

Judging Instructions:

WEB SITES

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a judge for the National History Day (NHD) Program. You will be judging the web site category. Some of our state's finest young historians have labored for months preparing their entries and are eager to share their outstanding historical research and conclusions with you.

PURPOSE OF JUDGING

The goal of NHD is to provide young people with a high-quality educational experience—whether or not they win a prize. Fair and effective judging is essential. Your evaluations are important to the students who advance to the next round, since your comments help them revise their entries. Most students, however, will not advance, and your feedback is even more important for them, since it is the only thing that they will take home. It is critical that your interactions with the students be fair, helpful, and positive. Your spoken and written comments are fundamental to making the History Day contest a learning process.

JUDGING PROCESS

NHD relies on consensus judging. That means that instead of giving entries numeric scores, you will be ranking them. You will be assigned to a team of 2 or 3 judges, one of whom will be designated the captain. It is important that everyone on your team agrees on the overall rankings of the entries you judge.

Unlike most other categories, web site judging is accomplished largely before the contest. The web site category is NOT a national category. Students who participate may proceed to the state competition and become state medalists, but they will not be eligible to attend the national contest in June.

Before the Contest

Read the judging instructions and theme information carefully. You will receive a judging packet which includes CD-Rs containing web sites, hard copies of the pages that make up each web site, process papers and annotated bibliographies for each project, and evaluation forms. Explore each web site and write preliminary comments on the evaluation forms and print-outs, which will be returned

to students. See the sections below entitled, "Evaluating Entries" and "Writing Comments."

If possible, meet with your other team members before the contest to discuss the web sites, review the comments you have written and reach a preliminary consensus about rankings. It is usually easiest to start by deciding which entries to eliminate. It may also be very clear that certain entries stand out as the best, although it usually takes some compromising to achieve consensus on how to rank the top entries. Be sure to note any rule violations and decide how that should affect your rankings. Your contest coordinator will provide you with information about how your contest handles web site judging.

Orientation

Attend the judges' orientation at the contest. The coordinator will go over the judging process in more detail and provide you with other important information. You will receive a judging packet that includes a schedule of student interviews for your team.

Judging

A few minutes before judging is scheduled to begin, go to the web site interview room. (Your contest coordinator may provide extra time for discussion before interviews begin.)

Interviews are scheduled at 15-minute intervals. Only the student being interviewed is allowed in the room with the judges. While you may discuss any aspect of the web site, be sure to use the interview to clarify any questions you have about the research or any possible rule violations. Let the door monitor know when you are ready for the next student. Please keep to the schedule.

After Interviewing All the Students

After all the interviews, return to the judges' room or contest headquarters. Your first task will be to determine if the interviews have changed your preliminary rankings. As with other categories, the web site should stand on its own; interviews should only affect the rankings if you have discovered a rule violation or if the interview helped clear up a misunderstanding you had. The team captain should then fill out the judges' ranking form, which should be

WEB SITES

signed by all the judges on your team. Double-check that you have completely filled out the evaluation forms. You also should consider whether the written materials—the process paper and the bibliography—are clear, organized, and well done. Do not be carried away by glitz; simpler is often better. Conversely, do not discount an entry or assume students had outside assistance simply because a web site is of high visual and production quality; many students achieve both superior production quality and superior historical quality.

RULES COMPLIANCE

There is no specific deduction for rule violations, but be sure that all of the judges note them on the evaluation forms. Keep these principles in mind when you are deciding how to handle rule violations:

- Major violations are those which give an entry a substantial advantage over other entries. These include plagiarism, reusing an entry from a previous year, or having unauthorized outside assistance. At all levels of the contest, only plagiarism and reusing an entry should result in disqualification, while other major violations should result in lower rankings. If you do have an entry that you believe should be disqualified, inform the contest coordinator and allow the coordinator to handle it.
- Minor violations are those which can be easily remedied and which do not confer a competitive advantage. These include using the wrong file name on the CD-R, putting the school name on the home page, exceeding the file size limit solely because of a failure to compress multimedia or reduce image resolutions, using inconsistent citation formats, etc. Minor violations can be treated with some leniency, especially at the local level, where judges may choose to simply note them without imposing a penalty. At the state level, enforcement of the rules should be stricter, since students should be familiar with the rules and any transgressions should have been caught at the local level. At all levels, if two entries are otherwise equal in quality, the entry with fewer violations should be rated more highly.

OVERALL RATING

All judges on a team must give the same overall rating for a particular entry. Additionally, the overall rating should be consistent with how you rated the entry on each of the criteria above. Students will not understand why you rated them as good overall if most of the checkmarks on their comment sheets are in the excellent range.

WRITING COMMENTS

In addition to rating each of the areas on the evaluation form, you must write comments. The evaluation forms are a teaching tool, and the comment section allows you to explain to students in a constructive way the ratings they earned and suggest how they might improve their web sites for the next level of the contest or how to do better next time. You must write positive and constructive comments.

