.
- \_\_\_ A copy of the process paper is on a disk. This will ensure that you have an extra copy if your paper is lost or damaged.
- \_\_\_ Two copies of your presentation/video have been prepared (one copy is for your presentation; the other is an extra copy in case your video is lost or damaged).



## HOW TO CREATE AN EXHIBIT

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CREATING A HISTORY DAY EXHIBIT can be an extremely rewarding experience. You have the opportunity to play the role of a historian, curator, and designer. A historian studies the past using documents and may be an expert in topics such as World War II, Medieval studies, or Florida history. He or she works with a curator to plan exhibit content, write text, and gather artifacts and images. A designer creates and assembles the display.

A History Day exhibit is similar to a museum exhibit. It is a well-conceived, creative, and organized display of images, text, artifacts, and graphics that visually explain a topic and its significance in history. An exhibit should have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources. NHD defines primary sources as materials that relate to a topic by time or participation, such as letters, speeches, diaries, articles, oral histories, documents, photographs, artifacts, or other items that provide firsthand accounts about a person or an event. Secondary sources include published books or articles by authors who based their interpretations on primary sources. Make sure the topic that you choose has a sufficient number of primary and secondary sources.

Many students ask, "How do I choose my topic?" Selecting a topic can seem mind-boggling, but it really is fun. The most important criterion is

### PROJECT PREPARATION

Before you start creating your project, you or your group should prepare an outline and a timeline to ensure that you know what you need to do, who is going to do what, and when you need to get it done. If you are working in a group, you should choose a leader. You will need to research the topic; take detailed notes; write your thesis statement; schedule interviews; choose primary source material; make your frame or base; sketch your layout; design the labels, text, and graphics; write your process paper and annotated bibliography; and type and proofread.

that you are interested in the topic. First, make a list of all of the things that you like to do. Second, choose an area of interest from your list. Once you have decided on your area of interest, narrow it down to a manageable topic.

Make sure that it relates to this year's theme. For example, you may want to be a lawyer and decide on law as your area of interest. Narrow the topic by choosing an area such as the *Gideon vs. Wainwright* case and title the entry, "The Gideon Lawsuit: A Florida Case Transforms the National Justice System." Or perhaps you are interested in music and select the era of the 1950s; you might narrow it down even further to the singer, Elvis Presley. You might title the exhibit "The First Rock-n-Roll Riot: Jacksonville, Florida, 1956." Then ask yourself, "Is this the best entry category for the topic I have chosen?"



An effective History Day exhibit describes, interprets, and analyzes an event or development and places it into historical context. Ask yourself the following questions suggested by NHD. They will help you accomplish a great History Day entry.

- 1) How important is my topic?
- 2) How does my topic relate to the History Day theme?
- 3) How did my topic develop over time?
- 4) How did my topic influence history?
- 5) How did the events and atmosphere (social, economic, political, and cultural) of the time influence my topic in history?

Your exhibit should consist of an introduction that conveys the thesis that you will be discussing, a main body, and a conclusion. The main body focuses on the thesis statement by providing

detail by using dialogue, quotations, or an excerpt from a speech, but be sure to incorporate your own ideas, interpretations, and analysis. The conclusion reinforces and clarifies how your ideas work together, gives the exhibit a sense of completeness, and leaves a final impression on the viewer.

Whether you work in a group or individually, research preparation is very important. It will help you organize your project, manage your time, and, if you are working in a group, it will ensure that all members do their fair share of the work. Once you have gathered an adequate amount of research material, you can write your thesis statement; create your base or frame, labels, and captions; sketch your layout; design the exhibit; and write the process paper and annotated bibliography (see *NHD Contest Rule Book*, Rules For All Categories, p. 7, Rules 11, 12, 13, and 14). If you plan to conduct interviews, see “Planning an Oral History Interview,” p. 30, in this booklet.

Students often ask, “Once I have done my research, how do I choose the pictures and text?” Remember that the exhibit has to explain itself. It needs to be easy to follow, and the viewer has to be able to connect your images together to understand your theme. All of the pictures and text in the exhibit should focus on the thesis statement, supporting statements, and the conclusion. If they do not, remove them. See “Writing About History: Helpful Hints,” pp. 31–32.

A well-designed exhibit depends on the size of pictures that you choose, the font and point size of the text, and the information in your labels and captions. There should be a level of hierarchy in your exhibit. Emphasize the most important information in large areas and the least important information in smaller spaces. For example, your title should be in a larger point size than secondary headings; the subheads are even smaller; and the text and captions are the smallest text on your exhibit, although they should be large enough to read easily.

Your pictures also should vary in size. The most important image is the largest, and the less important ones are smaller. Keep in mind that an exhibit board has a limited amount of space and that one or two pictures should not take up most of the space.

The viewer’s eyes should be able to connect together the labels, captions, images, and different levels of text in the display and understand your theme. This is important since you will not always be present to explain the exhibit to the judges and the public. See “Designing an Exhibit,” pp. 11–12, and “Levels of Text in Historical Exhibits,” p. 13.

Labels and captions are used to give the viewer information about the images presented. These should be short, active, and clear. They should not state the obvious. If you choose a picture of Jackie Robinson hitting a baseball, do not state in your caption, “Jackie Robinson is hitting a baseball.” Instead, use captions to present new or additional information. Give the viewer more information about a picture than what is already there.

