WHY TEACH HISTORY DAY?

The National History Day Program (NHD) is a program dedicated to academic rigor in the social studies curriculum for students in grades 6-12. For almost 50 years, students around the country have participated in NHD. Begun at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio, the program took roots in Minnesota in 1980, and has grown to be one of the largest, most successful programs in the country. Students investigate various topics in history related to an annual theme, conduct in-depth research, and present the information in a variety of formats. Although not required, students from all over the state can compete in school and regional level events, culminating in the statewide event in Minneapolis on the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. Select qualifiers then go on to represent the state of Minnesota.

- The Minnesota History Day program emphasizes fundamental skills like research, note taking, information analysis and synthesis.
- Ultimately a presentation of information in one of five categories: documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website.
- As a tool for college readiness, the History Day program teaches and reinforces the skills that students will eventually need to be successful in college.
- Other aspects of the History Day process incorporate time management, group decision-making, project management, and organization skills that will position History Day participants to excel in a college setting. 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.

The attributes of the program listed above are not content-related. This program is not only about knowing specific information about dates and events, but more about skills that are transferable to other classes, subjects, and disciplines. While students will become experts regarding the content of a project, the skills learned will help prepare students to achieve at the next level.

From humble beginnings in 1980, participation in the History Day program has grown to more than 25,000 students across the state each year. As program staff, we hear the anecdotal stories of the benefits of History Day all the time. We hope you will see the benefit of the program as well.

HISTORY DAY WEBSITE LINKS

History Day in MN website - official website of History Day in MN

Contest:

Evaluation Forms for each category - Downloadable PDFs of the contest evaluation forms

NHD Contest Rulebook (PDF) - Contest rulebook outlining requirements for all levels of program

Regional Contest - web page with information about each of the Regional contests in MN

School Level Contest - Information, timeline, planning materials and downloadable PDFs for your contest

State Contest - web page with information about the State Contest in MN

Curriculum:

All About Annotations (PDF) - Annotations explained with samples and sentence starters

Bibliographies Made Easy! (PDF) - Information about bibliographies

Categories and Sample Projects - Descriptions of the 5 categories along with tools, PDFs and samples

Credits and Captions (PDF) - Explanation of the credits required for visuals in exhibits and websites

Curriculum and Timeline - Links, lesson plans, PDFs, and videos to use in each step of History Day project

Picking a Topic Weebly - Interactive website with topic ideas

Process Paper Information (PDF) - Describes the requirements for the Process Paper

Theme - Find information about this year's History Day theme

Topic Selection - Resources to help students choose a topic

Research:

Hullabaloos - Research Open House events for students

Research Links - List of links for students to use in their research

Research & Resource Room - find links, PDFs, worksheets and videos for research and project questions

Student Research Workbook (PDF) - with downloadable editable versions of student worksheets

Scaffolding:

EL Curriculum Guide - Text set resources that break down the research process for English Language Learners

Support from History Day:

History Day Chat - text-based chat to provide additional help to students for their History Day projects

History Day Enrollment Form - Please fill out to enroll as a teacher and receive emails and physical mailings

History Day in MN website - official website of History Day in MN

Master Teacher Network - shared educator resources

Parent Communication Reminders (PDF) - Best practices for communicating with parents about History Day

Parent Letters (Multiple Languages) - Pre-drafted letters to send directly to parents

Teacher Professional Development - Find out about workshops and PD from MNHS and History Day

ADDITIONAL LESSON PLAN LINKS

Group Contract Sample (PDF) - Worksheet sample of a group contract for students and parents to sign

Introduction HD Student Guide - Worksheets and information to help students get started on History Day

Running a School History Day Event - Suggestions, forms, instructions, videos to help run a smooth school event

Student Research Workbook - Workbooks to help students conduct their research

Working in a Group Reflection (PDF) - Student self reflection to help decide whether to work individually or group

TEACHER FRAMEWORK ROADMAP

History Day is a national program that encourages students to investigate a topic in history and create a project based on a nationally chosen theme. Students are the directors of the project they produce as they are in charge of researching, writing, and presenting the information on their topic. The lessons provided are intended for teachers to guide students through the different steps of creating a project.

