

HOW DO I CHOOSE MY HISTORY DAY CATEGORY?

Do you have special interests or talents that lend themselves to a specific category? How would your topic best be expressed? Answering the following questions may help you decide.

HISTORICAL PAPER

- 1) Do I enjoy writing?
- 2) Am I more comfortable expressing myself on paper rather than in front of an audience?
- 3) Am I trying to convey a complex idea that requires a lot of explanation?

PERFORMANCE

- 1) Do I enjoy being in front of an audience?
- 2) Do I like to act?
- 3) Can I write a good 10 minute skit?
- 4) Will I have access to appropriate costumes and props?

EXHIBIT

- 1) Do I enjoy creating things with my hands?
- 2) Do I have a way to transport my project to a competition?
- 3) Can I tell my story primarily through pictures and artifacts instead of words?

DOCUMENTARY

- 1) Do I have access to and enjoy working with media and editing equipment and software?
- 2) Do I have a computer that I can take to a competition if necessary?
- 3) Does my topic have a lot of visual images or video footage that I could use to present a documentary?

WEBSITES

- 1) Do I enjoy working with computers?
- 2) Do I have regular access to a computer? Will I have time to complete a website entry?
- 3) Can I present my topic adequately in a website?

SHOULD I WORK AS INDIVIDUAL OR IN A GROUP?

The final decision a student should make when deciding on a competition category is whether to work alone or on a team. Both choices have great benefit. Below are some questions students should consider when making this decision.

- 1) Do you generally prefer working alone or with teammates?
- 2) What roles do I usually play in a group? (Some examples include peacemaker, organizer, technology specialist, writer, etc.)
- 3) What qualities make someone a good group member?
- 4) Would I be able to meet with potential team members after school? Do we live close to each other or would we be able to stay after school to work?

Some advantages to working as a group:

- You will improve your collaborative skills and participate on a team.
- You can share project costs.
- You can draw on one another's strengths and talents.

Some disadvantages to working as a group:

- You may have scheduling difficulties.
- You may have different work ethics.
- You will have increased communication demands.
- Opinions may differ.

Some advantages to working as an individual:

- You are the sole decision maker.
- You'll increase your independence.
- Work is completed on your own time and wherever you want.

Some disadvantages to working as an individual:

- You will be responsible for all costs.
- You won't have a partner to help with the work load.
- You won't have a partner to motivate you when work slows down.