Reviewing your exhibit is essential. See “Reviewing an Exhibit,” p. 14. You must create, assemble, and be able to carry the exhibit, yourself. The *NHD Contest Rule Book* states on p. 6, Rule 5, that “You are responsible for the research, design, and creation of your entry. You may receive help and advice from teachers and parents on the mechanical aspects of creating your entry: 1) you may have help typing your paper and other written materials; 2) you may seek guidance from your teachers as you research and analyze your material, but your conclusions must be your own; 3) you may have photographs and slides commercially developed; 4) you may have reasonable help cutting out your backboard (e.g., a parent uses a cutting tool to cut the board that you designed).” Be sure to read all of the Rules For All Categories and exhibit rules in the *NHD Contest Rule Book*.

GOOD LUCK!

#### SUGGESTED MATERIALS

**Research:** primary and secondary sources

**Frame or base:** foam board, wood, or a durable material that will stand upright on a table

**Graphics and text:** stencils, computer-generated images and text, pens, markers, pencils, paint, construction paper, paper, or mat board

**Interview(s):** microphone, tape recorder, and audio tapes

**Other materials:** tape, scissors, extension cord, velcro, push pins, and glue



# DESIGNING AN EXHIBIT

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The following tips will help you to create a well-designed exhibit that is easy to read and follow. Remember that research is the most important part of your display. Your exhibit should be aesthetically appealing and well made, but it also needs to have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources.



## 1. *What materials are appropriate for my exhibit frame?*

You can use wood or foam board such as insulation board, foamcore, or Gatorboard. Foamcore and Gatorboard can be found at your local art store, and wood and foam insulation board are available at a hardware store. If you decide to use wood, make sure that it is heavy enough not to buckle but light enough for you to transport easily. Do not use particle board, which is heavy and warps easily. Many home centers and lumber stores will cut the wood if you give them the exact measurements. Keep in mind that it will save you time and effort if you construct your exhibit so that the frame/board can be reused for next year's History Day.

## 2. *What size should my exhibit be?*

The *NHD Contest Rule Book*, Exhibit Category Rules, Rule 1, p. 11, states that "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 must be no more than 30 inches in diameter."

It is recommended that you do not make your exhibit panels the full 6 feet because it is difficult for people to read information that is too far above their heads. The standard large size foam board is 40 x 60 inches. Do not make your backboard smaller than 5 feet because you will not have enough space to explain your topic well, and your exhibit will be smaller than most other entries.

## 3. *How do I attach my frame together?*

A conventional frame consists of a center panel and two side panels. There are a variety of methods for attaching the three pieces of your frame together. If you are using a foam backboard, you can make foam and velcro hinges. You also can try the hingeless method in which the board is cut just enough to allow you to fold the two end panels inward. If you are using wood, you can attach your backboard together with metal hinges and screws.

You are not required to use the three-panel design; other formats are allowable. However, there may be restrictions on size, so be sure to review the *NHD Contest Rule Book* carefully.

**4. *What can I use to cover my exhibit board/frame?***

There is no limit to the materials that you can use to cover your backboard, including cloth, felt, burlap, paper, or paint. Paint should be applied evenly, smoothly, and without drips, and all other materials should be attached securely and not drooping.

**5. *How do I create levels of hierarchy within my text and pictures?***

Placing text or pictures on squares of foam board, wood, or colored paper will emphasize and highlight their importance. You can emphasize levels of text by using different thicknesses of foamboard: the thickest for the title and thinner for subtitles. Your display also should include small, medium, and large sizes of text. The title is the largest, subtitles are smaller, and the text and captions are the smallest. See “Levels of Text in Historical Exhibits,” p. 13, which illustrates the importance of titles and type sizes in exhibit design.

**6. *How should I attach my text and pictures?***

Attach all of your pictures, text, and other items with velcro until you have decided on your final design. This is essential because velcro can be removed but glue and spray mount are permanent, and pins will leave noticeable holes.

**7. *How do I create the text?***

Make sure that your text and captions are easy to read. Stencils and computer-generated text are good methods to accomplish this. Stencils can be found at your local art store or hobby shop. Painting or handwriting are acceptable, but they are not as perfect and even looking and may not be as easy for the judges and the public to read.



# Levels of Text in Historical Exhibits

The main title introduces the topic and attracts viewer interest:

## POP ART

The subtitle identifies the topic and what the project will interpret:

### A Revolution in Thinking

A subject label breaks down the topic into smaller parts. These labels are similar to a map, helping to organize the exhibit contents and direct the viewer around the display.

#### Reaction Against Abstract Expressionism

Text, panels, and captions are the most detailed labels. In these, you include your own ideas and interpretations of the subject. These should be short, active, and clear.

Pop Art, which began in 1958, was revolutionary because artists reacted against modernism and the spontaneous and nonrepresentational abstract expressionist style of the 1940s and 1950s. Artists used subject matter that was often ironic and taken from popular culture such as soup cans, comic strips, and road signs in paintings, collages, and sculptures. Others incorporated actual objects into their artworks. Andy Warhol made silkscreened prints of celebrities such as Marilyn Monroe, and Roy Lichtenstein borrowed the imagery and look of comic strips for his drawings and paintings. Claes Oldenburg transformed commonplace objects like clothespins and ice bags into subjects for his witty large-scale monuments.