INTRODUCTION

"Introducing History Day" and the "National Theme" are intended to provide background information for students as they make decisions for their project. The first lesson previews the whole process of History Day while inviting students to start thinking about their own project.

TOPIC SELECTION

The next section, "Choosing a Topic," emphasizes the fact that students will be working with this topic over a long period of time. One of the strengths of the History Day program is getting students to move from simply reporting the facts to explaining the significance of a specific event in the overall ebb and flow of history. Making an argument as to the importance of a topic in history is crucial. Then they hone in on what they enjoy about a particular era or event, and then develop research questions to guide the research and the first steps of their project.

RESEARCH

Research about the chosen topic is the foundation of the History Day project. Students should understand that they will be investigating a topic over a period of time in order to complete a quality, thorough, unbiased investigation of the topic. Students will be asked to gather, analyze, and present the relevant information of their topic. The lessons provided are intended to build understanding of the research process and how to effectively use research.

ANALYSIS

After students begin to understand the basic narrative of their topic, they will begin to develop their argument, or thesis statement, which describes the significance of their topic in history. In this step, students will also look at historical context, understanding how their topic is connected to larger issues in history.

PRESENTATION

When organizing the project, the writing process is structured to work through the different steps of the writing process. Starting with the development of the thesis, students will compile answers to the research questions they have been creating throughout the project. Then build the story using an outline and write the narrative. This makes the writing process in the following lesson less daunting.

A NOTE FOR TEACHERS

Teachers must remember that the steps may be similar in each classroom setting, but the time it takes to complete a step, or the time you can devote in class depends on your classroom and teaching style. This framework is intended to be adaptable to your needs. There are additional lesson plans in our Master Teacher Network as well as helpful resources on the Teacher page of our mnhs.org/historyday/teachers website.

HISTORY DAY AND THE REVISED SOCIAL STUDIES/ELA STANDARDS

Historical skills standards and benchmarks are embedded in every grade level of the revised Minnesota social studies standards. National History Day emphasizes the learning and mastering of historical skills, and engaging students in the History Day program can help teachers meet these standards at all age levels.

Historical Skills Substrands and Standards in Grades 6-12

Substrand 1: Historical Thinking Skills
- *Standard 1.* Historians generally construct chronological narratives to characterize eras and explain past events and change over time.
- *Standard 2.* Historical inquiry is a process in which multiple sources and different kinds of historical evidence are analyzed.

Substrand 2: Peoples, Cultures and Change Over Time
- *Standard 3.* Historical events have multiple causes and can lead to varied and unintended outcomes.
- *Standard 4.* The differences and similarities of cultures around the world are attributable to their diverse origins and histories, and interactions with other cultures throughout time.
- *Standard 5.* History is made by individuals acting alone and collectively

Historical Skills Benchmarks in Grades 6-12

Grade 6:
- *6.4.1.2.1.* Pose questions about a topic in Minnesota history, gather a variety of primary and secondary sources related to questions, analyze sources for credibility, identify possible answers, use evidence to draw conclusions, and present supported findings.

Grade 7:
- *7.4.1.2.1.* Pose questions about a topic in United States history, gather and organize a variety of primary and secondary sources related to the questions, analyze sources for credibility and bias; suggest possible answers and write a thesis statement; use sources to draw conclusions and support the thesis; present supported findings, and cite sources.
- *7.4.2.4.1.* Compare and contrast the distribution and political status of indigenous populations in the United States and Canada; describe how their status has evolved throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Grade 8:
- *8.4.1.2.1.* Pose questions about a topic in world history; gather and organize a variety of primary and secondary sources related to the questions; analyze sources for credibility and bias; suggest possible answers and write a thesis statement; use sources to draw conclusions and support the thesis; and present supported findings and cite sources.

Grades 9-12:
- *9.4.1.2.1.* Pose questions about topics in history; suggest possible answers and write a thesis; locate and organize primary and secondary sources; analyze them for credibility and bias; corroborate information across the sources; use sources to support or refute the thesis; and present supported findings.
- *9.4.1.2.2* Evaluate alternative interpretations of historical events; use historical evidence to support or refute those interpretations.

STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The Common Core standards for English/Language Arts, adopted by Minnesota in 2010, include a section on literacy in history and social studies. These anchor standards focus on reading and writing skills. National History Day can help teachers meet these standards for students at all age levels.

