

Name(s):

Period:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Rough Draft DUE:  
JAN. 29 FRI.

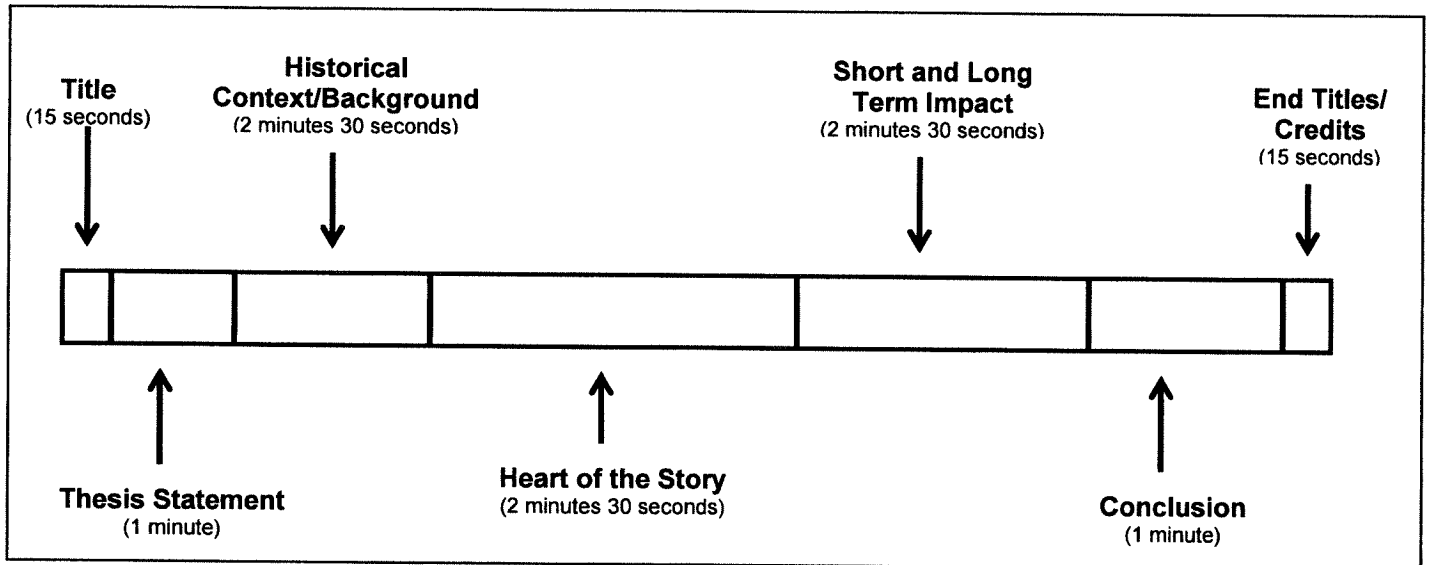
## DOCUMENTARY STORYBOARD FORM

NOTES	VISUAL	AUDIO

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## WORKSHEET: DOCUMENTARY PLANNING

It's important to think about breaking up your documentary into smaller segments, just like an exhibit is divided into sections. It will be easier to organize your thoughts into these smaller parts. It's also easier for your view to follow along when you have a well-organized documentary. Here are some general ideas about documentary organization. **Remember:** These are just ideas. As long as your project is organized, you can create it however you want!



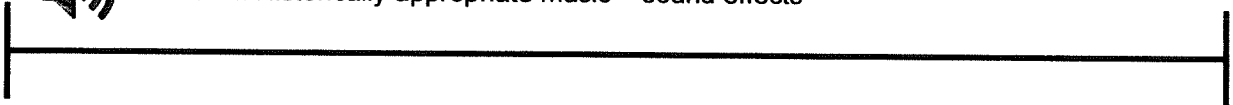
### Audio Tracks



Track 1: Student-read narration + oral history interviews



Track 2: Historically appropriate music + sound effects



# HANDOUT: ORGANIZING YOUR INFORMATION: DOCUMENTARIES


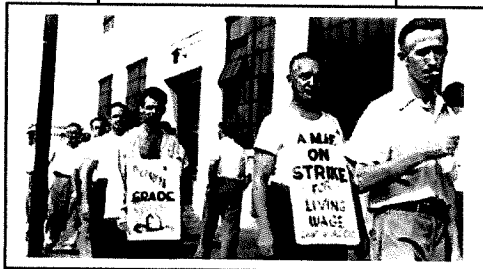

The most important element of a documentary is a great script. Remember that narration should always drive the visual images. In order to organize your documentary, consider the following:

