

National History Day - History Fair Project

Cambridge US History

Mr. Moretta/Ms. Chitty



All Cambridge students will complete a project using the guidelines of the National History Day competition. Students may choose to complete a research paper, museum exhibit, dramatic presentation, interactive website, or documentary film. Students may complete a project as an individual or as a group; however, groups agree to share the grades and responsibility equally.

Steps to success:

Step 1- Select a topic - Choose a topic that is historically important, relates to the theme of the contest, and one in which you have a genuine interest. Narrow your topic. For example, the Pony Express is an interesting phenomenon that was an innovative approach to transcontinental mail service. However, the topic of the Pony Express in general is very broad. You should consider what made the Pony Express so innovative and explore its legacy to American history to focus your research. Narrowing your topic is essential to a successful History Day project! Turn in project selection form on time.

Step 2 – Research - This is the longest phase of the project, and will continue through November. There are wide varieties of resources available for you to begin your quest. Begin with Secondary Sources. These will provide Historical Context, may assist you in narrowing your topic even further, and guide you toward Primary sources relevant to your topic.

Some helpful hints about Quality Research:

Use credible sources. Experts in the field write credible sources. They are peer reviewed and fact checked. If you have questions about your source's credibility, you need to investigate further! This is especially important when using information collected from the Internet. When evaluating websites keep in mind:

Who wrote, published, and maintains the site? Does it contain copyrighted material? What is the purpose of the site? Does it contain factual information or is the content ONLY opinion? This evaluation process applies to ALL sources you plan on using for you project. **BE CRITICAL! All research will be handwritten...** this is how you avoid plagiarism! Material that you plan to quote and cite may be digital.

Step 3 - Developing an annotated bibliography. You need to develop a system to track and categorize your research. Begin by building an ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY as you research. Include all the relevant information you will need to direct someone else to that source or to complete a bibliographic reference:

Author or Editor, Publisher, Year of publication or copyright, City of publication, Title of book or journal, include issue and volume numbers when applicable, Title of article, Page numbers, Hosts and URL addresses for websites

Annotations should include: What is the purpose of the publication? What types of information that can be found in this source? Is this source a primary or secondary source? How can you tell? How did you or will you use this source?

NOTE: Annotated bibliographies are REQUIRED for ALL projects. Building a quality bibliography as you go will save you time and headaches later!!!

Annotated bibliographies should follow MLA Format. Online sites can help you with this. Your ELA teacher will help also.

Step 4 – Research Analysis Sheets There are two research checkpoints built in to the calendar. On a research checkpoint, you need to turn five research analysis forms. This is an individual assignment. If you are in a group, you need to divide up the sources and turn in individual work. Each sheet needs to contain the appropriate citation and follow the instructions accordingly. The requirements shift from checkpoint 1 to checkpoint 2- read the directions carefully.

Step 5 – Interviews Encourage students to reach out for interviews. Require proof that they have attempted to contact the previously approved expert or person involved in their event.

Step 6 – Final product The final product will be exhibited in its entirety in the history fair. All components, including process papers, and final annotated bibliographies, will be scored.

Important Dates:

Topic Proposal due - 10/4/19

Research and bibliography due - 11/4/19

Interviews due - 11/25/19

Final project due – 1/6/2020

Topic Proposal Form

Name(s):

Due: Friday, October 4th, 2019

Format chosen:

_____ 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.

How does your topic relate to the theme for this year? Breaking Barriers in History