ELA: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

Key Ideas and Details. 1. 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. 2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. 3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure. 4. 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. 5. 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. 6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas. 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.* 8. 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. 9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity. 10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. *Please see "Research to Build and Present Knowledge" in Writing for additional standards relevant to gathering, assessing, and applying information from print and digital sources.

ELA: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing

Text Types and Purposes. 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

Writing Process: Production and Distribution of Writing. 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. 5. Use a writing process to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, drafting, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge. 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. 8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. 9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing. 10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. *These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

FRAMEWORK FOR 21ST CENTURY LEARNING, INCLUDING THE "4Cs": CRITICAL THINKING, COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION, CREATIVITY

(Partnership for 21st Century Learning, Batelle for Kids, 2019)

National History Day can help teachers meet standards in other areas of the 2011 Social Studies standards, as well as in national frameworks such as those proposed in the Framework for 21st Century Learning and in the Social Justice Standards from Teaching Tolerance.

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 Tools:
- 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

Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards: Anchor Standards and Domains

Diversity:
- Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.
- Students will respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.
- Students will examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.

Justice:
- Students will recognize stereotypes and relate to people as individuals rather than as representatives of groups.
- Students will recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g. biased speech) and injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g. discrimination).
- Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice in the world, historically and today.
- Students will recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup and institutional levels and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics.

HISTORY DAY SKILLS

Throughout the process of History Day, students develop and practice skills that are important in their scholarly lives. These skills will also help to meet academic standards. Please be aware that some students excel if they learn new skills with already established content before they apply to the new content of their project. Consider introducing these skills before they start work on their History Day project.

Some of the skills that will be developed are:

Research
- Notetaking
- Developing research questions
- Online and library-based research
- Verifying source integrity
- Understanding Plagiarism
- Primary vs. secondary sources
- Reading primary sources
- Reading maps
- Reading images/cartoons

Analysis
- Writing thesis statements
- Understanding historical context

Presentation
- Writing in five paragraphs (or a script)
- Project organization and planning
- Project development
- Writing a Process Paper
- Completing an annotated bibliography

SUGGESTED TIMELINE OF LESSONS

Because of the differing ability levels and classroom situations, these lessons are mostly stand-alone. However, we have a recommended sequence based on our experience in the classroom. It is our recommendation that you read through these lesson plans and any worksheets and decide which ones, if any, you would like to incorporate into your classroom. There are additional materials available at the Master Teacher Network on our website.

Introduction to History Day

Choosing a Topic 1 – Narrowing Topics and Developing Theme Connections
Choosing a Topic 2 – Research Questions and Contract

Research – Note-Taking
Research – Library Resources
Research – Verification and Integrity
Research – Library Visit
Research – Primary Sources

Analysis – Historical Context
Analysis – Historical Significance
Analysis – Thesis Development

Project Organization – Narrative Organizer
Project Organization – Writing for Your History Day Category
Project Organization – Build It!
Project Organization – Process Paper and Annotated Bibliography

MINNESOTA HISTORY DAY SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

MN History Day Staff is here to support you throughout the school year. Please contact us if you have any questions or need assistance.

Class Visits - History Day staff visit classrooms to discuss a variety of subjects related to History Day. Often staff introduces History Day, including a discussion of the theme, process, and sample projects. Visits can also look more closely at a specific category, discuss the research process, or address thesis statements. Please contact a History Day staffer to find out more.

Hullabaloos - These fun named events are research open houses held at libraries or virtually throughout the state. Students have an opportunity to attend Power Conferences and receive individual help from college mentors or HD Staff about their project. They also can attend mini-lessons on History Day topics like thesis statements, using NHD WebCentral or how to organize a project. Research help from librarians is available for books, collections and online resources. The in-person Hullabaloos even have raffle prizes that students can win.

Mentor Program - MN History Day has a unique mentor program to assist teachers and students. History Day partners with University students throughout the state to work individually with schools, either in-person where available or virtually.

Resources - Our website has a plethora of resources ready for you to download and go or copy and adapt to your particular classroom.

Teacher Professional Development Workshops - Each year we offer a range of teacher workshops in the late summer and early fall. Please check our website for more information and links to register.

