



National History Day-Orange County



WHAT IS NATIONAL HISTORY DAY-ORANGE COUNTY (NHD-OC)?

NHD-OC is Orange County's chapter of a yearlong educational program tied to the National History Day (<http://www.nhd.org/>) program and contest. Through their participation in this program, students in grades 4-12 become amateur historians on their journey to discover the significance of their chosen historical topic.

WHY SHOULD STUDENTS PARTICIPATE?

In addition to learning how to think creatively and critically, students will also gain valuable experience in collaborating and communicating with others. In short, NHD directly supports the California State Standards and HSS Framework with its focus on research and argumentative writing. Moreover, students will acquire more confidence in their own ability to learn and be better equipped to overcome the challenges of college and career.

WHAT CATEGORIES ARE IN EACH DIVISION?

The **Elementary Division** consists of **two entry categories**:

1. Individual Poster
2. Group Poster

There are **nine entry categories** for the **Junior and Senior Divisions**:

1. Individual Historical Paper
2. Individual Documentary
3. Group Documentary
4. Individual Exhibit
5. Group Exhibit
6. Individual Performance
7. Group Performance
8. Individual Website
9. Group Website

NOTE: An individual entry consists of 1 student. A group entry consists of 2-5 students.

HOW MANY ENTRIES CAN EACH SCHOOL SEND TO NHD-OC? (New for 2020)

1. Elementary Division (grades 4-5) may send up to ***three (3)** entries for each of the two categories.
2. Junior Division (grades 6-8) may send **up to**
 - two (2) entries in Historical Paper and Website categories.
 - ***three (3)** entries in: Exhibit, Documentary, and Performance categories.
3. Senior Division (grades 9-12) may send **up to**
 - two (2) entries in Historical Paper and Website categories.
 - ***three (3)** entries in: Exhibit, Documentary, and Performance categories.

***We strongly recommend that schools only send two (2) entries per category.**

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN A NHD PROJECT?

NHD entries consist of the project itself (e.g., performance, website, etc.) as well as a title page, process paper and annotated bibliography. The annotated bibliography reflects the research students have done and is the heart of the project. Refer to the [Rulebook](#) for detailed instructions for developing an annotated bibliography.

Each project also includes a thesis statement that is supported by evidence. Check out some [Student Project Examples](#).

The process paper is a short description (no more than 500 words) explaining how students conducted their research and created and developed their entry. The description must conclude with an explanation of the relationship of the selected topic to the contest theme. A process paper is NOT required in the Historical Paper category. Refer to the Rulebook for detailed instructions for developing the process paper.

WHAT WILL STUDENTS DO WHILE PARTICIPATING?

Students may work in groups or individually. After selecting a historical topic that relates to the annual theme, students conduct extensive research by using libraries, archives, museums, and eyewitnesses to deepen their understanding of the relevant events. They analyze and interpret their findings, draw conclusions about the significance of their topics in history, and create final projects to present their work. Project choices include a performance, documentary, historical paper, website, exhibit, or a poster (elementary only).

HOW DOES THE CONTEST WORK?

NHD projects can be used at the school site for rich project-based learning experiences and/or entered into a series of competitions, from the school, county, state, and ultimately to the national level depending on each school's program and the success of the entry. Students first participate at the school, or school district level, to reach the Orange County competition. Champion entries from the OC contest go on to represent our county at the NHD-California (NHD-CA) competition. The state contest is the highest level of competition for the Elementary Division. Champions at the state competition in the Junior and Senior Divisions advance to National History Day held at the University of Maryland each year, the national contest. Although the overall contest experience could depend on the sponsoring school, the county competition is open to every school district and participating school in Orange County.

HOW ARE PROJECTS/ENTRIES EVALUATED?

At each level of competition beyond the school contest, volunteer judges evaluate entries. The judging process at school level competitions varies from school to school. Judges at the NHD-OC competition are volunteers and typically have NHD judging experience, some with as many as twenty years. New and experienced judges alike attend the NHD-OC Judge Orientation prior to the event to receive training on the process and etiquette for this event. Additionally, new judges are required to view an hour-long webinar of judging procedures and expectations before the contest. In the past, NHD-OC judges have included professional and amateur historians, educators and NHD coaches, parents, and others passionate about history and helping students. NHD-OC staff members make every effort prior to and during the contest to ensure that judges have no conflicts of interest with schools, students, and/or entries that they might be judging.
