

Introducing...



NATIONAL HISTORY DAY!

Almost everything you need to know
to get started on your History Day adventure.

Youth Division Special Guide

Megan Wood
National History Day in Ohio
2007-2008

Adapted from "Introducing National History Day" from National History Day in Minnesota

National History Day in Ohio is a program of the Ohio Historical Society
and funded in part by Honda of America, Mfg., Inc., Cargill, and Ohio AEP and is an affiliate of National History Day

Table of Contents

The information in this guide is divided into two parts:

1.) Research (Noun. Scholarly investigation or inquiry)

Research is the most important part of creating a History Day entry. Historians depend on research the same way detectives need clues. Unlike detectives, however, History Day participants get to choose the “case” they will work on when they select their topics.

Topic Selection:

Selecting a Topic
Narrowing your Topic



Finding and Organizing Information:

Research Strategy
Sample Note Cards
Research Sources
 Secondary Sources
 Primary Sources
Finding Sources

The Process Paper

2.) Presentation (Noun. A creative demonstration of ideas and information)

Once you have completed your research you need to put together your exhibit. These ideas will help you get started, but use your imagination to make your exhibit stand out! Have fun and be creative!

Part One: RESEARCH

Topic Selection

Selecting a Topic

Here are some questions to think about when you select a topic to research:

- Does it fit the theme for the year?
- Does the topic interest you? (Remember, you will spend a lot of time researching this topic.)
- Can you find sources related to the topic?
- Why is this topic important in history? (What will people learn from your presentation?)

Narrowing your Topic

A good way to choose a topic is to start with a general area of history you find interesting. This might be information you read about in your textbook or something related to family history. Once you define your interest, the next step is to narrow your general ideas into a more focused topic.



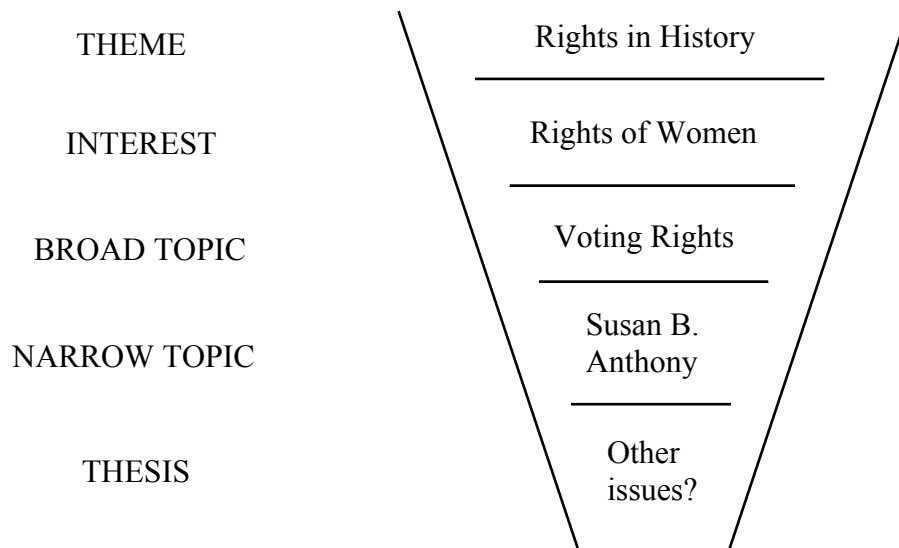
Here is an example for the theme “Rights and Responsibilities.” Your group is interested in women’s history, but realizes that this topic needs to be narrowed down. Because it is an election year you decide to research “Women’s Voting Rights.” However, this topic is still too broad because you have not defined the time and place for your study.

At this point one of your group members remembered that the silver dollar she saw in her aunt’s coin collection had a picture of Susan B. Anthony. By making Susan B. Anthony part of your topic you can focus on the work of one woman who worked for women's right to vote.



As you work on this topic you may come up with other ideas like comparing Susan B. Anthony with another woman activist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

This chart summarizes the topic selection process:



Finding and Organizing Information

Research Strategy

As you start to gather information it is important to have a **research strategy**. A good research strategy has two parts:

1. Finding sources of information

- Textbooks
- Encyclopedias
- Books from school library
- Interviews
- Internet

Go to:

- City or college libraries
- Historical Societies
- Archives

2. Keeping track of notes and sources

Every time you get information from a book or other source, write down the bibliographic information. What's that?

