

History Day L.A.

Saturday, March 2, 2024

Getting Started for Students

What is History Day?

Each year more than half a million students just like you participate across the nation. You choose a historical topic related to the annual theme, and then conduct primary and secondary research. You will look through libraries, archives and museums, conduct oral history interviews, and visit historic sites. After you have analyzed and interpreted your sources, and have drawn a conclusion about the significance of your topic, you will then be able to present your work in one of five ways: as a paper, an exhibit, a performance, a documentary, or a web site.

If you are in grades 4-12 at a school in Los Angeles County, have a teacher to sponsor you, and submit the registration materials and fee before the deadline you may participate in History Day L.A. It is an exciting day for everyone!



Winners of the History Day L.A. contest will be eligible to compete at the National History Day – California contest. State winners move on to the Kenneth E. Behring National History Day Contest at the University of Maryland at College Park in June. This is where the best National History projects from across the United States, American Samoa, Guam, International Schools and Department of Defense Schools in Europe all meet and compete.

After you have analyzed and interpreted your sources, and have drawn a conclusion about the significance of your topic, you will then be able to present your work in the form of a History Day project as designated below:

- **Elementary Division:** Students in grades 4 or 5 may submit projects in the form of a poster, either as an individual or as a group.
- **Junior Division:** Students in grades 6-8 may submit projects in the form of an exhibit, a performance, a documentary, or a website, either as an individual or as a group. Historical papers may be submitted but only by individuals.
- **Senior Division:** Students in grades 9-12 may submit projects in the form of an exhibit, a performance, a documentary, or a website, either as an individual or as a group. Historical papers may be submitted but only by individuals.

Getting Started:

- Ask a teacher to sponsor you for the contest. The teacher will be responsible for registering you and submitting payment and required paperwork.
- Read the Contest Rule Book on the History Day L.A. web page at <https://www.lacoe.edu/Academic-Events/History-Day>
Read about the Theme: *Turning Points in History*, at <https://www.lacoe.edu/Academic-Events/History-Day>
 - Decide between an individual or group project
 - Determine the type of entry that best reflects your topic, skills and research:
 - podcast
 - paper (individual only)

- exhibit
- performance
- documentary
- website
- poster (Grades 4 and 5 only)
- Select a Topic
- Research the Topic
- Be sure to check the “Guidelines, Rules and Formatting Instructions on the History Day L.A. web page at <https://www.lacoe.edu/Academic-Events/History-Day> when creating your project.
- Ask your sponsoring teacher to review your project each step of the way.

Read about the Theme:

Turning Points in History

This year’s theme is broad enough for you to select a local, state, national or world history topic. To understand the historical importance of your topic, you must ask questions of time and place, cause and effect, change over time, impact and significance. You must ask questions about why events happened and what impact the events had?

Regardless of the topic selected, you must do more than describe what happened. You must draw conclusions, basing your opinion on evidence, about how the topic affected individuals, communities, nations and the world. Studies should include an investigation into available primary and secondary sources, analysis of the evidence, and a clear explanation of the relationship of the topic to the theme. Entries should NOT just recount events, but should include differing perspectives and cause and effect relationships between events. An analysis or “so what?” part of an entry is what separates a great History Day presentation from a traditional report.

Choose a Topic

Topics for research are everywhere! Think about a time in history or individuals or events that are interesting to you. Start a list. Read books, newspapers or other sources of information and add to your list. Talk with relatives, neighbors, or people you know who have lived through a particular time in history that interests you and add more ideas. Keep thinking, reading and talking to people until you have many ideas that are interesting. Now go back through the list and circle the ideas that connect with the theme. From the ideas that you circled, select one to begin your research. Keep your list because you might need it again.

Congratulations on embarking on your History Day journey! It is sure to be a memorable one. You never know what information you might find, or whom you may get to meet. And the skills you will learn along the way will last a lifetime.