

## Part Two: PRESENTATION

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

**PAPER**

**EXHIBIT**

**PERFORMANCE**

**DOCUMENTARY**

**WEBSITE\*\***

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

\*\*Websites will not compete at the regional or National contest until 2008. For more information about the website category, go to [www.ohiohistory.org/historyday](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyday).

### Choosing a Category

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

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

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

### The National History Day *Contest Rule Book*

After choosing your category be sure to consult the National History Day *Contest Rule Book* for complete information on the rules that relate to your entry. The *Contest Rule Book* will also describe the judging criteria for evaluating History Day entries. The *Contest Rule Book* is available online at [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org) or [www.ohiohistory.org/historyday](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyday).



# PAPERS

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

A research paper requires three basic steps.

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

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

## WHAT IS A FOOTNOTE?

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

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

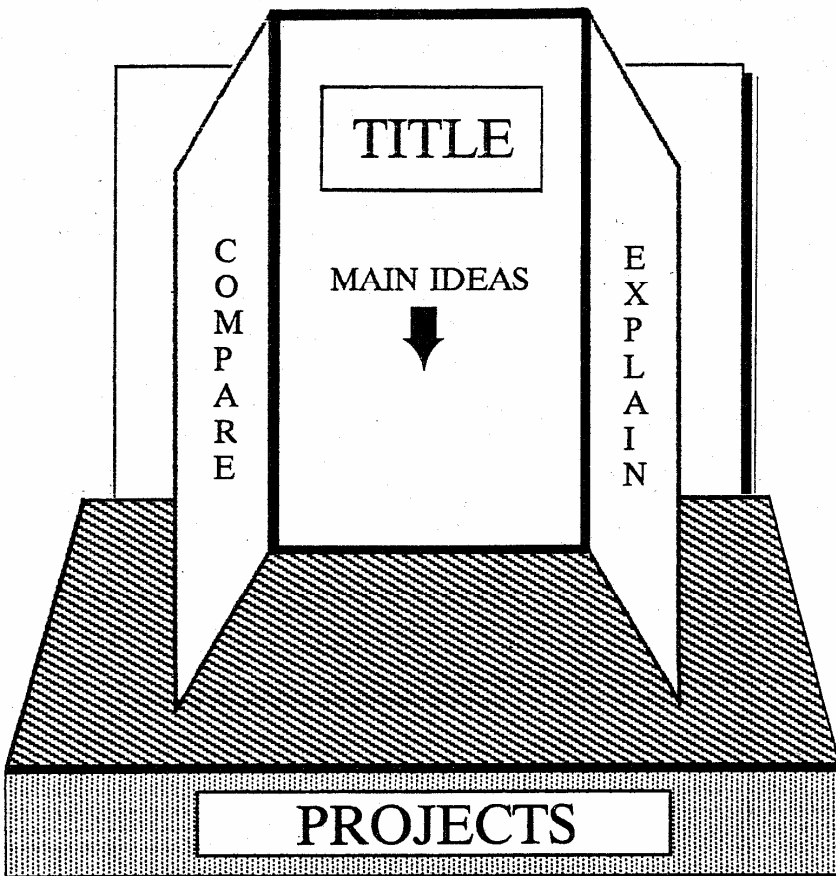
## HOW LONG DOES THIS PAPER HAVE TO BE?

History Day papers are 1,500 to 2,500 words in length (approx. 6-10 pages).

## MUST THE PAPER BE TYPED?

No, but typing is always best and you may have someone type your paper for you. Be sure to refer to your *Contest Rule Book* for more information about title pages, footnote style, and entry requirements. Good Luck!