# REVIEWING AN EXHIBIT

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The following questions will help you to create a well-designed exhibit that is easy to read and follow. Remember that research is the most important part of your display. Your exhibit should be aesthetically appealing and well made, but it also needs to have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Did I incorporate my own ideas, interpretations, and analysis of the historical data, or did I merely describe my topic?
2. Are there enough primary sources to support my topic?
3. Does the written material demonstrate an understanding of the historical context?
4. Are the grammar and spelling of the written material correct?
5. Do the visual images, text, and captions support a common theme?
6. Is the thesis statement in a prominent place?
7. Are there levels of hierarchy within the title, subtitle, captions, and text?
8. Do the captions explain and interpret the pictures? Do captions restate the obvious or further elaborate the subject?
9. Are the images, text, and captions easy to follow, understand, and read?
10. Are there a variety of interesting images that keep the viewer's attention?
11. Are the images too large or too small?
12. Are the text and image panels cut squarely, with no ragged edges, and completely attached to the backboard?
13. Does the conclusion emphasize my topic and supporting statements?
14. Does the annotated bibliography demonstrate a well-researched topic?



# EXHIBIT CHECKLIST

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**Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student or Group Leader** \_\_\_\_\_

National History Day and Florida History Fair suggest that you check the following points after your exhibit has been completed.

\_\_\_\_\_ The exhibit strongly relates to this year's theme.

\_\_\_\_\_ The exhibit has been reviewed.

\_\_\_\_\_ At least one other person has read the process paper for clarity, punctuation, and grammar.

\_\_\_\_\_ The bibliography is separated into primary and secondary sources, and the citations are annotated.

\_\_\_\_\_ The title and subtitle of the exhibit are prominent features of the design.

\_\_\_\_\_ The main idea or thesis is clearly stated and is located in a prominent area on the backboard.

\_\_\_\_\_ The exhibit is divided into subtopics.

\_\_\_\_\_ The labels or interpretive information explains and/or identifies pictures, objects, or documents.

\_\_\_\_\_ The exhibit text, including narrative, labels, and captions, does not exceed 500 words (direct quotes are not included).

\_\_\_\_\_ The exhibit is aesthetically pleasing and well constructed.

\_\_\_\_\_ The exhibit is no larger than 40 inches wide, 30 inches deep, and 6 feet high, including any stand and table cloths. A circular or rotating exhibit is no wider than 30 inches in diameter.

\_\_\_\_\_ Four copies of the process paper have been prepared (three copies for the judges and one copy for yourself). Contents include the title page (title, student(s) name(s), category, and division); a 500-word essay describing your research methods, how you created and developed your entry, and a concluding paragraph that explains the topic's relationship to the contest theme; and an annotated bibliography.

\_\_\_\_\_ A copy of the process paper is on a disk.



## HOW TO CREATE A PERFORMANCE

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CREATING A HISTORY DAY PERFORMANCE can be a rewarding experience. You have the opportunity to combine acting, research, and creative skills in one project by playing the role of a historian and actor or actress. A historian studies the past using documents and may become an expert on a specific subject such as World War II, Medieval studies, or Florida history; and an actor or actress performs on the stage, in motion pictures, and on television.

Around the world and throughout time, performances have been used to entertain and as a way to communicate history through narrative storytelling. For example, the ancient Greeks acted out stories about gods in what is considered the first permanent theater building, the amphitheater. In the traditional Japanese Noh theater, dating back to the 14th century, most characters wear masks and dress in medieval costume. During the 19th century, pantomime, a type of silent acting, was popular in England. In the 20th century, avante garde performance art became popular. You have the opportunity to present your performance in any format that appeals to you.

A History Day performance is a clear, well-conceived, and creative story that is much like a play that we see in a local theater except that it portrays a nonfictional, accurate account of an event, era, or life story and describes its historical

significance. A performance should have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources. NHD defines primary sources as materials that relate to a topic by time or participation, such as letters, speeches, diaries, articles, oral histories, documents, photographs, artifacts, or other items that provide firsthand accounts about a



person or an event. Secondary sources include published books or articles by authors who based their interpretations on primary sources. Make sure that the topic you choose has a sufficient number of primary and secondary sources.

Many students ask, "How do I choose my topic?" Selecting a topic can seem mind-boggling, but it really is fun. The most important criterion is that you are interested in the topic. First, make a list of all of the things that you like to do. Second, choose an area of interest from your list. Once you decide on your area of interest, narrow it down to a manageable topic. Make sure that it relates to this year's theme. For example, you may want to be an environmental scientist and decide on the environment as your area of interest. Narrow down the topic by choosing a specific area such as the Everglades. Your entry might be titled, "Environmental Conservation: Saving the Everglades." Or perhaps you are interested in Native American culture and you narrow the topic down even further to the Seminole or Miccosukee Indians. You might title the performance, "Florida's Seminole and Miccosukee Indians: An Unconquered People."

An effective History Day performance describes, analyzes, and interprets an event or

### PROJECT PREPARATION

Before you start creating your presentation, you or your group should prepare an outline and draw a timeline to ensure that you know what you need to do, who is going to do what, and when you need to get it done. If you are working in a group, you should choose a leader. You will need to research the topic; take detailed notes; write your thesis statement and script; choose the primary source materials; schedule interviews; design the set and costumes; write your process paper and annotated bibliography; and type and proofread.

development and places it into historical context. Ask yourself the following questions suggested by NHD. They will help you accomplish a great History Day entry.

- 1) How important is my topic?
- 2) How does my topic relate to the History Day theme?
- 3) How did my topic develop over time?
- 4) How did my topic influence history?
- 5) How did the events and atmosphere (social, economic, political, and cultural) of the time influence my topic in history?

A performance consists of an introduction that conveys the thesis that you will be presenting, a main body, and a conclusion. The main body focuses on the thesis statement by providing supporting statements. In this section you can add dialogue, quotations, or an excerpt from a speech,

but be sure to include your own ideas, interpretations, and analysis. The conclusion reinforces and clarifies the thesis statement, demonstrates how your ideas work together, gives the presentation a sense of completeness, and leaves a final impression on the viewer. See “Writing About History: Helpful Hints,” pp. 31–32, in this booklet.

Whether you work in a group or individually, research preparation is very important. It will help you organize your project, manage

your time, and, if you are working in a group, it will ensure that all members do their fair share of the work. Once you have gathered an adequate amount of research material, you can write your thesis statement, script, and write

#### SUGGESTED MATERIALS

**Research:** primary and secondary sources

**Script:** written dialogue

**Props:** display, lighting, furniture, backdrops, or constructed visual materials

**Costumes:** representative of the time period

**Interview(s):** microphone, tape recorder, audio tapes, and batteries

**Other materials:** tape, scissors, extension cord, velcro, safety pins, and glue

the annotated bibliography and process paper (see *NHD Contest Rule Book*, Rules For All Categories, p. 7, Rules 11, 12, 13, and, 14). See “Planning an Oral History Interview,” p. 30, in this booklet.

Students often ask, “Once I have done my research, how do I write my script and choose my props?” Your script and props should focus on the thesis statement, supporting statements, and your conclusion. Keep your set to a minimum and only use props that are necessary and important to your characterization. See “Designing a Set,” pp. 18–19, in this booklet.

You will add detail to your performance if you use quotations or an excerpt from a speech, but remember to

incorporate your own ideas and interpretations. Your performance needs to be easy to follow and the viewer must be

able to connect all of your dialogue and movements together to understand your theme. This is important since you will not always be able to explain your performance to the judges and public. In other words, the performance has to explain itself.

Reviewing your performance is essential. See “Reviewing a Performance,” p. 20, in this booklet. The *NHD Contest Rule Book* states on p. 6, Rule 5, that “You are responsible for the research, design, and creation of your entry. You may receive help and advice from teachers and parents on the mechanical aspects of creating your entry: 1) you may have help typing your paper and other written materials; 2) you may seek guidance from your teachers as you research and analyze your material, but your conclusions must be your own; 3) you may have photographs and slides commercially developed.” Be sure to read all of the Rules for All Categories and performance rules in the *NHD Contest Rule Book*.

GOOD LUCK!





# DESIGNING A SET

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The following tips will help you to create a well-designed set and a well-choreographed performance that complements your research. Your set should be aesthetically pleasing, but your research is the most important part of your performance. It should have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary material. Your costume design (clothing, accessories, hair, and makeup) and props should reflect the historical time period of your topic as much as possible.



## Costume Design

The costume affects the overall design and mood of the performance and helps your audience to understand the setting of your topic. You can make your own costumes or take something already made and alter it to fit the time period. For example, you could add sequins to a pair of gloves or paint a design on a hat to make them appear as though they were from the 1920s. The *NHD Contest Rule Book* states on p. 7, Rule 8, that “you may rent or have reasonable help creating your own costumes (e.g., a parent helps you to use the sewing machine).”

- **Clothing:** you can acquire clothing for your performance from your own closet, from a family member, a thrift store, or you can make your costume yourself.
- **Accessories:** these add finishing touches to your costume and set. Jewelry, hats, gloves, shoes, or little odds and ends can be used to enhance the performance.
- **Hair:** the personality and mood of the character, and photographs and paintings from the time period, will help you to choose the right hair style for the character(s).
- **Makeup:** you will need to decide whether makeup is an essential or appropriate part of your character(s).

## Props

Props are used to decorate the set, or they are used by actors during the performance. Props help your audience understand the setting of your topic. Making props can be exciting and fun! You can use papier-maché, paint, cloth, found objects, and items that you already own. An object can be altered to fit the historical period of your performance with a little dab of paint and a brush.

There are many imaginative and creative ways to use props. An experimental performance might have props that are more abstract and nonrepresentational; a low-budget play could have minimal props and a simple set; and some topics might require a very realistic set. Your set does not need to have a lot of props. There might be only one or two objects that are essential to the characterization.



## Rehearsing the Performance

A play might appear to be spontaneous and easily acted, but it is really well planned and rehearsed. Follow these guidelines for rehearsing your performance.

- **Early rehearsals:** use your script.
- **Later rehearsals:** do not use your script because you will have to know your lines during the judging process.
- **Final days:** run through the performance in full costume with a complete set, lights, and sound. This will determine whether your equipment is working and if your performance setup and presentation can be completed in 20 minutes. This includes 5 minutes to set up your equipment, 10 minutes for your performance, and 5 minutes to remove your equipment.
- **Dress rehearsal:** present your performance as if you were at History Day. It is a good idea to practice in front of a small audience of friends and parents.

## Blocking

This is when you decide where and when your character(s) will move on stage. Make sure your set design is completely finished. Finalize your blocking during the later rehearsals. This will ensure that your performance is precise and that it will run smoothly at History Day.





