

The Vermont Historical Society Presents

VERMONT HISTORY DAY



TEACHER GUIDEBOOK

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This teacher guidebook is designed to provide an introduction to the History Day program. Experienced History Day Coordinators have selected and developed the strategies and materials included in this guide. Teachers are encouraged to apply the suggestions in this handbook to suit their teaching style and the needs of their students.

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National History Day

Origin

National History Day® (NHD) is a program dedicated to academic rigor in the social studies curriculum for students in grades 6-12. For 50 years, students from all 50 states and various U.S. territories have participated in NHD. The contest began at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio. It has grown to be one of the largest, most successful programs in the country with over a half a million participants annually.

What is National History Day?

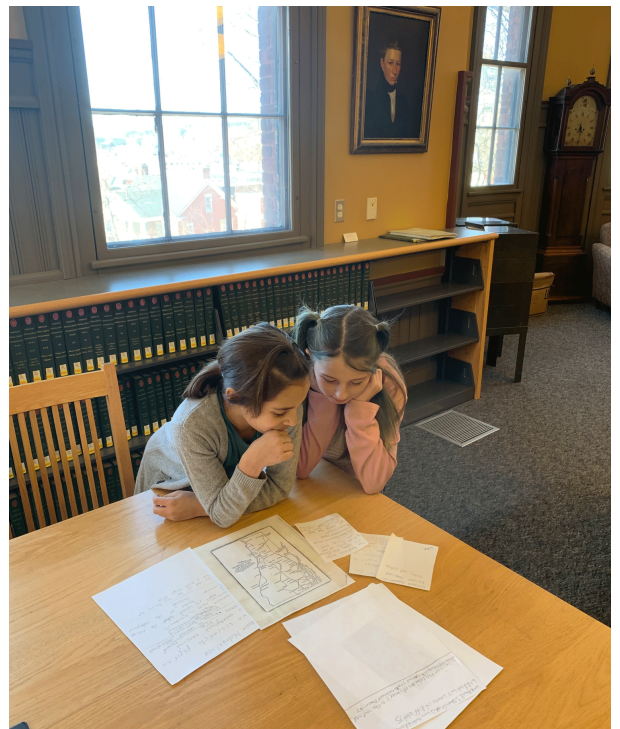
History Day is a performance-based academic program that aligns to NCSS' College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards and English-Language Arts standards. Students hone transferrable skills through the study of history. The program can easily be integrated into classroom curriculums, after school programs, or public library programs.

Project-based Learning

NHD's inquiry-based, student-centered program champions project-based learning. History Day provides an avenue for personalized learning. Critical thinking skills are fostered through historical inquiry and authentic research. Students conduct research online and in libraries, museums, and historical societies.

Student "Choice and Voice"

At its core, History Day is about student "choice and voice." Each year, National History Day selects the annual theme, but students choose their research topic, drive their research, and their project format. History Day provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities to apply learned information through authentic assessment in student products. Working individually, or in small groups (up to 5), students can explore a topic related to Vermont history, US history or world history. Students can present their research as an exhibit, website, documentary, performance or paper.



Vermont History Day

Origin

The Vermont Historical Society became a National History Day affiliate in 1983. Participation in the Vermont History Day (VHD) program has been steadily growing. The benefits of History Day are gathered in anecdotal stories shared by participants, teachers, and parents. One previous student reported:

“Participating in History Day over several years helped me approach large projects and time-management in other classes. I become better at breaking down a big project into smaller tasks.”



What is Vermont History Day?

Vermont students in grades 5 through 12, and homeschool students ages 10 to 18, can participate in the Vermont History Day program. Students investigate various topics in history related to NHD's annual theme, conduct in-depth research, and present the information in a variety of formats. Some students compete in schoolwide showcases and competitions, choosing not to participate in the state contest. Currently, the Vermont Historical Society hosts one culminating statewide contest at St. Michael's College in April. After months of dedicated work, hundreds of students arrive eager to share their final products with contest attendees. At the state contest, students present their claims to local historians, educators, and other professionals who participate as judges. Select qualifiers then go on to represent the state of Vermont at the National Contest on the University of Maryland College Park campus.

