



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

BEFORE JUDGING

- **Who will keep track of time?**
 - Documentaries + Performances = need time keeper
 - Website + Paper + Exhibit = optional; helps to keep interviews on time
- **Who will open the door and greet the students?**
 - Welcoming students into the room eases their anxiety

JUDGING

- **Greet**
 - Welcome the student
 - Collect process paper + bibliography (minimum 1 per judge team)
 - Papers + Websites: should already be included in project
- **Read**
 - Process paper = the who/what/when/where/why of their project
 - Bibliography = VERY important; see what research they did
- **View**
 - Write brief notes (on scrap paper; record complete thoughts on comment sheets)
 - Documentary + Performance = signal to begin and time
- **Questions**
 - Do not ask about: schools, home town, or background
 - Start with “soft-pitch” question to ease nerves; go deeper if appear confident

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- **Primary Sources** (Things directly from the time of the event; a first-hand account)
 - Examples: laws/treaties, letters, newspapers, interviews, photos, or artifacts
- **Quality over Quantity** – Are there sources that could be added?
 - If the topic is MLK Jr. did the student include his speeches, the Civil Rights Act of 1968, newspapers, and interviews?
 - If the topic is Ancient Rome, the student may only have a few primary sources
- **Secondary Sources** (Anything not from that time; second-hand account)
 - Examples: biography, others, others, others
 - Not *just* websites, student clearly did some digging to learn more

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- **“Soft Pitch” Questions**
 - Why did you choose this topic?
 - How does your topic relate to this year’s theme?
 - What was your favorite source?
 - What did you learn in this process?
 - How did you find your images or resources?

- **Deeper Questions**

- How did your thesis evolve?
- Why does [topic] matter today?
- What further research would you want to do?
- If you advanced, would you change your project? How so?
- Do you think this [event, decision, etc] could have been resolved another way?
Was there a better option?

CRITERIA

- **60% — Historical Quality**

- Accuracy
- Interpret and analyze
- Place in historical context
- Shows wide research
- Strong thesis
- Balanced—multiple viewpoints
- Available primary sources used

- **20% — Relation to Theme**

- Use triumph AND tragedy
- Demonstrate why topic is significant in history

- **20% — Clarity of Presentation**

- Use of visual images
- Process paper and bibliography clearly organized
- Do NOT get swayed by the glitz and glamor
- Do NOT judge based on quality of film software/props

- **0% — Quality of Interview**

- Interview is meant for students to share more about their process/research
- Projects stand alone; extra content can give a competitive advantage. They can share, but you can't judge what they say over what they completed.
- Students are naturally nervous during the interview!

AFTER JUDGING

- **Return** to the judges' room for food!
- **Review** projects to determine qualifiers; come to consensus together
- **Report** plagiarism or rule violations (note on comment sheets as well)
- **Record** feedback on comment sheets
 - Follow Compliment Sandwich Model: positive – area of improvement – positive
 - Mention ways to improve/flaws in a positive fashion
 - Avoid extreme '*superior*' and '*needs improvement*' marks unless unanimous

REMEMBER, THEY ARE MORE NERVOUS THAN YOU!
WHEN IN DOUBT—SMILE ☺