TEACHER CHEAT SHEET

FIND OUR COMPLETE TEACHER GUIDE ONLINE!

"My favorite part of NHD is teaching students the lifelong skill of researching."

HOW TO DO NHD

It's versatile! Whether as an afterschool club or in-class curriculum, start with a size and scope you can manage. Here are some guiding questions as you plan:

⇨ Will students be able to pick any topic they want? Or will there be a time or geographic topic limit?
⇨ How will you track progress?
⇨ Will students get time in class to work, have to work outside of class or a mix of both?
⇨ Will students be able to work in a group?
⇨ Will students be able to showcase their projects at the end?
⇨ Is competition an option?

These factors are all up to you. There are no 'right' answers! This is supposed to be an exciting adventure for you, too! Pick a system that works best for you.

GETTING STARTED

1. Reach out to us! Ask us questions via email or call our office.
2. Browse the National History Day website (nhd.org) to learn about the program.
3. Visit wisconsinhistory.org/nhd to see worksheets and lesson plan samples.
4. Look at project examples on both websites. (View the annotated bibliographies!)
5. Make a timeline. Below is information on competition dates, but that is not required!

Timeframe
⇨ Whether you have 4, 6, or 12 weeks, this project can work. The stages are:
  ✓ Topic Selection
  ✓ Research
  ✓ Thesis and Analysis
  ✓ Project Creation

Optional Competition Cycle Dates*
⇨ Regional Contest = Late February – Late March (various locations across WI)
⇨ State Contest = Mid April
⇨ National Contest = Mid June
⇨ School Contest = Anytime! Show off student work to your community.

THEME AND TOPIC

Each year there is a new theme selected by the Nationals office. The purpose is to encourage kids to look at history from a different perspective.
Examples of themes are:
⇨ Leadership and Legacy in History
⇨ Turning Points in History
Go to nhd.org/themebook to read more.

TOPIC CHOICE

Projects can be on local, national, or international topics. Make sure they relate to the theme! *You can find ideas*:
⇨ In the annual theme guide.
⇨ On NHD in WI website.
We recommend picking topics or events from over 20 years ago in order to talk more about its historical impact.

RESEARCH
⇨ Begin with secondary sources (books, websites, articles) so students gain background information on their topic. It is a great way to sample a topic to see if it interests them!
- o Wikipedia, History.com and others are great ways to familiarize yourself with topics.
- o Check the footnotes and bibliographies to find primary sources, too!

⇨ There is no magic number of sources. It varies by topic. Remember quality over quantity!
- o Students should be able to show they dug deep (especially for primary sources!)
- o If you want to test your student(s) knowledge, ask them to explain their topic to you. Encourage them to reference specific sources as they go.

⇨ Visit an archive! You are always welcome at the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, but there are also Area Research Centers across the state. Find out more on our website.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT
Why was the United States so eager to get to the moon before the Soviet Union? Oh right, because of the Cold War! Encourage students to research before and after their topic, too!
- ⇨ It will help them understand their topic.
- ⇨ It will enhance their analysis.
- ⇨ They will be evaluated on it at contests!

BIAS AND BALANCE
Sometimes an author's opinion influences a source—that is not always bad! Make sure students can spot bias and ask, "Why would sources disagree?" Include all sides of an issue in a project.
- ⇨ It allows an opportunity for analysis.
- ⇨ They will be evaluated on it at contests!

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Bibliographies are to historians as lab reports are to scientists—it's how we show our work! Be sure students:
- ⇨ Divide into Primary and Secondary.
- ⇨ Use MLA or Chicago citation styles.
- ⇨ Track sources early and often!
- ⇨ Include how the source helped him/her in their annotation.

PROJECT TYPES
- ⇨ Documentary – 10 minutes
- ⇨ Exhibit – 500 word maximum
- ⇨ Paper – between 1,500 – 2,500 words
- ⇨ Performance – 10 minutes
- ⇨ Website – 1,200 word maximum

Encourage students to get creative and pick something they are good at! It will keep them interested and motivated.

"I enjoy seeing the kids learn something new and being proud of the product they created on their own."

wisconsinhistory.org/nhd

CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS!

"The skills students engage with throughout the process such as organization, time management and communication show it is more than just history."

"Students are challenged to express their knowledge in different formats."

608 – 264 – 6487
Or email at:

historyday@wisconsinhistory.org

"Students see how valuable revision is!"

Collecting, Preserving, and Sharing Stories since 1846
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