- Author
- Title
- Publication date
- Publisher
- Publisher location
- Page numbers

This will help you keep track of the information that will be used on your exhibit.

Sample Note Cards

Here are examples of index cards for a bibliographic entry and research notes about the Ohio National Guard's participation in the Civil War.

You can buy index cards at office supply stores or discount stores. Look for the larger sized cards (5 inches x 8 inches) with lines for writing. You can buy more than one color to help keep your cards organized.

Bibliography Card

Bibliography	Secondary Source	Book
<p>Freedman, Russell. <i>The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane With Original Photos by Wilbur and Orville Wright</i>. New York: Holiday House.</p> <p>This book gave a history and background on the Wright Brothers. It includes pictures from the Smithsonian of the first flight and of the telegram Orville sent to his father back in Dayton about the first flight.</p> <p>Important pages: 74-79</p>		

Bibliographic info!

What you can find in the source!

Once you have this bibliographic info, you can also write down quotes or information you want to use on your exhibit.

Note Card

The first flight with an airplane	Freedman, 77
<p>The Wright Brothers tried several flights on the windy December morning, taking turns flying the plane.</p> <p>Their father had given Orville and Wilbur a dollar to send a telegram if they had a successful flight. The Brothers sent the telegram from the Weather Bureau at Kitty Hawk that read:</p> <p>“Success four flights thursday morning all again twenty one mile wind started from Level with engine power alone average speed through air thirty one miles longest 57 seconds inform Press home Christmas.”</p>	

Author's Last Name and Page #

Research Sources

Historians try to find many different sources to help them understand why historical events are important. You will have to separate your bibliography into **primary** and **secondary** sources. What is the difference between primary and secondary sources?

Primary Sources

Primary sources are important because they:

- were written or produced in the time period you are studying.
- are first-hand accounts of historic events.
- are later stories told by people who were there during the event.

Examples of primary sources include:

Diaries	Manuscript collections
Autobiographies	Newspapers from the era
Government records	Letters
Photographs	Music of the era
Interviews with participants	Historic Objects

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are usually books or articles by an author who talks about why he or she thinks the topic is important in history based on primary sources.

The writer is not an eyewitness to, or a participant in, the historic event.

Secondary sources are useful because they provide important background information about your topic. Look at the notes on the bottom of pages or in the back of the book. They will help you find other sources that the author also used.

Examples of secondary sources:

Biographies	Books about the topic
Encyclopedias	Articles about the topic
History textbooks	Media documentaries
Interviews with scholars	

History In your Life:

If your Grandma tells you a story about witnessing the Xenia Tornado in 1974, she's a **primary** source! Quick, get your notebook or tape recorder.

When you tell your friends what your grandmother told you, you're a **secondary** source!

Finding Sources

Start at your school or community library! Encyclopedias will have good information to start out with. It is important to find other sources of information and not depend on encyclopedias. Ask your **Librarian or Media Specialist** for help. Librarians and media specialists are professional and are very helpful in doing research.

You will also discover that the first few books you find will also help you in your search.

Once you have collected the basic information and sources on your topic you will be looking for primary sources. Here are some places to go:

Municipal and College Libraries

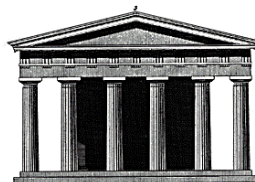
- Librarians
- Newspapers
- Scholarly Journals



If you cannot checkout books be sure to bring money for copying!

Historical Societies

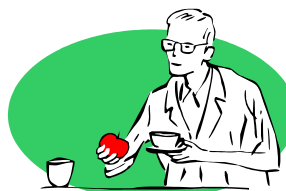
- Letters
- Diaries
- Photographs



There may be special rules on how you may use these materials. Call your local historical society to check on rules and hours!

Interviews

Do you have grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, or family friends that were around during the time of your topic? Interview them! Write your questions in advance and be prepared to take notes or record the interview.