Models of Participation and Timeline

The History Day model is flexible, allowing teachers and students to participate in a variety of ways.

Class Assignment
History Day is assigned as the major project for a 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.

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 and research/analysis skills. Library/Media specialists can play an essential role in helping students access research and work with technology.

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 coordinator can serve as advisor.

Extracurricular
History Day is offered as part of a menu of co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Classroom credit is optional.

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

Independent
If students are enrolled in a public, private, or charter school that does NOT participate in History Day, they can still participate on their own. A teacher or parent can serve as the advisor.

There is no required timeline for History Day participation. If competing, most teachers start with their Regional event date and plot backwards.

State	**Qualifying students** advancing from Regional contests are eligible to compete at State History Day on **Saturday, April 22, 2023**. Qualifiers get more information at Regional awards ceremonies.
Regional	Minnesota is divided into **12 Regional contests in March,** based on geography, school, and age division. Contact the History Day staff to find out which event your students would attend and registration deadlines (which are usually two weeks before the event).
School Fair	Depending on the number of students you have participating, you may need to winnow down the entries that are eligible to register for a Regional contest. You will want to host any school fairs or contests **at least three weeks before your Regional** event to give students enough time to confirm their participation and register. Many school contests take place late January through February.
Contest Prep	While not always required for school contests, National History Day requires that students create an annotated bibliography and process paper for all other levels of competition. Students often finalize these documents **before school contests, or once they have been selected for Regionals.**
Project Creation	The actual process of putting a project together might not take place until **January or February.** Teachers often encourage their students to focus on research, analysis, writing, and project planning before bringing out the scissors and glue.
Research & Analysis	After selecting topics, the research process begins, often extending from **November through early January.** This timeline varies widely based on when a school begins and how much time a teacher is spending on the project in class. 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.
Topic Selection	Discussions of the annual theme, topic exploration, and selection usually begin **immediately after the kick-off**. Teachers usually give their students time to explore a variety of topics, and get a sense of the available resources before finalizing.
Kick-Off	Schools most commonly kick-off the program with a visit from a staff member during **October or November**. Some schools will pace their programs at one History Day a week until they reach contest season... and some carve out time for more consolidated focus on History Day.

Sample Timelines

Each History Day classroom timeline is different. The sample timelines below are from actual History Day classrooms in Minnesota. You can find these, other examples, and sample curriculum materials from a variety of teachers on our Master Teacher Network:

https://www.mnhs.org/historyday/teachers/master-teacher-network

Middle School Integrated into Curriculum

Mid-October: Introduce History Day, spend next three class periods doing topic selection and preliminary research

End of October: Topics and group selected

November: Initial research done approximately 2-3 days a week, viewing sample projects around Thanksgiving

December: Research once a week the first two weeks, research every day before winter break

January: Research three days a week in class

Last week of January-First two weeks of February: Project creation in class every day

Third week of February: Project due

High School Integrated into Curriculum

November: 2nd week - Introduce History Day

Monday before Thanksgiving: Topics selected, initial research completed during break

End of November/Early December: Media Center time for Primary/Secondary Sources

Winter Break: Students research in a community or university library

January: 2nd week - Thesis Statement Due

End of January: First draft of all text due for feedback, have had approximately one class day a week to work on project

February: Revising text and creating project, approximately one day a week of class time to work

End of February: Project due

Middle School Curriculum Hold for History Day

January 2: Project Introduction
January 3: Overview of Contest/Topic Ideas
January 6: Primary and Secondary Sources
January 9: Topic and Project Categories
January 10: Research Tips
January 13-22: Research in class
January 23-31: Project Assembly
February 4: Projects Due

HISTORY DAY VOCABULARY

Throughout this framework and other History Day communications, some unique History Day vocabulary will be used. This is also the vocabulary that will be used throughout the lessons so the students become familiar with terms while researching and putting together their projects. Hopefully the following guide will be helpful as you discover more about the program.

Annotated Bibliography: Students must track their resources in the MLA or Turabian style. Along with proper citations, they need to annotate each source describing what the source was and how they used it. Students participating in all categories must complete an annotated bibliography.

Category: The medium in which a student will present their project. Choices are: Paper, Performance, Documentary, Exhibit (Display Board), and Website.

