

SELECTING A TOPIC

The key to an effective History Day entry is the combination of a good topic with good research. Here are some characteristics to think about in selecting a topic for History Day this year.

- **Make sure it fits the theme.** Your topic needs to have a connection to the History Day theme. You may need to do some preliminary research to figure this out.
- **You are interested in this topic.** You will be spending a lot of time researching. It helps if you are interested and want to learn more. If you're working in a group, all members should agree on the topic.
- **There is research out there about your topic.** Do some preliminary searching to figure out if there are a variety of primary and secondary sources you can find about your topic.
- **Your topic has significance.** In a successful History Day project, you need to be able to make an argument about how your topic was important in history. This doesn't mean you need a world-famous topic. Even local history topics had an impact in history.
- **Your topic is historic.** If you select a topic that's too recent, you're going to have a hard time discussing your topic's long-term significance in history. Selecting a topic that took place at least 20 years in the past will help to ensure you're not focusing on current events.



Like your topic. You will be spending a lot of time with it!

WORKSHEET: TOPIC BRAINSTORM

A good way to choose a topic is to start with a general area of history you find interesting. This might be something you read about in your textbook or something related to family history. Using the chart below, brainstorm one topic in each category that fits this year's theme, **Breaking Barriers in History**.

<u>Politics</u>	<u>The Environment</u>
Topic Idea:	Topic Idea:
<u>Civil Rights</u>	<u>Social Issues</u>
Topic Idea:	Topic Idea:
<u>Military History</u>	<u>Religion</u>
Topic Idea:	Topic Idea:
<u>Science & Technology</u>	<u>Education</u>
Topic Idea:	Topic Idea:
<u>Business</u>	<u>Arts, Music & Culture</u>
Topic Idea:	Topic Idea: