

Step 1: Topic Proposal Form

Name: _____

Remember this is not a firm commitment, but you should have an idea of what you're interested in very soon.

Due: _____

Type of Entry:

- Historical paper (individuals only)
- Documentary
- Museum Exhibit
- Website
- Performance

Proposal Description – Who / what do you want to study?

Subject:

→ Why are you interested in studying this person / event / idea?

→ Describe why this person / event is important – explain the historical significance. Give three clear reasons why this was important to history at a local, state, national, or international level:

a.

b.

c.

→ So what? Why is this important enough for you to research and present? Convince me.

→ How does your topic relate to the theme for this year?

Score _____
20

How Do I Choose My Category?

Do you have special interests or talents that lend themselves to a specific category? How can your material best be expressed? Answering the following questions may help you decide.

Historical Paper

1. Do I enjoy writing?
2. Am I more comfortable expressing myself on paper rather than in front of an audience?
3. Am I trying to convey a complex idea that requires a lot of explanation?

Performance

1. Do I enjoy being in front of an audience?
2. Do I like to act?
3. Can I sing or play a musical instrument? (Musical talent is not necessary, but many students incorporate music into their performances.)
4. Can my topic be expressed dramatically?

Exhibit

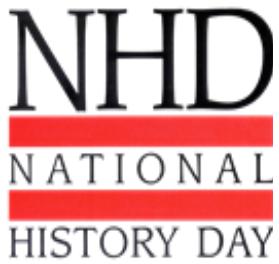
1. Do I enjoy creating things with my hands?
2. Do I have room to keep an exhibit once I create it?
3. Do I have a way to transport my project to a contest?
4. Can I tell my story primarily through pictures and artifacts instead of words?

Documentary

1. Do I have access to and enjoy working with media equipment?
2. Do I have access to editing equipment that I can operate?
3. Do I have a VCR, television, slide projector, tape recorder, computer, etc. that I can take to a contest?
4. Will my research be most clearly presented as a documentary?

Websites

1. Do I enjoy working with computers?
2. Do I have access to a laptop computer to present my entry at the contest?
3. Do I have a basic knowledge about developing websites?
4. Can I effectively present my topic in a website?



NHD: Choosing a Topic

A. Topic Selection

1. Historical sub-fields – History is a huge and broad umbrella that includes lots of sub-branches of history. Look at the list below and choose five to cross out (that you have **NO interest in) and five to circle (that you have a high interest in).**

political history	social history	military history	economic history
religious history	cultural history	diplomatic history	environmental history
women's history	public history	history of government	demographic history
rural history	family history	ethnic history	labor history
urban history	history of education	history of the common man	intellectual history

2. Time Periods / Geographic Regions – the second thing that you have to do is to narrow down some geographic locations. Based on that, choose one or two that you'd like to pursue.

North America	Central America	Caribbean	South America
Pre-Columbian	Pre-Columbian	Pre-Columbian	Pre-Columbian
Exploration and Settlement	Exploration and Settlement	Exploration and Settlement	Exploration and Settlement
Founding / pre-civil war	Independence movements	Independence movements	Independence movements
Post-Civil War	Twentieth century	Twentieth century	Twentieth century

Europe	Africa	Asia	Pacific Rim
Romans, Dark/Middle Ages	Pre-imperialism	Pre-imperialism	Pre-imperialism
Early Modern	Imperialism	Imperialism	Imperialism
Imperialism	Post-imperialism	Post-imperialism	Post-imperialism
Twentieth century	Modern Africa	Modern Asia	Modern Oceania

B. Web Searching – Choose three of the links below to explore.

Our Documents - <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/index.php?flash=true&>

Look at the 100 most important documents in US history.

Choose three that you think are interesting and note WHY you are interested in these documents.

Document....	This is interesting because....

Library of Congress - <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/>

→ Click on the link above and choose two sets of primary sources.

Primary Source Set....	This caught my attention...

National Historic Landmarks - <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/>

→ Sometimes a place can inspire an idea....the National Parks Service protects historic places across the United States.

Ideas.....

PBS History - <http://www.pbs.org/topics/history/>

On the menu bar across the top, choose “topics” and choose some categories that interest you. Note your pathways and ideas in the box below.

Ideas.....

Library of Congress Timeline –

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/index.html>

→ If you like to look at history chronologically.....try this! Talk about what you see below.

Ideas....

C. If you have extra time, consider some of these....

If you're interested in....	Try....
Exploration in North and South America....	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://www.americanjourneys.org/
Colonial History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://www.history.org/history/teaching/index.cfm• http://www.dohistory.org/home.html
Social History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://www.ashp.cuny.edu/
Politics and government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://www.annenbergclassroom.org/
Women's History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/thematic-units.html
A general overview of US History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://historymatters.gmu.edu/• http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/• http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/index.cfm• https://www.gilderlehrman.org/• http://nhd.org/USHistoryPrimarySources.htm
World History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://www.bne.es/es/Colecciones/• http://eudocs.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Main_Page• http://nhd.org/WorldHistoryPrimarySources.htm
Puerto Rican/Latino History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://centropr.hunter.cuny.edu/• http://www.preb.com/geneal2/adasj.htm• http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/