Who Can Participate?

Students learn history by "doing history," but they learn best with instruction and guidance. NHD defines a "teacher" as an adult who mentors and supports a student(s) participating in the History Day program. Teachers include public, private, and homeschool teachers, as well as, after school instructors, librarians, and local historians.

Why Teach History Day?

Student Skill Development

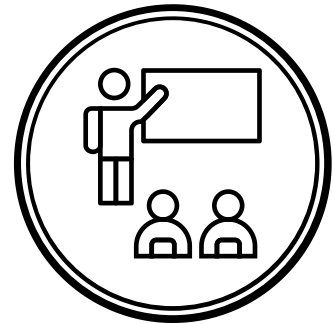
Throughout the process of History Day, students develop and practice skills that are important in their scholarly lives. These skills will also help students meet academic standards. The Vermont History Day program emphasizes fundamental skills like research, note taking, information analysis, and synthesis. Other aspects of the History Day process incorporate time management, group decision-making, project management, and organization skills. Bibliography and citation skills, as well as knowledge of public and academic libraries and other related research resources, are skills that college students will be expected to know. Collectively, these skills enforce college-readiness. After studying a topic, students present information through the creation of a documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website.

The attributes of the program champion student “choice and voice,” in turn tapping into intrinsic motivation. The History Day program is not designed to replicate a content-based curriculum. Instead, students will gain important transferrable skills that can be applied to other classes, subjects, and disciplines while they gather specific information about dates and events as it relates to a topic. While students will become experts regarding the content of a project, the skills learned will help prepare students to achieve at the next level.



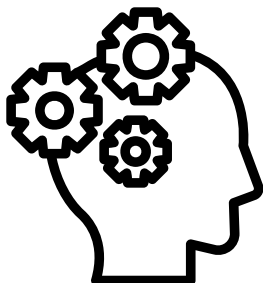
Research

- Note taking
- Developing research questions
- Honing research skills
- Verifying source integrity
- Understanding plagiarism
- Primary vs. secondary sources
- Reading historical documents



Presentation

- Project organization and planning
- Final product planning and design
- Composing a process paper
- Presenting findings to a public audience



Analysis

- Writing thesis statements
- Understanding historical context
- Considering multiple perspectives
- Synthesizing research

NHD and C3 Standards

A National History Day project can be an excellent vehicle for implementing the C3 Framework, which was published in 2013 under the title College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History. Vermont adopted the C3 Framework in 2017.

The framework is guided by:

“a common belief that our democratic republic will not sustain unless students are aware of their changing cultural and physical environments; know the past; read, write, and think deeply; and act in ways that promote the common good.”

College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, p. 5

From developing the right questions to communicating conclusions, a successful National History Day project involves all four dimensions of the Inquiry Arc.

The 4 Dimensions of the C3 Framework

Dimension 1

Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries

Dimension 3

Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence

Dimension 2

Applying Disciplinary Tools and Concepts. Specific objectives are outlined for history in grade bands K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12.

Subject-specific objectives are also outlined for civics, economics, and geography, and in appendices on psychology, sociology, and psychology.

Dimension 4

Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action



Interdisciplinary Learning

English Language Arts - Reading and Writing

• Key Ideas and Details

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

• Craft and Structure

- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

• Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

• Text Types and Purposes

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

Framework for 21st Century Learning

National History Day can help teachers meet Framework for 21st Century Learning standards.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.)
- Use systems thinking
- Make judgements and decisions
- Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs
- Analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view
- Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis
- Identify and ask significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions



Communication

- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral written, and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts
- Use multiple media and technologies and know how to judge their effectiveness as well as assess their impact

Information, Media, and Technology

- Access information efficiently (time) and effectively (source)
- Evaluate information critically and competently
- Use information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand
- Manage the flow of information from a wide variety of sources
- Apply a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information
- Understand both how and why media messages are constructed and for what purposes
- Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors
- Understand and utilize the most appropriate media creation tools, characteristics and conventions
- Use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information

Participation Models

The History Day model is flexible. Teachers and students can participate in a variety of ways.

Class Assignment

History Day is assigned as the major project for a unit, quarter, or semester. Projects usually account for a major project in the overall grade for a quarter or semester. For schools that intend to participate in the competitive cycle, projects are usually completed by mid to late February. Participation in the competition cycle is not a required part of History Day participation.

Home Study

Homeschool students are welcome to participate in History Day. A parent/guardian can serve as a teacher advisor for the project.

Interdisciplinary

Teachers collaborate to build upon the learner outcomes required for a History Day project. Language Arts instructors focus on research and writing skills. Social Studies teachers assist students with topic selection, research, and analysis skills. Library/Media specialists can play an essential role in helping students access research and work with technology.

Extracurricular

History Day can be offered as part of a menu of co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Vermont History Day can be offered as an afterschool program, or in partnership with libraries, and local historical societies.

Enrichment

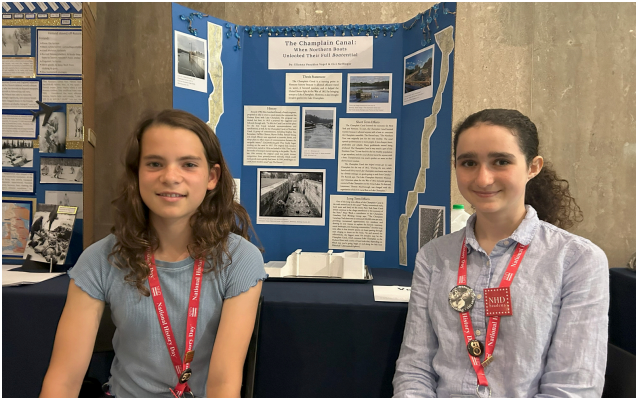
Students who have completed the standard curriculum, or want to substitute an in-depth research assignment for other assignments, participate in History Day as an optional project for which students can get classroom credit. A teacher or other school staff can serve as advisor.

Independent Pathway

If students are enrolled in a public, private, or alternative school that does NOT participate in History Day, they can still participate on their own. It may meet the requirements of an independent study or pathway to graduation. A teacher or parent/guardian can serve as the advisor.

Contest Levels

Competitions are an optional part of the National History Day program in which most History Day schools choose to participate. Entering a project in a Vermont History Day contest is an opportunity for students to become the expert by sharing their work with peers, parents, and community members. As students advance through various levels of competition, they are allowed and encouraged to revise and improve their work.



School-level Showcase or Contest

School-level contests are a great way to recognize student achievement. Schools coordinate their own contests and recruit their own judges from the community. Teachers who are interested in this option, but would like guidance and/or resources, please reach out to Vermont History Day coordinators for more information.

State Contest

The state contest, Vermont History Day, currently takes place at St. Michael's College in Colchester. Student entries from all across the state are eligible. Contest registration opens in early February and ends mid-March. Please refer to this year's calendar for specific dates. Late entries will not be accepted. More specific information about the Vermont History Day contest itself is available on the Vermont History Explorer website, housed under the Educator tab.

National Contest

The National Contest takes place in mid-June at the University of Maryland in College Park, just outside of Washington D.C. The top two entries in each category/division can represent Vermont at the contest.

Sample Timelines

There is no required timeline for History Day participation. If competing, most teachers begin with the Vermont History Day registration date and plot backwards.