# REVIEWING A PERFORMANCE

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The following will help you to create a well-designed performance that is easy to follow and understand. Remember that research is the most important part of your presentation. Your performance should be aesthetically appealing, dramatic, and well rehearsed. It also needs to have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Did I incorporate my own ideas, interpretations, and analysis of the historical data, or did I merely describe my topic?
2. Are there enough primary sources to support my topic?
3. Does the written material demonstrate an understanding of the historical context?
4. Are the grammar and spelling of written material correct?
5. Does the dialogue support a common theme?
6. Is the dialogue clear and easy to understand?
7. Is the blocking well planned and precise?
8. Do the props and costumes support a common theme?
9. Are the props and costumes historically accurate?
10. Does the conclusion emphasize the topic and supporting statements?
11. Do I display stage presence in my performance?
12. Does the annotated bibliography demonstrate a well-researched topic?



# PERFORMANCE CHECKLIST

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**Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student or Group Leader** \_\_\_\_\_

Florida History Fair and National History Day suggest that you check the following points after your performance has been completed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ The performance strongly relates to this year's theme.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The presentation has been reviewed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The bibliography is separated into primary and secondary sources, and citations are annotated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ At least one other person has read the process paper for clarity, punctuation, and grammar.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The main idea or thesis is clear to the viewer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The performance is no more than 10 minutes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The performance requires no more than 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to remove equipment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Special equipment such as props needed during the judging has been obtained.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Four copies of the process paper have been prepared (three copies for the judges and one copy for yourself). Contents include the title page (title, student(s) name(s), category, and division), a 500-word essay describing your research methods, how you created and developed your entry, and a concluding paragraph that explains the relationship of the topic to the contest theme; and an annotated bibliography.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of the process paper and script are on a disk. This will ensure that you have extra copies if your paper or script are lost or damaged.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You or your group are prepared to answer the judges' questions.



## HOW TO CREATE A HISTORICAL PAPER

CREATING A HISTORY DAY HISTORICAL PAPER can be an extremely rewarding experience. You research, analyze, and interpret your topic's significance in history. You have the opportunity to play the role of a historian and writer. A historian studies the past using documents and may become an expert on a specific subject such as World War II, Medieval studies, or Florida history. A writer puts his or her thoughts and ideas on paper in the form of a book, article, essay, or poem.

A historical paper is a clear, well-conceived essay that describes, analyzes, and interprets your topic in history. It is the traditional form of presenting historical research. You also can choose to write a historically based creative paper such as a fictional diary or epic poem; however, all methods of presenting material must have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary sources. NHD defines primary sources as materials that relate to a topic by time or participation, such as letters, speeches, diaries, articles, oral histories, documents, photographs, artifacts, or other items that provide firsthand accounts about a person or an event. Secondary sources include published books or articles by authors who based their interpretations on primary sources. Make sure that the topic you choose has a sufficient number of primary and secondary sources.

Many students ask, "How do I choose my

### PROJECT PREPARATION

Before you start researching your topic, you need to write a list of questions that you would like to discuss in your paper. Next, prepare an outline and a timeline to ensure that you know what you need to do, when you are going to do what, and when you need to get it done. You should take detailed notes, write a thesis statement, choose the primary source materials, schedule interview(s), write an annotated bibliography, and type and proofread your paper.

topic?" Choosing a topic can seem mind-boggling, but it really is fun. The most important criterion is that you are interested in the topic. First, make a list of all of the things that you like to do. Second, choose an area of interest from your list. Once you decide on your area of interest, narrow it down until you have a manageable topic. Make sure that your topic relates to this year's theme. For example, you may want to be an

architect and decide on architecture as your area of interest. Narrow down the topic by choosing a specific area such as Florida lighthouse

architecture. You might title the entry, "Lighthouse Architecture: How Our Environment Affected the Transformation of the Building Design." Or perhaps you are interested in the Cuban culture, and you narrow your topic down even further to Fidel Castro. You might title the paper, "Castro's Revolution and its Effect on Immigration to Florida."

Research preparation is very important. It will help you to organize your project and manage your time. Once you have gathered an adequate amount of research material, you can write your thesis statement, paper, and annotated bibliography. The length of the text of your paper should be no less than 1,500 words and no more than 2,500 words. This does not include your annotated bibliography and supplemental/appendix material (see *NHD Contest Rule Book*, p. 7, Rules For All Categories, Rules 11, 12, 13, and 14; and Category Rules, Papers, p. 9–11, Rules 1, 2, 3, and 4).

An effective History Day Historical Paper describes, analyzes, and interprets an event and



places it into historical context. Ask yourself the following questions suggested by NHD. They will help you accomplish a great History Day entry.

- 1) How important is my topic?
- 2) How does my topic relate to the History Day theme?
- 3) How did my topic develop over time?
- 4) How did my topic influence history?
- 5) How did the events and atmosphere of the time (social, economic, political, and cultural) influence my topic in history?

A historical paper consists of an introduction that states the thesis that you will be discussing, a main body, and a conclusion. The main body focuses on the thesis statement by providing supporting

### SUGGESTED MATERIALS

**Research:** primary and secondary sources

**Interview(s):** microphone, tape recorder, audio tapes, and extension cord

**Other materials:** typewriter, computer, eraser, pens, pencils, notecards, and paper

statements. In this section you can add detail by using dialogue, quotations or an excerpt from a speech, but be sure to incorporate your own ideas, interpretations, and

analysis. The conclusion reinforces and clarifies the thesis statement, demonstrates how your ideas work together, gives the essay a sense of completeness, and leaves a final impression on the reader.