Division: The National History Day competition is divided into two divisions, Junior (grades 6 – 8) and Senior (grades 9 – 12). Those in the Junior division only compete against other Junior division students, and students in the Senior division only compete with other Senior division students.

Hullabaloo: A research day at a public or university library with History Day and library staff available to assist students with research and project development.

Multiple Perspectives: A perspective is one point of view, one person's experience, or one side of the story. Multiple perspectives are present when a topic is explored from more than one point of view, mostly those with different opinions.

Process Paper: Required for all competing projects. The process paper describes the process that students went through to create their project. Students will answer several basic questions:
- How did you choose your topic and how does it relate to the annual theme?
- How did you conduct your research?
- How did you create your project?
- What is your historical argument?
- In what ways is your topic significant in history?

Student Voice: Students will incorporate their own analysis of the research they have collected. This analysis is the student's thesis statement or historical argument backed up by evidence. Student voice does not have to be different from a historian's viewpoint, but it needs to be in the students' own words and show the reasoning behind their thesis.

Theme: Each year National History Day chooses a theme for projects to be related to. For example, in 2021, the theme was "Communication in History: The Key to Understanding." In the judging process, theme connection is part of the historical quality section, and is valued at 80% of the evaluation. Ideally, each project should clearly relate to the theme. However, as each classroom and student is unique, connection to the theme can be a relative goal in your classroom.

Thesis Statement: This is a historical argument or claim supported throughout the project by evidence. It is the main idea of the project and serves as a roadmap for the student to present their analysis. We recommend a student incorporate the 5 w's of who, what, when, where and why. A strong thesis will also include a connection to the History Day theme and show how the topic changed history, in other words show its significance in history.
History Day Enrollment Request | Minnesota Historical Society

TEACHER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why do I need to enroll as a History Day teacher?
When you enroll, make 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 at History Day Teacher Enrollment Form.

Why do I need to fill out the Participation Survey?
The Participation Survey (due in mid-January) is how the History Day staff decides how many students your school can send to the Regional competition. We also need this information to plan for space needs at the competition. It's important to be as accurate as possible with this survey!

How many students can I send to the Regional competition?
The number of students you are allowed to bring to the Regional competition depends on a few factors. The number of students participating at your school, student participation at schools in your region, and space available at the Regional event all contribute to this number. Completing the Participation Survey (due in mid-January) is key for the staff in deciding how many entries each school is allowed to send in each category.

I am a new History Day teacher. Is there an experienced teacher I can get in touch with for advice?
If you are new to History Day and would like some additional help, there are many places to turn. On our website, you will find our Master Teacher Network, which contains lesson plans and guides from teachers who have taught History Day for many years. You could attend a teacher workshop led by History Day staff. Please feel free to contact History Day staff for advice at any time.

When should we hold our school event?
The Regional events take place in March so most schools hold their school events in February. Make sure to allow time for students advancing to the Regional competition to make changes to their projects. Registration forms for the regional competition are due approximately two weeks before the event. Keep this registration deadline in mind when planning the date for your school competition.

What assistance can I get in the classroom?
Please see our page on History Day Support for all the ways we can assist.

When should I start History Day in the classroom?
The most important factor in deciding when to start is knowing the deadline that projects will need to be completed. Work backwards from the Regional competition date and factor in the registration deadline. If you are holding a school competition, you will need to give students time to turn in their forms and revise their projects. 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. For actual samples of classroom schedules, visit the Master Teacher Network on the Minnesota History Day website.

How many days a week should I work on History Day in my classroom?
The amount of class time dedicated to History Day will vary in each classroom and depend on the balance of in-class and out-of-class work that you want to assign. Allowing for variances in the calendar like assemblies and vacations, many schools will have one "History Day" a week. Teachers often report that they spend more time as the final deadline – and competition – approaches.

Should History Day be done in-class or after school?
There are advantages and disadvantages to offering History Day as a classroom project as compared to an after-school or optional project. As an optional project, you can announce the project and offer this opportunity to your students without adjusting your coursework. In reality, without deadlines even motivated students will often lose interest and not complete the project.

Most programs incorporate History Day into regular coursework, often as a class assignment. This offers students the structure, deadlines, and encouragement to guide them through the process and keep them on task. Teachers can introduce skill-building activities and establish deadlines for key parts of the History Day process, earning points for the steps along the way. Students do not have to participate in the completion cycle, however, it's great if they at least participate in a school-level exposition of the History Day project.