Fall 	Kick-Off	Schools most commonly kick-off the program in the fall by beginning to introduce foundational skills that will be further practiced throughout the History Day program. Some schools dedicate one History Day a week until they reach contest season. Others carve out a focused curriculum block between 2-3 months.
	Theme & Topic	Discussions of the annual theme, topic exploration, and selection usually begin soon after the kick-off. Teachers usually give their students time to explore a variety of topics. Determining available resources, and ensuring that there are enough, before finalizing a topic has been proven to be crucial to student investment and success.
	Research & Analysis	After selecting topics, the research process begins. Research is foundational to the project. Historical quality comprises 80% of judging criteria for the state contest. Depending on schedules and pacing, this timeline varies widely based on how much time a teacher is spending on the project and program entry point. Students should begin with secondary sources to get an overall view of their topic and understand how it changed history before looking for primary sources.
Winter 	Product Creation	The actual process of creating the final product together may not take place until late January or February. Teachers often encourage their students to focus on research, analysis, writing, and project planning before beginning their final product.
	Contest Preparation	While not always required for school showcases or contests, National History Day requires that students create an annotated bibliography and process paper for all other levels of competition. Therefore, Vermont History Day participants are required to submit process papers and bibliographies by March prior to the contest. Visit the Vermont History Day page on Vermont History Explorer for exact submission dates.
	School Showcase or Contest	Many school contests take place in February or early March. Some teachers time school events so that their students can receive feedback and improve their projects before the Vermont History Day contest.
Spring	State Contest	Vermont History Day takes place in early April. Visit the Vermont History Day page on Vermont History Explorer for exact submission dates.

Sample Timelines



Every learning environment presents its own structural benefits and constraints. As the History Day program teacher, you know what your needs are given your curriculum and academic timeline.

If you work within a school, will you need special permission from your administration? Have you decided whether you are working independently or as a part of an interdisciplinary team? If you are working as a team, who is on board? Tap into the skillsets of your ELA teachers, Library/Digital Media Specialists, or Arts/Performing Arts Teachers.

12 Week History Day Schedule Example

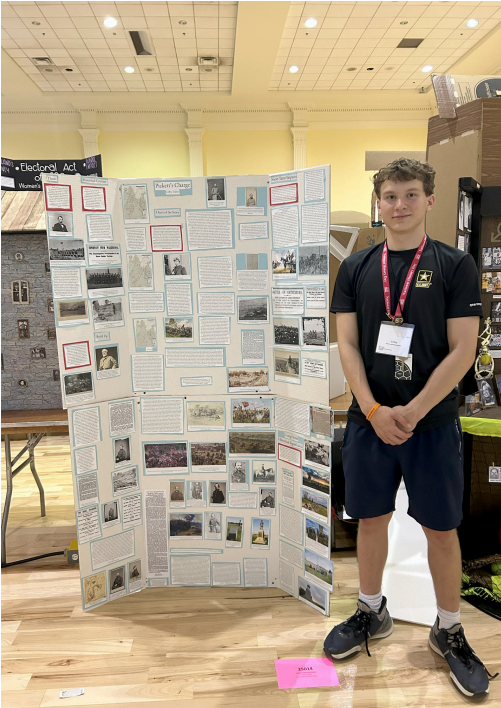
Week 1	• Introduction ◦ Structural Components ◦ Annual Theme
Week 2	• Topic Selection ◦ Too broad? Too focused? ◦ Are there enough diverse sources?
Weeks 3-7	• Primary/Secondary Sources Lesson • Research • Thesis Development and Honing
Weeks 8-9	• Project Creation
Weeks 10-12	• Complete Process Paper • Complete Annotated Bibliography • Editing and Completing Final Product
State Contest (optional)	• Vermont History Day takes place in early April.

