



## Frequently Asked Questions: Being a Judge

### I've never judged History Day before. Is that okay?

Absolutely! We welcome seasoned and new judges. Upon registration, each judge will receive a welcome packet and an introductory video to watch. Also, the day of the contest there will be an orientation an hour before judging begins. Judging teams will consist of seasoned and novice judges.

### What are the qualifications needed to be a History Day judge?

There are no qualifications needed to be a judge. However, judges should possess an interest in history and be comfortable interacting with students and making decisions. A critical eye as well as the willingness to give your time and provide constructive feedback is important.

### What is the time commitment to be a judge?

At both the Regional and State level, judges should be prepared to commit at least five to seven hours (8:00 a.m. to roughly 1:30 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. if judging final rounds). This includes an orientation followed by examination of student work, interviews with students, and determination of top entries. Judges who review Historical Paper and Website entries have a slightly different schedule with a similar time commitment. A continental breakfast and lunch are provided to judges and volunteers.

### How do I sign up to become a judge?

Signing up is easy! Just visit the Ohio History Day [webpage](#), select "Judges" and then "Sign Up!" Next, find the region you want to judge at and click the "Register Here" button. This will bring you to your regional contest registration page, where you can create an account as a judge. Got stuck or have questions? No problem, just reach out to your regional coordinator for help!

### How does judging work?

The easiest way to understand how judging works is to see it in person or watch our upcoming video. In general, you will arrive about an hour before judging begins for an orientation. You will meet your judge team and get a schedule of projects to view. Judges view projects and interview students. Once they have seen all the projects, judges will discuss, rank top entries as a team, and write comments, which will be returned to students in the week following the event.

### What kinds of questions should I ask the students?

Questions during the judging process should give the student the opportunity to tell you what they learned while creating their project. The judge should never talk more than the student, or make them feel as though they have not done enough research. Questions about their research process, sources used, inspirations for the topic, and what they liked about the project are all appropriate questions. For sample questions, please refer to your judge packet.



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## How long does it take for a judge to write comments?

It varies. Most judges will spend at least an hour writing comments after they are done viewing projects. Some judges will be done earlier, especially if they judge a pre-judging category and have written preliminary comments in advance. Some judges will take longer if they have a lot to say.

## How do you ensure fair judging if teachers or parents are serving as judges?

In general, people affiliated with History Day students or schools are still allowed to serve as judges. Teachers, former teachers, and community members should identify the schools with which they have affiliations during their judge sign-up. The History Day staff will assign judges with conflicts to different categories/divisions. When you get to an event, please look over your schedule to see if there are students you know and alert us if there are conflicts. It's not a problem to switch you before judging begins!



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