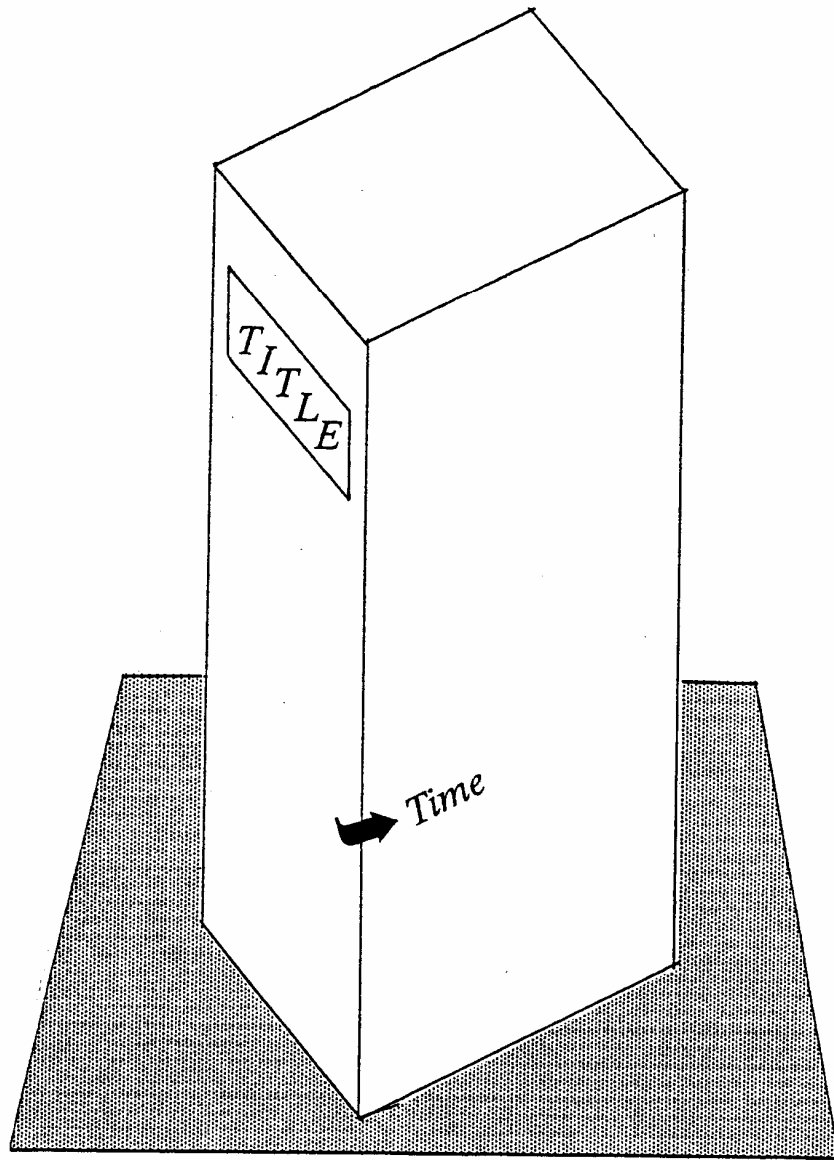
# EXHIBITS



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

The most common form of exhibit entry is a three panel display similar to the above illustration. This style is the least complicated to design and build, but is still a very effective way to present you information. Here are some tips for this style:

- \* Be sure your title is the main focus of the center panel.
- \* Also use the center panel to present you main ideas.
- \* The side panels are best used either to compare issues about your topic or explain related details.
- \* Artifacts or other materials may also be placed on the table between the side panels.



### **THREE DIMENSIONAL EXHIBIT**

A three-dimensional exhibit is more complicated to construct but can be especially effective for explaining topics where change over time is important. Like the three-panel display, one side should contain your title and main theme. As you move around the exhibit the development of your topic can be explored. It is not necessary for the project itself to be able to spin. You may set it on a table (or the floor) so people can walk around it.

# MORE HINTS ABOUT EXHIBITS...

## LABELING



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

One way to make your labels stand out is to have the writing on a light colored piece of paper with a darker background behind it. This can be done with construction paper, tag board, or mat board. Dark black lettering makes your labels easier to read.