Sample Timelines

7 Week Schedule Example - Interdisciplinary (February break considered)

January 3rd week	• General ◦ Introduction to History Day structure and annual theme • Social Studies/History ◦ Topic Selection ◦ Developing a research question ◦ Defining “Historic Context” ◦ Primary/Secondary sources ▪ Location of sources, number required, assessing overall quality
January 4th week	• English Language Arts (ELA) ◦ Developing supporting/organizing questions ◦ Finding Sources ◦ Introduction to annotated bibliography (MLA) ◦ Complete <i>Feasibility Report</i> (homework) ▪ states topic ▪ overarching research question • supporting questions ▪ draft of bibliography (sources identified as useful)
February 1st week	• ELA ◦ Notetaking strategies during research ◦ Conducting research • Social Studies/History ◦ Locating outside research (university libraries, special collections, local historical societies, historians)
February 2nd week	• ELA ◦ Conducting research • Social Studies/History ◦ Final product discussion and planning ▪ organization - outline, storyboarding, mock-up
February 3rd week	• ELA ◦ Conducting research • Social Studies/History ◦ Process paper
March 1-2 week	• ELA ◦ Write title page, finalize process paper and annotated bibliography • Social Studies/History ◦ Complete final product ◦ Practice judge interviews using mock questions

Teacher FAQs



Why do I need to enroll as a teacher?

When you enroll, it makes sure we know that you are interested or participating in History Day this year. You will get important mailings and emails about the competition, deadlines, and alerts about new and useful resources. You can enroll online using the [Teacher Form](#).

When should I start in the classroom?

The most important factor in deciding when to start is knowing the deadline that projects will need to be completed. If competing, work backwards from the state registration date. If you are holding a school showcase or competition, you may like to provide time for students to revise their projects before the state competition. From this point, you can work backwards and plot out your year. In general, History Day recommends that you allow at least 10 weeks for students to complete a project.

How many days a week should I work on History Day?

The amount of time dedicated to History Day will vary due to a variety of factors. An afterschool program will have a different plan than that of a classroom. A classroom experience will depend on the balance of in-class and out-of-class work that is assigned. Allowing for variances in the calendar like assemblies and vacations, some teachers choose to have one “History Day” a week. Others decide to dedicate 1-2 months of focused work. Teachers often report that they spend more time as the final deadline approaches.

Should History Day be done in-class or outside of school?

There are advantages and disadvantages to offering History Day as a classroom project versus an afterschool option. As an optional project, you can offer this opportunity to students without adjusting curriculum. However, students are more likely to lose interest and not complete the project without deadlines. It's not impossible to create a robust afterschool program, however. It just requires planning.

Many participating schools offer History Day as a comprehensive component of curriculum. Teachers can use skill-building activities and deadlines for key parts of the process, assigning points along the way. Students do not have to participate in competitions, but it's great if they can participate in a school showcase.

Are teachers required to offer students all five project categories?

Teachers may offer all five, limit category choice, or add non-competitive modified or additional categories to best fit their classroom. National History Day categories include: paper, website, documentary, performance, and exhibit.

Teacher Recommendations

Connect with VHD Coordinators

The History Day staff at the Vermont Historical Society will be there to help you throughout the process. Make sure to let them know that you are participating by filling out the online [Teacher Form](#).

Teachers Don't Have to Be an Expert on Every Topic

Many teachers initially feel overwhelmed by the prospect of having students researching topics with which they may be unfamiliar. Remember that you don't have to be the content expert on each of your students' topics. You are the expert in the process and can guide them to where they might find those answers.

Trusting Teachers

History Day can be adapted to suit your needs and the needs of your students. Feel free to adapt the program to suit specific classroom needs - like limiting group size, category options, or restricting topic choice to the time period covered in your class. Initially, we encourage teachers to find an entrance point that matches their own comfort level. It is not uncommon that teachers will alter their approach as they become more experienced within the program.

Build Your Support Network

In addition to the History Day staff, it's useful to begin building your support network in the school. Your English or Language Arts (ELA) teacher may be able to assist with aspects of writing thesis statements or creating bibliographies. Your librarian or media specialist may be able to support the research process. Connecting with community or university libraries will help your students to access even more research resources. When it comes time to hold a school showcase, members of the PTO, school board, or local historical societies can be great resources.

Know and Plan for VHD Deadlines

By enrolling and connecting with the History Day staff, you will receive program reminders via email. Additionally, all important contest related deadlines are posted on the Vermont History Day page on Vermont History Explorer. Keep these dates in mind as you plan your History Day calendar. It is important that students develop responsibility, and that includes submitting required work by registration deadlines. Rare exceptions will be made, only when there are extenuating circumstances.

