

A Three Step Planning Guide For National History Day Exhibit

Objectives: Students can use these planning steps to define an exhibit topic, use support resources, and develop a storyline.

Step 1. What's The Storyline?

- Decide on your topic. Make it small enough to tell an interesting story FROM BEGINNING TO END. Tell a whole story, not an entire story.
- Theme + topic = thesis statement posed as a question
- Use a theme to formulate a thesis.
- Use one or both sides to tell the story
Ex: Triumph and Tragedy: The Tragedy Before / The Triumph After

Step 2. Who's Saying What?

- Work with librarian and create a bibliography
- Triangulate the data for each part: past (beginning), present (main topic), future (end)
 - Primary data
 - Secondary data
 - Expert opinions / Community
- Use note cards to track each resource.
- Are there enough resources to tell the story?
 - Need 2 to 3 sources for each area.
 - If less, revise the question / topic.

Step 3. Tell Me Your Story

- Summarize the story:
 - First share the story with partner, parent or teacher.
 - Then, using the previous step, write a paragraph about the story
 - Expand your paragraph to include past, present, and future to outline the story.
- Storyboard the Project
Overall Explanation: Your paragraph about the story.
Past:
 - Headline: Sub-theme + the topic. i.e., *The Tragedy of Alaskan Education Before Molly Hootch*
 - Text
 - Resources: photos, quotes, maps, illustrations

Present:

- Headline: Sub-theme + the topic. i.e., *Molly Hootch Goes to Court*
- Text
- Resources: photos, quotes, maps, illustrations

Future:

- Headline: Sub-theme + the topic. i.e., *Equal Access: A Triumph for Alaskan Education*
- Text
- Resources: photos, quotes, maps, illustrations

Final Conclusion: Answer the question posed in the beginning