Research preparation is very important. It will help you organize your project and manage your time. Once you have gathered an adequate amount of research materials, you can write your thesis statement, outline, paper, and annotated bibliography. In addition, if you plan to interview individuals for your entry, see “Planning an Oral History Interview,” p. 30, in this handbook. *NHD Contest Rule Book*, Rule 1 Note, p. 9, says that “Oral history transcripts, correspondence between you

and experts, questionnaires, and other primary or secondary materials used as sources for your paper should be cited in your bibliography but not included as attachments to your paper.”

Students often ask, “Once I have done my research, how do I begin writing my essay?” Before you begin writing your paper, you need to organize your notes within an outline. All of the information that you have collected should relate to a section of your outline. If it does not, do not include it in your paper. Next, write your paper following the outline.

Your paper needs to be easy to follow, and the reader must be able to connect all of your written material together to understand your theme. This is especially important since you will not always be present to explain the paper to the judges and public. In other words, it has to explain itself. Reviewing your paper is essential. See “Reviewing a Historical Paper,” p. 24, and “Writing About History: Helpful Hints,” pp. 31–32, in this handbook.

Remember that the *NHD Contest Rule Book* states on p. 6, Rule 5, that “You are responsible for the research, design, and creation of your entry. You may receive help and advice from teachers and parents on the mechanical aspects of creating your entry: 1) you may have help typing your paper and other written materials; 2) you may seek guidance from your teachers as you research and analyze your material, but your conclusions must be your own; 3) you may have photographs and slides commercially developed.” Be sure to read all of the Rules For All Categories and historical paper rules in the *NHD Contest Rule Book*.



GOOD LUCK!



# REVIEWING A HISTORICAL PAPER

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The following questions will help you to create a well-written and organized historical paper. Remember that research is the most important part of your essay. It should have a solid historical foundation through the use of primary and secondary materials.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Did I incorporate my own ideas, interpretations, and analysis of the historical data, or did I merely describe the topic?
2. Are there enough primary sources to support my topic?
3. Does the written material demonstrate an understanding of the historical context?
4. Are the grammar and spelling of the written material correct?
5. Does the text follow a common theme?
6. Does the main body of the written material explain the introduction?
7. Are the paragraphs easy to follow and understand?
8. Does the first sentence of each paragraph explain the subject of the paragraph?
9. Is each paragraph complete and at least three sentences long.
10. Does the conclusion emphasize my topic and supporting statements?
11. Does the annotated bibliography demonstrate a well-researched topic?



# HISTORICAL PAPER CHECKLIST

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**Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Florida History Fair and National History Day suggest that you check the following points after your paper has been completed.

- \_\_\_\_\_ The historical paper strongly relates to this year's theme.
- \_\_\_\_\_ At least one other person has read the paper for clarity, punctuation, and grammar.
- \_\_\_\_\_ All quotes and paraphrased ideas from an author or primary source have been footnoted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The bibliography is separated into primary and secondary sources, and citations are annotated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The main idea or thesis is clear to the reader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The historical paper is well organized, clearly thought out, and easy for the reader to follow.
- \_\_\_\_\_ No illustrations have been included on the title page.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The historical paper contents include a title page (title, student's name, category, and division) and an annotated bibliography.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Five copies of the historical paper have been prepared and submitted prior to the state contest (three copies for the judges, one copy for public viewing, and one copy for Florida History Fair files.).
- \_\_\_\_\_ A copy of the historical paper and annotated bibliography is on a disk. This will ensure that you have an extra copy if your paper is lost or damaged.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You are prepared to answer the judges' questions.





# PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

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Your History Day project should rely on both primary and secondary sources. You should make sure that a substantial portion of your research material consists of primary sources. This will help you to prepare a well-researched project.

What are primary sources? NHD defines primary sources as materials that relate to a topic by time or participation, such as letters, speeches, diaries, articles, oral histories, artifacts, artworks, or other items that provide firsthand accounts about a person or event. These are evidences of our past that have been left behind by people just like you. These evidences make up a historical record that we can use to learn and discover new ideas about the history of our culture and society.

What are secondary sources? Secondary sources include published books and articles by authors who have based their interpretations on primary sources. They can be found in books, encyclopedias, reference books, textbooks, journals, periodicals, or Internet articles.

It is important to decide carefully whether a source is considered primary or secondary. Documents, objects, and other historical information that you find can be a primary source for one topic of study, but a secondary source for another topic of research. For example, an artwork is a primary

source for interpreting the work of an artist. However, if you are researching Roman architecture and the building is depicted in a painting or drawing, then you are seeing the artist's interpretation of the structure, and it is considered a secondary source. If you have a question about whether a document is a primary or secondary source, ask a teacher, librarian, historian, or archivist.

Where do you find primary sources? They are located in archives, historical societies, museums, libraries, research centers, government offices, and community organizations. They also include people in your community, and increasingly they can be found on the Internet. For example, if you are researching Pop Art, you might choose to look for a primary source at a museum, where a collection includes original Andy Warhol paintings. You can locate documents on World War II and Florida history at places such as Florida State University's Institute on World War II and the Human Experience, the Florida State Archives, and the State Library of Florida. If you choose to do some of your research on the Internet, make sure to read "The Internet as a Research Tool" on p. 29, which will help you to determine whether the Internet material you find is historically accurate.

Analyze, interpret, and ask yourself questions about each primary source that you find. This will help you to form your own ideas and conclusions and it will lead you to additional information on your topic. For example, you might ask yourself "What was the point of view of the person who wrote the letter?" or "What does the perspective, symbolism, and portrayal of images in a painting tell me about the prevailing attitudes and conditions of the time period?" If you are listening to an audio recording of a speech, you might ask yourself "What is the speaker's point of view, and do I agree or disagree?" and "How does the speaker's oratory style affect the impact of the message?"

