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# I. Program Overview

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## A. Theme

Each year a theme is selected for the National History Day contest. Although you may select a topic on any aspect of local, regional, national, or world history, your project's research and conclusions must relate clearly to the annual theme. Be careful to limit the scope of your topic to focus on an issue that can be explained and interpreted within the category limits of size and time.

## B. Topic

Effective National History Day entries not only describe an event or a development, but they also analyze and place it in its historical context. To help you draw conclusions about your topic's significance in history, ask yourself the following questions:

- How is my topic important?
- How was my topic significant in history in relation to the National History Day theme?
- How did my topic develop over time?
- How did my topic influence history?
- How did the events and atmosphere (social, economic, political, and cultural aspects) of my topic's time period influence my topic in history?

## C. Rewards For Participation

The most important rewards are the skills and new knowledge that you will acquire as you move through the National History Day program. At each level of competition, outstanding achievement may be recognized through certificates, medals, trophies, scholarships, or monetary awards. A number of special prizes may be given at the regional, affiliate, or national level.

## D. Divisions

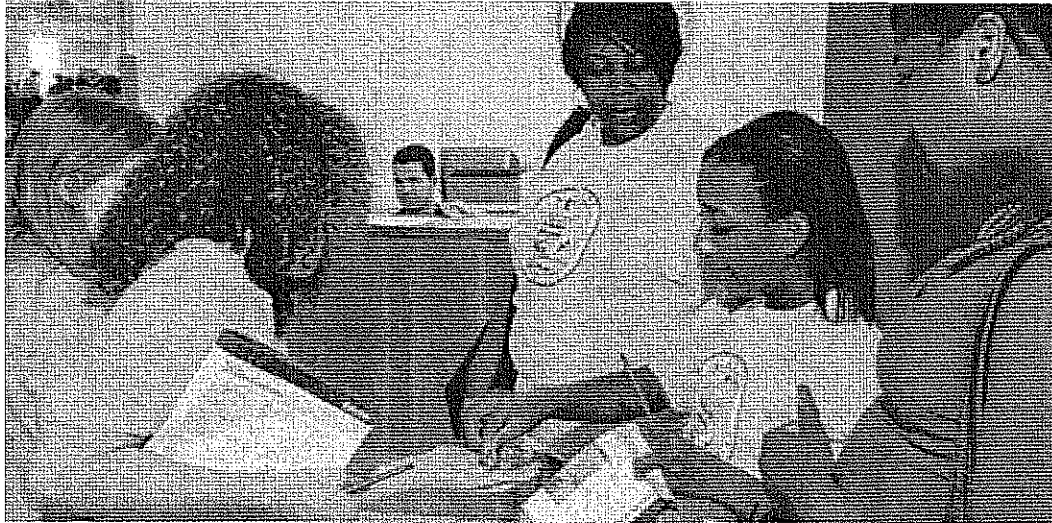
The National History Day competition has two divisions based on school grade.

- Junior Division — grades 6, 7, and 8
- Senior Division — grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

Entries in each division are judged separately at all levels of competition.

*NOTE: Some affiliates sponsor participation in 4th and 5th grades. Check with your affiliate coordinator for more information. You can find your coordinator through the NHD web site, [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org).*

*NOTE: Students in non-graded schools must check with the National History Day office to determine in which division they should register for the competition.*



### *E. Contest Categories*

You may enter one of nine categories:

- paper (individual only)
- individual exhibit
- group exhibit
- individual performance
- group performance
- individual documentary
- group documentary
- individual web site
- group web site

Each category in each division is judged separately. Groups may include 2 to 5 students. Group participants do not have to be in the same grade to compete together, but they must be in the same division.

*NOTE: Choose a category in which you can make the best use of your own special abilities, talents, and interests. Be careful to choose the most suitable category in which to present your research and conclusions and take into consideration the availability of equipment and resources.*

### *F. Important Notices For Contestants*

All contests are held in public areas. You are solely responsible for the security and safety of your own equipment and artifacts. National History Day program officials and sponsors will not be responsible for the loss of, or damage to, exhibits, props, equipment, or personal belongings.

### *G. Program Materials*

Each year program materials such as topic suggestions, sample entries, videos, and category tips are available on the National History Day web site at [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org). These materials are provided to help teachers and students participate in the NHD program and may be duplicated for classroom use. Additional materials may be purchased from the NHD online shop. For further information or to order materials, contact your regional or affiliate coordinator or the National History Day office.