How do I run a school competition?
Check out the school contest page of our website for more information on how to run a school-level competition! Here you will find tips and advice as well as downloadable forms, judging rubrics and a link to our judge training webpage. If you can't find what you need on this page, please contact a History Day Staffer for more information.

Does my school have to compete?
No, competition is not a requirement of participating in History Day. You may choose to have a showcase at your school instead.

STUDENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions of Teachers by their History Day Students

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. Your teacher will let you know how many students can be in a group at your 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.

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."

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 your 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.

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 your 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.

What if I cannot fill all the holes in my research or get all of my research questions answered?
Figure out the questions you need to answer and the types of information you still need. Bring this information to a librarian and ask for help!

Levels of Competitions and Regional Assignments

Competitions are an optional part of the National History Day program in which most participating schools choose to participate. Entering a project in a 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 levels of competition, they are allowed and encouraged to revise and improve their work.

SCHOOL-LEVEL

School-level contests are a great way to recognize student achievement, as well as narrow down the number of entries a school is able to send to a Regional competition. Schools coordinate their own contests and recruit their own judges from the community. Teachers should check out the resources we have on our website, including a judge training video, sample forms, and to-do lists.

REGIONAL

Minnesota is divided up into 12 regions for Regional contests. History Day will assign your school to the Regional that works best for your school *and* the History Day program. Approximately 4,500 students compete at the Regional level in Minnesota. Regional event registration materials will be available online in mid-January.
- All students from the same school must attend the same Regional contest.
- Schools are encouraged to attend the same Regional from year to year. If your school has an unavoidable conflict and you need to switch Regionals, you must contact the State HD office as soon as possible.
- **Please see communication from the State Coordinator regarding information on a virtual contest.**
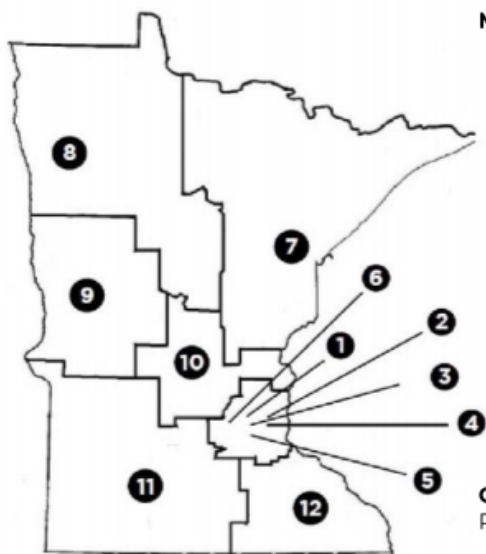
Metro Area (1-6)
- **Metro Senior**: There is one Regional event for all Senior Division (grades 9-12) schools in the Metro area that are not part of either the Minneapolis or St. Paul Public Schools Districts.
- **Metro Junior West, Central, and East:** These three Regional events are for Junior Division (grades 6-8) schools in the Metro area that are not part of either the Minneapolis or St. Paul Public Schools Districts.
- **Minneapolis Public School District**: This Regional event is ONLY for students in the Minneapolis Public School District (grades 6-12). If you are not in this district, you will attend the Metro Senior Event or one of the Metro Junior events.
- **St. Paul Public Schools District**: This Regional event is ONLY for students in the St. Paul Public Schools District (grades 6-12). If you are not in this district, you will attend the Metro Senior Event or one of the Metro Junior events.

Greater Minnesota (7-12)
Regional lines are roughly drawn along county boundaries.

7 Northeast - Duluth   **10** Central - St. Cloud
8 Northwest - Bemidji   **11** South Central - Mankato
9 West Central - Moorhead   **12** Southeast - Winona

STATE: APRIL 22, 2023

State History Day takes place at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities campus. Entries from each Regional contest will be eligible to compete at State, with approximately 1,300 students taking part. State Qualifiers will receive event and registration information at their Regional awards ceremonies. Eligible students must register for State in order to compete. Information about State will be available on the History Day website in March.

NATIONAL CONTEST: June 2023

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 will represent Minnesota at the contest, approximately 60 students.