## PLACES TO LOOK

**Archives:** collects and preserves documents, personal papers, photographs, and other historical materials

**Historical society:** collects the history of a community, city, county, region, or state

**Public, university, or private library:** a repository for books, periodicals, journals, records, and documents

**Museum:** a place where objects of historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural value are used for research, education, interpretation, or exhibition

**Research center:** researches, collects, and disseminates information in an area of study

**Government offices:** maintain records relating to city, state, and national records

**Community organizations:** churches, civic groups, social service and ethnic organizations



# THE MYSTERY OF A VAN GOGH PAINTING

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Art historian Bogomila Welsh discovered, while she was a graduate student in Holland, that a painting believed to have been painted by Vincent van Gogh was really the work of Charles Angrand. The painting in question, *Landscape of Paris*, 1886, had been attributed to van Gogh in 1967 by historian Marc Tralbout.

The first clues that led Welsh to question the authenticity of the painting were the subject matter and style of the painting. The painting depicted a landscape in the industrial area of Paris near Clichy. It was similar to landscape scenes that van Gogh had created while in Paris, and it also was painted in his aggressive style, but these stylistic characteristics were not a close enough match. Welsh believed that it had been painted in a much more contemporary style than van Gogh's painting technique.

She began researching reviews of paintings between March 1886 and February 1888, during van Gogh's stay in Paris. This led her to the next clue, a review written by Felix Feneon, a well-known art critic of the 19th century, which, by chance, described the painting in question. In the review, Feneon noted that the artist of the painting was Charles Angrand, who did paint in a more contemporary style than van Gogh. Further research brought her to the Angrand family archives. His nephew, Pierre Angrand, gave a firsthand account that he saw it at the house of one of his uncle's friends, confirming that the painting changed hands. He also had the artist's account books and an unpublished letter that van Gogh had written to Angrand (see p. 28, "Vincent van Gogh Primary Source Documents").

The letter, postmarked October 25, 1888, confirmed that van Gogh had been drawn to Charles Angrand's realist subjects depicting the Paris landscape and that he had requested an exchange of paintings between Angrand and himself. Vincent wrote to Angrand, "*I would recommend myself for an exchange. In fact, I have two views of the Moulin de la Gallette that I could get hold of.*" Van Gogh stated his interest in a painting of

Angrand's that he referred to as a "*girl with chickens,*" which he had "*seen again at Tanguy.*" He then encouraged Angrand to contact Theo van Gogh (Vincent's brother) at Boussodet Valadon, where he could view "*a very good one by Gas*" and presumably a selection of van Gogh's own work. Van Gogh's request for an exchange of paintings never transpired. Welsh examined the original painting, which led her to another important piece of evidence that would close the case. She also noticed that Angrand's signature and date had been conveniently removed from the painting.

By analyzing, interpreting, and piecing together the historical evidence, including Vincent's letter, the nephew's oral history, Charles Angrand's account records, the original paintings, an exhibition review of the time, and secondary sources, Welsh was able to form a valid conclusion and answer the question "Was the painting, *Landscape of Paris*, painted by Vincent van Gogh?" She determined that the painting was not the work of van Gogh, but that it really was titled *Outskirts of Paris* and painted in 1887 by Charles Angrand. The similarities between the two artists' work were due to van Gogh's interest in Angrand's paintings, which, in turn, influenced his painting style. Welsh wrote about her findings in a publication titled *The early work of Charles Angrand and his contact with Vincent*.

There are still many questions to be asked and new ideas to be discovered about our society and culture. Bogomila Welsh questioned the identity of a Vincent van Gogh painting and changed history through the use of primary sources. By asking yourself questions about each primary source you find, you too may be able to discover new ideas and make a mark in history.

*The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh, Volume II.* London: Bullfinch Press, 2000.

Welsh-Ovcharov, Bogomila. *The early work of Charles Angrand and his contact with Vincent.* The Netherlands: Editions Victorine, 1971. Trans. Kate Walker. Vincent van Gogh's letter to Angrand, 1888.

Welsh-Ovcharov, Bogomila. E-mail to the author, 29 and 30 Dec. 2001, 2 Jan., 8 Feb. 2002.



# VINCENT VAN GOGH PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS

54 Rue Leprieux  
 Monsieur, j'ai écrit à M. Boggs  
 de l'indienne que j'ai eue avec vous  
 et si vous aimez, faire un échange  
 avec lui allez-y hardiment parce  
 vous verrez de belles choses que lui  
 et il sera très content de faire  
 votre commission.  
 Mais même je ne recommande  
 aussi pour un échange  
 j'ai justement à vous de  
 montrer de la galette dont je  
 pourrais disposer  
 Espérant donc vous voir au de ces jours  
 je vous salue à moi  
 Vincent

Allez donc aussi voir mon frère (Goupil  
 14 Boulevard Montmartre) il a dans ce moment un  
 peu de gaz - j'ai encore ce qui change  
 votre petite au poids - c'est justement cette idée  
 que j'ai, aussitôt bien à vous échanger - de même un autre  
 de mon frère si vous ne le trouvez pas le vous priez,  
 sans toujours monter sur les talons



Vincent van Gogh's letter to Charles Angrand and the envelope (written in French), postmarked October 25, 1888; collection of Pierre Angrand.