Tips for Writing Comments

- Be positive. Find something to praise. Most of the students have worked hard on their entries, and you want to encourage them to try again.
- You do need to point out any major flaws in an entry, but couch your criticisms in positive terms, such as:
“You might think about doing X this way...”
“Another source you might find helpful is...”
“A simpler background (or fewer decorative animations, etc.) would make your site more visually appealing.”
“Having a similar layout on each page of your site would make it easier for your audience to navigate.”
“Adding an introduction that includes your thesis and main points would help your viewers understand the intent and structure of your web site.”
“It was clear from the interview that you understood the historical significance of your topic, but you need to convey that in your web site.”

GENERAL RULES

These are the rules to which students must adhere in developing their entries:

Annual Theme

An entry must be clearly related to the annual theme and explain the topic's significance in history.

Interpretation:

- Entries that do not relate to the theme at all should not win, since adherence to the theme counts 20% in judging.
- Students will sometimes stretch the boundaries of the theme in order to pursue a topic that particularly interests them. An example is a student doing “Pickett's Migration at the Battle of Gettysburg” for the theme “Migration in History.” If a topic is only tangentially related to the theme, judges should take that into account when evaluating the entry.

WEB SITES

Here is a copy of the Evaluation Form you will use:

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

WEB SITE

JUDGING CRITERIA <small>(Judging Criteria are explained in the <i>Student Contest Guide</i>)</small>	EVALUATION
---	------------

COMMENTS

- Strengths

Historical Quality (60%)									
• Entry is historically accurate									
• Shows analysis and interpretation									
• Places topic in historical context									
• Shows wide research									
• Uses available primary sources									
• Research is balanced									

Relation to Theme (20%)									
• Clearly relates topic to theme									
• Demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions.									

Clarity of Presentation (20%)									
• Web Site, written material is original, clear, appropriate, organized, articulate									
• Web Site has visual impact, uses multimedia effectively, actively involves viewer									

Rules Compliance	Yes	No
• Maintains word limit (1200 words)		
• Maintains size limit (50 MB)		
• Multimedia clips maintain time limit: (45 seconds)		
• Includes annotated bibliography		
• Others:		

WEB SITES

- If an entry is merely descriptive and does not analyze the topic's causes and consequences, the judges should take that into consideration when ranking it.
- While entries should be clearly related to the annual theme, they often do not need to address every aspect of the theme. For the 2004 theme, "Exploration, Encounter, Exchange," students could examine exploration OR encounter OR exchange; they did not have to include all three. The 1997 theme, "Triumph and Tragedy," presented a different challenge. Triumph and tragedy are often intertwined: what appears to be a triumph from one perspective might look like a tragedy from another. Since students are to consider all appropriate perspectives, most entries that year addressed BOTH triumph and tragedy. In a few cases, however, it was acceptable to focus on one OR the other, rather than both.

Contest Participation

Students may participate in the research, preparation, and presentation of only one entry each year.

Individual Entries

Group entries are not permitted in the web site category. A web site must be the work of only one student.

Development Requirements

Entries submitted for competition must be researched and developed during the current contest year that begins following the national contest each June. Revising or reusing an entry from a previous year—whether a student's own or another student's—is unacceptable and will result in disqualification.

Construction of Entry

Students are responsible for the research, design, and creation of their own entries. They may receive help and advice from teachers and parents on the mechanical aspects of creating their entries: (1) typing the process paper and other written materials; (2) guidance from their teachers as they research and analyze the material, but their conclusions must be their own; (3) photographs and slides may be commercially processed.

Interpretation:

- Students entering as individuals should do all of their research themselves and not share research or bibliographies with other students. In cases where students have shared research with other entrants, it is appropriate for the judges to reduce their final ranking.

- Students may receive reasonable help from adults on the mechanical aspects of creating their entries. Nonetheless, students should do as much of the mechanical work as possible.
- The intellectual aspects of the production, such as the actual composition of text and the web site design, must be the student's own work.
- It is up to the judges to decide, when appraising an entry, if adult assistance has exceeded acceptable levels and given the students an unfair advantage over others.
- Advice and guidance is encouraged and acceptable.

Discussion with Judges

Students should be prepared to answer judges' questions about the content and development of their entries, but they may not give a formal, prepared introduction, narration, or conclusion.

Costumes

Students in the web site category are not permitted to wear costumes that are related to their topic during judging.

Interpretation:

- If you suspect students are wearing costumes, ask them before imposing a penalty. Students sometimes wear ethnic clothing that judges mistake for costumes.

Title

Entries must have titles that are clearly visible on all written materials.

REQUIRED WRITTEN MATERIAL FOR ALL ENTRIES

Title Page

A title page is required as the first page of written material in every category. The title page must include only the title of the entry, the name of the student, and the contest division and category.

Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography is required for all categories. It should contain all sources that provided usable information or new perspectives in preparing the entry. Students will look at many more sources than they will actually use. They should list only those sources that contributed to the development of their entries. Sources of visual materials and oral interviews must be included. The annotations for each source must explain how the source was used and how it helped the students understand their topics.