Teacher Recommendations

Skill-Building and Scaffolding

There are many ways to scaffold important lessons that will support the success of the History Day program in your classroom. Before you even introduce the project, ask yourself: “What important skills am I already teaching that can support students as they approach their History day projects? What complex skills could I break into smaller chunks? Do my students have an introduction to the foundational skills necessary to feel successful?”

Divide the Project into Parts

Don’t forget that this may be the first time your students have embarked on a research project of this size. By dividing the project into smaller parts, helping them to meet the smaller deadlines along the way, and awarding points for the process – not just the final project – you will help them to build time and project management skills.

Take the Time Needed

Students may be excited and motivated by the possibility of creating their final product, but there are several vital steps along the way that serve to strengthen their project. Allow appropriate time for students to fully understand the theme, explore topics, and conduct ample research. Though presentation is important, more emphasis is placed upon historic quality.

Student Outcomes Will Vary

While the competition is an exciting aspect of History Day, the ultimate goal is academic growth. Not all students will qualify for the National Contest or win a Special Prize. How will you help your students understand the value of the skills they’ve gained as historians and scholars, perhaps especially if they don’t win?

Keep Parents Informed and Involved

Your students could be dedicating a tremendous amount of time to their History Day projects. How will you keep parents “looped-in” to their child’s work? Pass along information like important deadlines, especially if students will be working outside of the classroom. Additionally, are there other ways in which parents can support the program, like acting as mentors, or leading a fundraiser for student registration/travel costs?

Teacher Planning Template (Page 1)

We suggest that you think about the following questions about how you plan to implement History Day before starting!

IMPLEMENTATION MODEL

My current plan for implementing History Day is:

- ☐ Voluntary club/after school
- ☐ Entire grade/class
- ☐ Select student enrichment (GT, etc.)

TEACHER ENROLLMENT

am I enrolled for History Day this year?

I will receive important information about Vermont History Day coordinators via email)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

PROGRAM BENEFITS

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

My administration knows about plans for History Day this year.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I plan to build their support by:

SCHOOL SUPPORT

Other staff at my school with whom I'd like to collaborate:

- ☐ English Language Arts
- ☐ Media Specialist/Library
- ☐ Performance/Theater
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Other: _____

I plan to ask them:

WEBSITE

Something I want to explore further on the VHD page on Vermont History Explorer is:

Something I want to explore further on the NHD website is:

PARENT/GUARDIAN

My plan for letting parents/guardians know about the History Day project is:
(blog, email, letter, conferences, etc.)

Teacher Planning Template - Page 2

We suggest that you think about the following questions about how you plan to implement History Day before starting!

TOPIC CHOICE

When picking topics, students will have:

- ☐ Will have NO LIMIT on topic choice
- ☐ Will be limited to:

DUPLICATE TOPICS

What are my thoughts on duplicate topics for students in the same class?

- ☐ Yes - duplicate topics is fine
- ☐ No - I'd prefer there are no duplicates

GROUP SIZE

History Day allows groups of up to five.
Our maximum group size will be:

GROUP MEMBERS

In selecting groups, students may:

- ☐ work with members outside of their class period
- ☐ may not work with members outside of their class period

CATEGORY

Students may create projects in the following categories:

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Exhibit
- ☐ Documentary
- ☐ Performance
- ☐ Website

SCHOOL CONTEST/SHOWCASE

School contests/showcases are great ways to show off your students' hard work. It's can also provide students with feedback before the state contest. A possible timeframe for a school contest/showcase:

STATE CONTEST

I want my students to have the option to participate in the National History Day competition cycle.

- ☐ Yes!
- ☐ No, maybe next year.