Welsh, Bogomila. *The early work of Charles Angrand and his contact with Vincent*. The Netherlands: Editions Victorine, 1971.



# THE INTERNET AS A RESEARCH TOOL

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The Internet can be an excellent tool for research when it is used properly. It can be very helpful for a student who lives in a rural area and does not have access to a variety of libraries, historical societies, or art and history museums that are filled with primary sources and information on their subject.

Many students believe that they can do all of their research on-line. Do not base a majority of your research on the Internet. It may be convenient to stay at home and use the Internet, but it has only a fraction of the material that is available for a well-researched History Day project. Historians, curators, and professors use the Internet, but they still rely heavily on the old-fashioned method of research by visiting libraries, museums, and the state archives. Internet sources will complement your research project when they are combined with other material such as books, journals, and newspaper articles.

You should use the following guidelines when you are using the Internet as a research tool. If you have a question about the validity of a source, make sure to ask a teacher, librarian, historian, archivist, or find a second source that agrees with the information.

Look closely at each Internet document you find to help you to identify reliable research sources. The following are clues that the Internet material may not be credible.

1. There is no date on the text or document, and the sources are not cited. Citing information on a document is important; otherwise, it might be an opinion and not factual.
2. The subject matter is described in generalizations, and there is very little detail.
3. The author gives a one-sided view or opinion that does not consider or explain opposing views.
4. The author's name is not listed in the text.
5. The author's organizational affiliation is not listed in the text.
6. The author uses bad grammar or misspelled words. A few errors do not invalidate the reference, but obvious carelessness is not the best work of experts and is a sign that it may not be credible.

Make sure to cite each source properly. Using only a Web site address to cite a source is not acceptable. The following are two methods you can use to cite Internet text.

1. Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Projects*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1999. The following is the MLA method:

“Table Tennis.” Compton’s Encyclopedia Online. Vers. 2.0. 1997. America Online.  
4 July 1998. Keyword: Compton’s

2. Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual For Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996. The following is the Turabian method:

Flax, Rosabel. 1979. *Guidelines for teaching mathematics K12*. Topeka: Kansas Department of Education. Database on-line. Available from Dialog, ERIC, ED 178312.





# PLANNING AN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

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The following tips will help you to plan and successfully complete an interview for an exhibit, documentary, historical paper, or performance.

1. Decide whether you want the interview to be spontaneous or more practiced and rehearsed. If you would like it to be rehearsed, give the interviewee a copy of the questions before the interview so that he or she can prepare.
2. Choose a place to film or tape that has very little noise or distractions. If you are filming, make sure that you would like the chosen surroundings as the background in your documentary.
3. Each interviewee must sign a consent form. Without a signed consent form, you cannot legally use any of the footage or taped material in your History Day entry. If a person prefers not to be in the visual part of the documentary, ask whether you can use an audio cassette recorder.
4. If you are working in a group, make sure that all members know what their designated roles are during the interview.
5. Practice the interview before you begin shooting or taping. Ask a friend, parent, or group member to play the role of the interviewee. This will ensure that the interview runs smoothly.
6. Arrive early to set up your equipment. You should be completely ready when the interviewee arrives.
7. Test your equipment beforehand, especially the video camera and microphone. This will help you to avoid any unwanted surprises on the day of the interview.
8. Announce and record the date, location, and persons present at the beginning of each videotape or audio cassette recording session.

The following are two additional tips for documentary entries.

1. Decide whether you want to film both the interviewee and interviewer or just the interviewee.
2. Suggest to the interviewee that he or she not wear clothing with busy patterns or very bright or predominantly white colors. This type of clothing does not film well. Keep in mind that glasses often reflect light and may add glare to your film.



# WRITING ABOUT HISTORY: HELPFUL HINTS

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A documentary, exhibit, and performance are all required to include a process paper. This is an essay that is no more than 500 words, in which you explain your research methods, how you created and developed your entry, and the relationship of the topic to this year's theme. This is your opportunity to explain the process that you have worked so hard on to the judges and public. You absolutely must include an annotated bibliography. A historical paper does not include a process paper (see *NHD Contest Rule Book*, p. 7, Rules For All Categories, Rules 11, 12, 13, and 14), but it must have an annotated bibliography. The following tips will ensure that your written material is organized, well written, and easy to follow and understand.

1. An effective History Day research project does not merely describe an event; rather, it also analyzes and interprets it.
2. The text avoids generalizations and is as specific as possible.
3. The minimum length of a paragraph is three sentences.
4. The first sentence of each paragraph serves as the topic sentence and subject, and the rest of the paragraph explains the topic sentence.
5. At least one person should read the paper for clarity, punctuation, and grammar.
6. Verbs should be checked to eliminate the passive voice.
7. Adverbs and adjectives are used only when they contribute to the meaning of a sentence. This will make your paper clear and concise.
8. You should read the paper out loud. This will help you to find repetitions, unclear sections or sentences, and grammatical errors.
9. Quotations and paraphrased sentences that are another author's ideas are footnoted in the paper and listed in the bibliography.



## **Tips for a Historical Paper**

1. The introduction states the thesis and explains what the paper will discuss. All of the information should relate to the thesis; otherwise, remove it.
2. The body of the paper explains the introduction.
3. The conclusion reinforces and summarizes the thesis statement, demonstrates how your ideas work together, gives the essay a sense of completeness, and leaves a final impression on the reader.
4. Conclusions about the event or period have been drawn, based on research.