WEB SITES

Separation of Primary and Secondary Sources

Students are required to separate their bibliographies into primary and secondary sources.

Interpretation:

- While many sources clearly fall into one category or the other, some sources can be either, depending on how they are used. In those questionable cases, the student should explain in the annotation why they classified that particular source as primary or secondary.
- If judges disagree with the categorization of a source as primary or secondary, they should ask about it during the interview and allow the students a chance to explain their rationale.
- If judges have doubts about the validity of an Internet source or its classification as primary or secondary, they should ask about it during the interview.

Style Guides

Style for citations and bibliographic references must follow the principles in one of the following style guides: (1) Kate L. Turabian, *A manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* or (2) the style guide of the Modern Language Association of America (MLA). Regardless of which manual is used, the style must be consistent throughout the project.

Interpretation:

- If judges at the district/regional or state level believe the style is incorrect or that it is used inconsistently, they should note that in their written comments, being as specific as possible, so that students can make corrections.

Process Paper

Entries in all categories except historical papers must provide copies of the following written materials: (1) A title page. (2) A description of no more than 500 words explaining how the students conducted their research and created and developed their entries. They must conclude their description with an explanation of the relationship of their topics to the contest theme. (3) An annotated bibliography. These materials must be typed or neatly printed on plain white paper and stapled together in the top left corner. They should not be enclosed in a cover or binder.

Interpretation:

- The process paper should not summarize the students' research but should instead explain how they

conducted research and developed the entry. It should also explain the relationship of their topic to the theme.

- While the rules provide specific directions regarding the type of paper and fonts to use, failure to observe these requirements is a minor violation. The judges should note the noncompliance on their comments, but they should not downgrade an entry on this basis.

Plagiarism

Students must acknowledge in their annotated bibliographies all sources used in their entries. Failure to credit sources is plagiarism and will result in disqualification.

CATEGORY RULES: WEB SITES

Viewing Web Sites

Judges must view web sites with a recent version of Internet Explorer at a resolution of 800 x 600.

Size Requirements

Web site entries may contain no more than 1,200 visible, student-composed words. Citations, code used to build the site, and alternate text tags on images do not count toward the word limit, nor does the content of the process paper and bibliography. The entire site, including all multimedia, may use up to 50MB of file space.

Interpretation:

- The word limit only applies to student-composed words; that is, it does not apply to documents, oral history quotations, artifacts with writing, or other illustrative materials that are used as an integral part of the web site.
- Brief citations of quotations, visual materials, or multimedia do NOT count toward the word limit.
- Links (e.g. www.wisconsinhistory.org) and dates (e.g. January 1, 1960) each count as one word. Words in names are counted separately (e.g. Franklin D. Roosevelt counts as three words).
- If judges suspect a web site exceeds the word limit, they may ask the contest coordinator to have someone count the words.
- If a web site uses only a few words or kilobytes of file space more than the maximum AND the judges believe the extra content provided no qualitative advantage in terms of the amount of interpretation or evidence included, then the judges may choose to note the infraction without reducing the entry's final ranking.

WEB SITES

- If a web site exceeds the size limit by more than a few words or kilobytes of file space AND the judges believe the extra content gave the entry an unfair advantage, the judges should reduce the entry's final ranking. At the state level, such an entry should not be a medalist.

Navigation

One page of the web site must serve as the "home page." The home page must include the student's name, the title of the entry, the student's age division, and a main menu that directs viewers to the various sections of the site. All pages must be interconnected with hypertext links. Automatic redirects are not permitted.

Multimedia

A single multimedia clip may not last more than 45 seconds and may not include student-composed narration. (Narration that is NOT student-composed is permitted.) If an entry uses any form of multimedia requiring a plug-in (for example, Flash, QuickTime or Real Player), the student must provide on the same page a link to an Internet site where the plug-in is available as a free, secure, and legal download. Judges must make every effort to view all multimedia content. If you have difficulty viewing a multimedia clip, please contact your contest coordinator.

External Links

Entries may not link to live or external sites, except to direct viewers to plug-ins.

Stable Content

The content and appearance of a page may not change when the page is refreshed in the browser. Random text or image generators are not allowed.

File Safety

Entries that contain potentially harmful file contamination (e.g. a virus or worm) are subject to disqualification. Coordinators will scan files with virus detection software before distributing them to judges.

Citations

Citations--footnotes, endnotes or internal documentation--are required. Citations are used to credit the sources of specific ideas as well as direct quotations.

Entry Production

All entries must be original productions. Students may use professional photographs, graphics, video, recorded music, etc. within the site. Such items must be integrated into the web site and proper credit must be given within the site as well as in the annotated bibliography. Students must operate all software and equipment in the development of the web site. Students may not use objects created by others specifically for use in their entries.

THANK YOU AND HAVE FUN!



For information and product catalog go to abc-clio.com or call (800) 368-6868.

National History Day

0119 Cecil Hall, University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742

www.nationalhistoryday.org

Copyright 2002 • National History Day, Inc.

May be duplicated without permission;
duplication for profit is prohibited