The Process Paper

History Day entries include a process paper. This paper has four sections:

1. Explain how you choose your topic.
2. Explain how you did your research: What libraries did you go to? Who did you talk to about your project?
3. Explain how you created your exhibit: How did you organize it? Did you choose your colors for a reason? How did you decide on your pictures?
4. Explain how your project relates to the theme.

Title Page

The title page includes:

1. The title of your exhibit
2. The name(s) of the student(s)
3. Youth Exhibit Division

A good title tells the audience what your exhibit is about and can grab their attention.

For example, a title for an entry about the Wright Brothers work on creating the first successful airplane could be:

The Invention of Flight: The Wright Brothers and the Innovation of the Airplane

This title explains the topic and is creative.

Annotated Bibliography

A **bibliography** is an alphabetized list of the sources you used. An **annotated bibliography** not only lists the sources, but also gives a short description of the source and how you used it in your entry. A History Day bibliography should be separated in to **primary** and **secondary sources**.

Use your note cards to create your annotated bibliography.

Freedman, Russell. *The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane With Original Photos by Wilbur and Orville Wright*. New York: Holiday House.

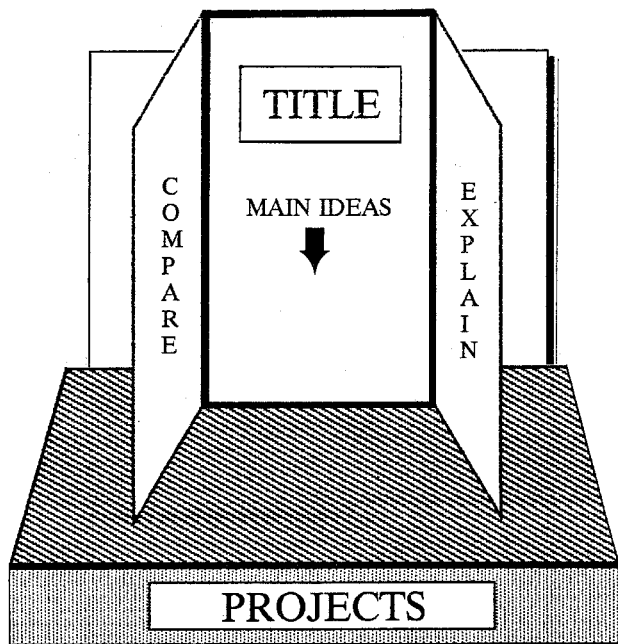
This book provides information and photos on the historic first flight by Orville and Wilbur Wright. It includes pictures taken by the Wright Brothers and the telegram they sent to their father after four successful flights on the beach at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

Part Two: PRESENTATION

The Rule Book

Every student participating in History Day should read the National History Day in Ohio Youth Exhibit Division pamphlet for specific guidelines and rules for creating a project. It can be found online at www.ohiohistory.org/historyday.

Making Your Exhibit



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 be interesting to look at and explain your topic.

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.

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.

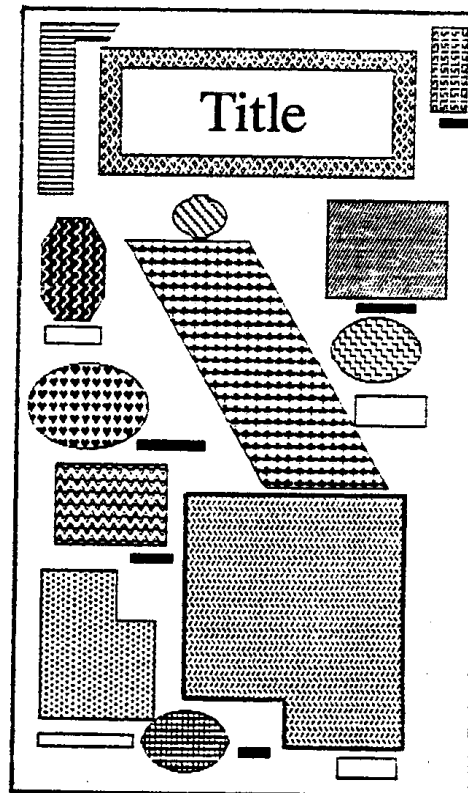
Photographs and written materials will also stand out more for the viewer if you put them on backgrounds as well

