

GENERAL CATEGORICAL ADVICE for NHD PROJECTS

Documentaries

- Watch professional documentaries (and past winning NHD docs on youtube) with attention to production techniques
- Break narration/argument into chapters with subheadings
- Narrate at a slow pace
- Use only high quality, hi-res visuals
- Visuals must integrate with and reinforce narration
- Change the visual every few seconds to keep it interesting
 - When using still images, zoom in or out or pan around to create illusion of movement
- Include music that reflects and therefore reinforces the tone of the material
- Make sure background music is not distracting (too loud, w/ lyrics or both)

Exhibits

- Must have timeline that provides historical context as details specific events relevant to topic.
- Segmentation: Clearly divide your space into smaller self-contained spaces (like paragraphs in an essay)
 - Use subtitles and color coding
- Use visual cues to organize & make connections
 - Use string or symbols to connect events on timeline to where they are developed in greater depth
 - Use arrows to show causation
 - Color code or use symbols to help related ideas hang together
- Minimize Text
 - Long blocks or even full sentences are deadly. Nobody reads them.
 - Use text for headings, subheadings, captions etc. but keep them short
 - Do not write in complete sentences
 - Even quotes, which don't count towards word total, should be kept short
 - always provide a caption that indicates who said it, in what context and perhaps how it is related
 - Use ellipsis's (...) and brackets([]) judiciously
- Must be visually appealing
 - Use only high quality, hi-res visuals
 - Think about your background
 - Back images with matting
 - Think about overall form. Perhaps have the form relate to topic.
Ex. Topic on Civil Rights era sit-ins display made to look like a lunch counter
- Displays are free standing. Be sure yours is constructed solidly and assembles easily

Performances

- Must have dramatic conflict (makes it interesting)
- Have 2-3 scenes (even feature films stick with a scene for only a couple minutes)
- Remember that you must manage all your sound effects and costume & set changes
- Avoid anachronistic language, props, costumes, etc.

Papers

- Must cite any information or ideas taken from other sources.
 - Use footnotes for citation
 - See a style manual, me or your English teacher to learn how
- May integrate visuals

Websites

- Look at professional websites or other high quality NHD websites
- Clear Navigation
 - Use landing pages for main arguments with supporting pages for supporting arguments
 - Have links to all relevant supporting pages on landing pages
 - "Next to ___", "Thesis" & "Back to ___" links on every page
- Minimize Text
 - Long blocks or even full sentences are deadly. Nobody reads them.
 - Use text for headings, subheadings, captions etc. but keep them short
 - Topic sentence on each page. Otherwise, do not write in complete sentences

- Even quotes, which don't count towards word total, should be kept short
 - always provide a caption that indicates who said it, in what context and perhaps how it is related
 - Use ellipsis's (...) and brackets([]) judiciously
- Make it Multimedia & interactive
 - Use only high quality, hi-res visuals
- Make sure all media runs on its own (viewer can't be expected to download players)