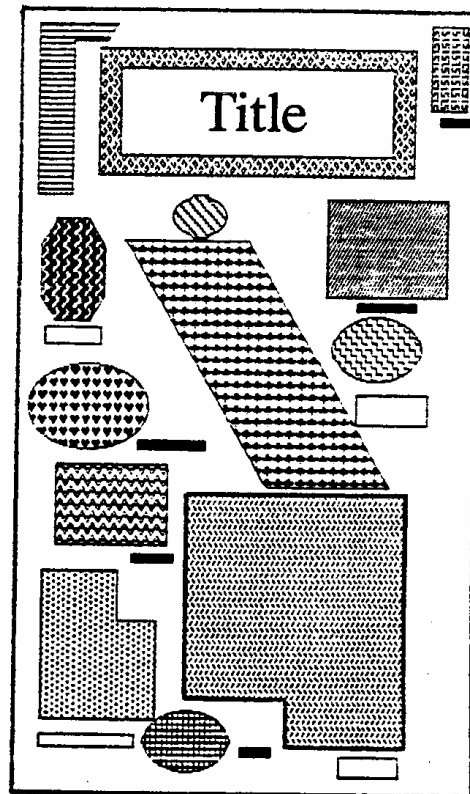
Photographs and written materials will also stand out more for the viewer if you put them on backgrounds as well.

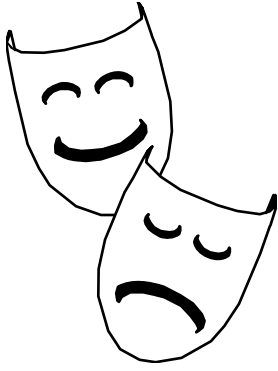
## EXHIBIT DESIGN

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

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

Be Careful  
of Clutter!





# PERFORMANCES

The Performance category allows you to create a historical play. Entries in this category must have dramatic appeal, but not at the expense of historical information. Creativity is the key here, and students must make effective use of their 10 minute time allowance. Innovative performances have made this category the highlight of many History Day competitions!

Here are some suggestions:

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

# DOCUMENTARIES



## POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

The documentary entry allows you to create documentaries like the ones on PBS or the History Channel. Although the use of videotape or DVD is popular in this category, PowerPoint or slide presentations are still an effective medium. Slides can be either purchased or produced by students. The key to an effective entry is a good combination of visual images and recorded narrative.

Here are some things to keep in mind:

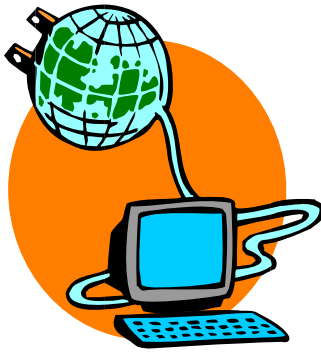
- Make a story board of the types of images you want to use to explain your topic (*see blank story board attached*).
- Photograph pictures from books to build your slide collection and avoid too much repetition.
- Appropriate music is an important addition to your recorded narrative.
- Make sure your narrative fits with the image on the screen.
- Preview early and edit at least once.

## VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

The availability of home video cameras has increased the popularity of this entry category. If you are able to use editing equipment in your school or local cable company this can be an exciting and educational project. Here are some suggestions for video entries:

- Remember -- a student must operate the camera and the editing equipment.
- Be sure to draw up a story board of the scenes you will be shooting. This will keep you organized.
- Try to present a variety of panning shots, interviews, live action, and still subjects.
- Keep track of your scenes in a notebook to make editing easier.
- Appropriate instrumental music is an effective addition to your sound track; but remember that the music must match your presentation -- do not let it overshadow the verbal presentation.
- Middle School students can check to use their High School's equipment.
- Local cable companies have film-editing classes.
- Watch professional documentaries for ideas.
- Preview early to make sure that your tape works correctly.
- First record the audio track, then match up the visual images to the sound.

# Websites



## **NEW at Ohio History Day In 2007**

For the 2006-2007 school year, website can be submitted to the Ohio History Day State competition. For 2007, anyone can enter a website at the state level. Like other categories, there is a junior and senior division with individual and group projects. See attached rules for more specific information about this new category.

Some tips about websites:

- Remember that just because the medium is different, the historical quality is still most important.
- The website must be completed built by the student, video or other media used in the website can be used from professional sources. Check the rules for length of media clips.
- School computer labs can be a great resource for building your website.
- Look at history websites produced by museums or universities for ideas.
- Go out and research in the real world! Even though your entry is made for the virtual world you should still be doing research at libraries, archives, and other research institutions.
- Much like a paper, your entry needs to be submitted on CD (3 copies) to the state office by the registration deadline.
- Keep your information organized, like a documentary, performance, or exhibit, you want your audience to be able to follow your argument.