IMPORTANT VHD DATES

Some important dates & deadlines include:

VHD Registration Opens: _____

Student Research Days: _____

Student Registration Ends: _____

Submission Deadline: _____

VHD Contest Date: _____

NHD Contest Dates: _____

Parent/Guardian Recommendations

Introduction to the Project

Give parents/guardians a heads up about History Day before it begins. Share the introductory video with them. Let parents/guardians know about the theme. Consider hosting a parent kick-off at school. Let them know that:

- **History Day is worth the work.** You've chosen to bring History Day into your classroom because it meets state standards and teaches valuable college and career skills. Topic and category choice empowers students and motivates learning. Sure, it's work, but it's worth it!
- **History Day can extend beyond the classroom.** 500+ Vermont students participate in History Day each year, with only a portion competing in the state contest. Some schools offer a student showcase, while others host school competitions. Many parents were surprised at the amount of time their student invested into this project!

Project Steps and Deadlines

This may be the first time their student is completing a project as large in scale as History Day. Parents/guardians want to know the steps in the process and clear deadlines for completion.

- Consider creating your own timeline of steps that parents/guardians can review with their student.

A Parent/Guardian's Role

Parents/Guardians want to support their child, but also don't want to cross the line. Remind them that doing well with History Day doesn't mean spending a lot of money. Let them know not only the classroom expectations, but also direct them to the complete [NHD Contest Rule Book](#). Refer to the [Parent/Guardian FAQ](#) document which outlines the best ways for them to help guide students through the process, while making sure the project remains their own.

Where to Get Help

Many parents/guardians didn't feel that they knew who to contact when they had questions. Most importantly, parents said they didn't know where to find resources. Direct the to the Vermont History Day page, or to your own resources.

Communication

Parents appreciate the regular flow of communication via newsletter, email, or other format. They also recognize that their own student may be the missing link in effective communication, so make sure that parents/guardians have other ways to access this information. Communicate contest information directly to parents/guardians, too, including general event schedules, student presentation times, and other event logistics.

Student FAQs



Do I have to participate in History Day competitions?

No. The National History Day program does not require students to participate in the competitive aspect of the project. Presenting the project and interviewing with judges, however, is a valuable experience. Sharing a project is the culminating activity that makes NHD an authentic learning experience and demonstrates real student achievement. Even without the competition, however, there are many fundamental skills that students will learn by participating in History Day.

As a History Day teacher, you can structure the competitive aspect of the program in the way that best suits your classroom. Even if students are not required to participate in the competition, many teachers find it beneficial to have all their students participate in a school-level showcase of their work.



How many students can be in my group?

National History Day rules say that groups can be no larger than five students. Teachers will determine if they are setting a different maximum group size at their school. Many teachers find that groups of two or three are more effective in keeping students accountable for their work. Some teachers make exceptions to this rule for performances, which may benefit from more group members. Use your best judgement.



When have I found enough sources?

There's no magic number of sources that students have to find for History Day. The number of sources out there is going to depend on the topic. Once students have met the guidelines that their teacher has set, they should look at their research questions. If students feel like they are missing answers, they probably need to do more research. As historians, students will soon realize that there is ALWAYS more research that they can do.

An important question to ask students who think they have "done enough research" is to look at the balance of photo and non-photo primary sources. Text-based primary sources offer researchers a deeper level of understanding about their topic. Judges will be looking to see if students looked at primary sources "beyond photos."

Student FAQs

What does the judging sheet mean by “wide research” and “multiple perspectives”?

History Day judges want to see that students have used a wide variety of sources in their research (books, websites, photographs, interviews, etc.). They also want to see that students have considered multiple points of view. Looking at a topic from only one perspective can lead to imbalance in the project.



What if I cannot fill all the holes in my research or get all of my research questions answered?

Students should figure out the questions they need to answer and the types of information they still need. Encourage them to bring these questions to a librarian or another mentor. Encourage them to ask for help!



What do I do because the sources I'm finding are all saying the same thing?

Some students say they reach a point in their research where “all their sources keep saying the same thing.” Most of the time, this happens to students who are only doing research online and relying solely on Google. There may be a lot of websites out there about their topic, but they often aren't very detailed. Taking their research in a different direction – like books or primary sources – will likely provide a deeper level of analysis and different information than what they found online.