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COMMUNICATIONS AND DEADLINES FROM THE STATE HISTORY DAY OFFICE – 2022/23

"Enroll" as a History Day Teacher

Enrolling as a History Day teacher lets us know that you are interested in participating this year. You will get a free Enrollment Packet and be added to the mailing list for important program deadlines. There's no obligation to participate if you enroll: http://www.mnhs.org/historyday/teachers/enroll
- **Deadline**: Enroll anytime before January to get information about the competition cycle. The earlier the better!

Enrollment Packet

The free Enrollment Packet contains key materials to get you started with History Day, including rule and theme information, event calendar, and workshop schedule. All teachers who participated in History Day in the previous year are automatically signed up to receive this mailing. Any other teachers can get this mailing by enrolling as a History Day teacher on the Minnesota History Day website.
- **Deadline**: Enrollment Packets will be mailed in mid-September.

Participation Survey

The participation survey is a critical first step in planning for the History Day competition cycle. Schools let History Day know how many entries they have participating in each category/division. History Day staff uses this information to figure out how many entries each school gets to send to the Regional contest.
- **Check for an email in mid-December with the January 11, 2023 deadline**.

School Allotment and Regional Entry Forms

Your school's allotment will let you know how many entries your school can register for the Regional contest. These numbers are calculated based on the amount of space we have available at the Regional as well as the number of entries in each category at each participating school. As a rule of thumb, schools will be allotted at least three entries per category/division. If we have more space available, we will allot more entries to schools based on participation.
- **Deadline**: You will get this information from the State History Day office in mid-January.

Regional Deadline

Registration information for your Regional contest will be sent with your school allotment numbers. Regional entry forms will be due two weeks before the Regional contest. Students participating in the website category will be locked out of editing their websites one week before the Regional contest so judges can review websites in advance of the competition.
- **Deadline**: Check the Minnesota History Day website for a full listing of deadlines for each Regional.

Paper Category Deadline

Students participating in the Research Paper category do NOT compete at the Regional level of competition. These students participate through a mail-in process. Papers are due in early March and are sent via postal mail to judges. Students who advance to the final round of competition will be notified by email and will get an interview at State History Day.
- **Deadline:** Check the Minnesota History Day website for a full listing of deadlines for students in the Paper contest.

State Deadline   Registration information for State qualifiers is distributed directly to students at Regional contest awards ceremonies. State entry forms are due two – three weeks before State History Day. Students participating in the website category will be locked out of editing their websites one week before State History Day so judges can review websites in advance of the competition.
- **Deadline:** Check the Minnesota History Day website for a full listing of [deadlines](#) for State History Day.

RECOMMENDED TEACHER 'MUST DO'S' FOR HISTORY DAY SUCCESS

1. Connect with the History Day staff.
The History Day staff at the Minnesota 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 **Enrollment Form**. We will let you know which staff member is assigned to your area of the state… but remember that any of us are able to help you and your students during the year.

2. 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 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, members of the PTO, school board, or local historical societies can be great resources for judges.

3. Keep parents informed.
Letting parents know about this project, important deadlines, as well as ways that they can assist.

4. Know the deadlines.
By enrolling and connecting with the History Day staff, you will get regular updates on program and competition deadlines. Keep these dates in mind as you plan your History Day calendar.

5. 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.

6. Don't rush it.
Students may be excited and motivated by the possibility of creating the final project, but there are important steps along the way that they need to go through. Allow time for them to first understand the theme, explore topics, and conduct research before letting them put their actual project together.

7. Think about skill-building.
There are many ways to scaffold important lessons that will support the History Day project. Before you even introduce the project, there are likely important skills that you are already planning on introducing in your classroom that will feed into History Day. For example, do you have other lessons already planned to explain the difference between primary and secondary sources? How to analyze documents? Maybe the Language Arts teacher is already planning on covering thesis statements and bibliographies? These skill-building activities can do double-duty in a History Day classroom.

8. You 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.

9. Know that each student will get something different out of History Day.
While the competition is an exciting part of History Day, the ultimate goal is the academic growth of the students. Not all students are going to go to the national contest. Help students to understand that even if they don't win, they have still gained important skills as historians and scholars.

10. You are the boss.
History Day can be adapted to suit your classroom. You have the ability 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.