EXHIBIT DESIGN

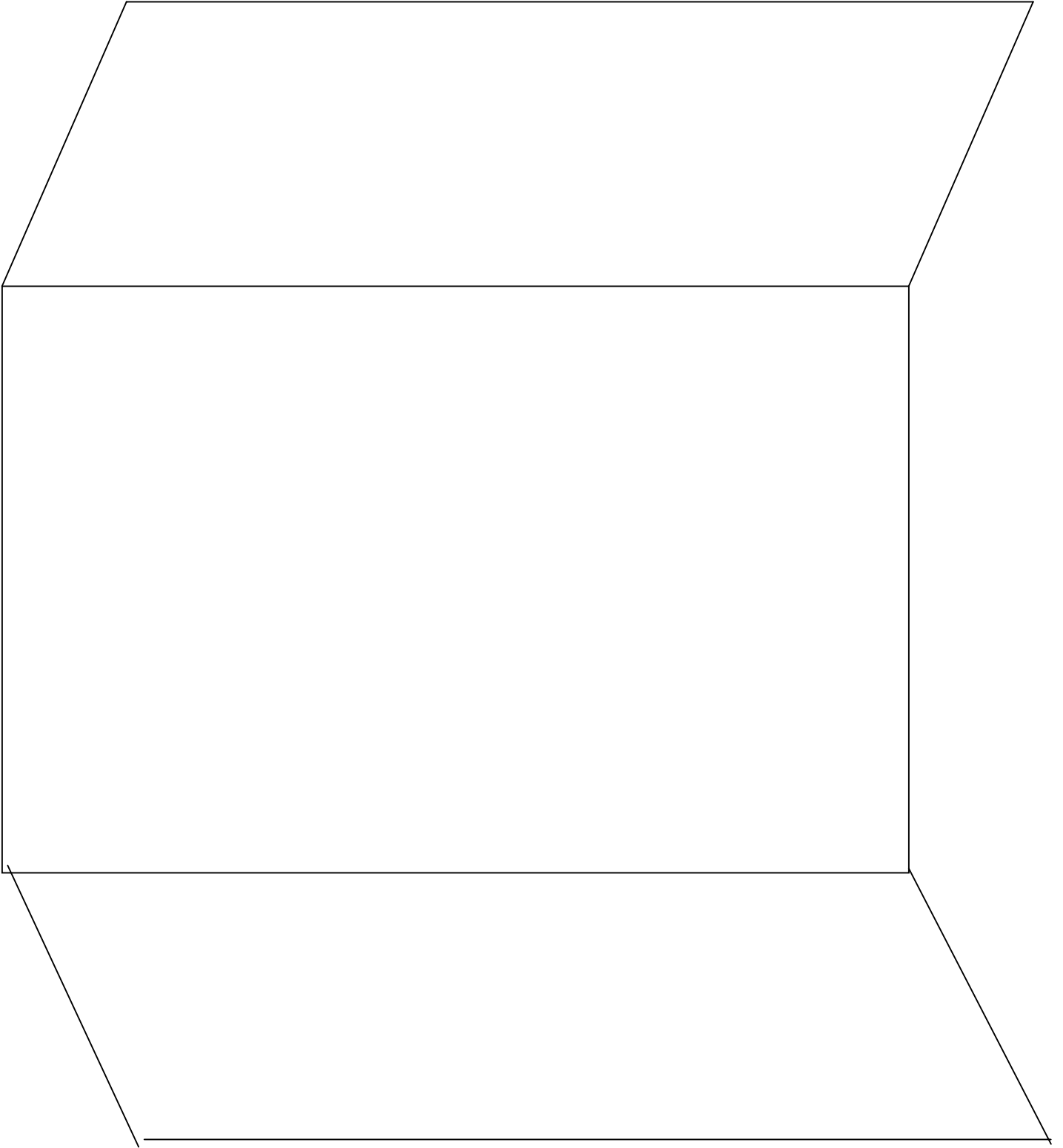
Your exhibit should tell a story about your topic and also be organized. Use pictures, titles, and text neatly arranged to create a project that's easy to look at and understand!

It is easy to put too much on your exhibit but try to choose the most important information.

*Be Careful
of Clutter!*



1



¹ Blank exhibit for outlining