Segment your information. You are telling a story, so you want to make sure that you have a clear and distinct parts:

- **Introduction:** Make sure people understand where and when this is happening and include your thesis
- **Background Information:** What will people need to understand your main argument and the importance of your topic?
- **Main Argument:** Fully explain your topic and argument.
- **Conclusion:** Address the impact your topic has had in history and sum up its importance.

Write your script first. Trying to put images together first often results in disaster and despair. If you know where you are going with your project, it is much easier to find images that fit your ideas than ideas to fit your images. Use a storyboard to add images that fit later on. It is likely that you will need about 100 images in total.

## Example of a Storyboard

Script	Image
During the Great Depression the Wagner Act created the National Labor Relations Board or NLRB, a federal agency. The goal of the Act was to allow workers greater rights, including the right to create labor unions.	
Many unions were soon formed and workers struck for better wages throughout the nation.	
However, the Act created controversy as some felt it worsened the Depression. It also created conflict between the two major union organizations.	

# **HANDOUT: 11 HELPFUL TIPS FOR MAKING A DOCUMENTARY**

- 1. Always write the script before you start creating the documentary!**
- 2. Make sure you have enough visuals for your documentary**
  - You might need more than you'd think:
    - Documentary = 10mins = 600 seconds
    - Avg. length of time each picture is on the screen = 5 seconds.
    - $600/5 = 120$  images!!
  - Other types of visuals: Newspaper headlines, video clips, interview clips, maps, drawings, cartoons, documents, title screens, talking head, etc.
  - No fuzzy pictures. Period!
  - Places to go for visuals:
    - Scan from books
    - Take digital photos of books/hard copy photos
    - Google Images - Use medium or preferably large sized images only
    - Minnesota Historical Society Visual Resources Database (Minnesota history topics)
    - Take video from other documentaries (its okay, just don't take the narration!)
- 3. Do a storyboard so that you know you have the visuals to support your narration**
  - Documentary-makers mantra: "Say cow, see cow!"
- 4. Record the narration before you insert the visuals**
  - The story must drive the visuals, not the other way around
  - Chop up your script into small chunks (1 or 2 paragraphs) to be recorded separately. This makes it easy to edit if you make a mistake.
  - Use a decent microphone. The ones built into computers aren't very good.
  - Talk over your microphone so you don't get "popping" noises
  - Limit distracting background noises
- 5. Save your project frequently!**
  - Make sure you have enough space (iMovie and Windows Movie Maker projects can take up several GB of space).
  - If you need to transport the project from computer to computer, be sure you have an external hard drive.
- 6. Do an interview (or a couple!)**
  - Interviews provide a validating outside opinion and add spice to the flow of the documentary
  - Good interview subjects:
    - Eyewitnesses
    - History professors
    - Authors
    - Newspaper reporters
    - Elected officials
    - Anyone else who can speak with a unique/authoritative voice on the subject
- 7. Don't try to cram too much into your project**
  - Talking faster just makes it harder to understand your project
  - Leave enough time to utilize title screens and dramatic pauses for effect and to allow your points to sink in with the audience
  - Sacrifice interesting details so that you can include more historical context and analysis

**8. Don't go crazy with the transitions**

- At some point, they just get annoying
- Mix it up, use a variety of transitions, and concentrate on using the less noticeable ones

**9. Listen to your project with a critical ear toward the audio**

- Make sure narration volume levels are consistent, especially from one speaker to the next
- Add music to create flow and build intensity/emotion
  - a. Use instrumental music only, unless there is some lyrical music that relates to the topic and is used unobtrusively
  - b. Check [www.freeplaymusic.com](http://www.freeplaymusic.com) for copyright-clean, instrumental music that can be tailored to the length you want
  - c. Classical music is also good
- Balance music volume so that it is not competing with the narration

**10. Add a brief credits screen to give credit for music, research archives, interview subjects and any "special thanks" you'd like to give**

- Credits do NOT need to be your complete bibliography. Credits will be much briefer, usually only listing major sources of information.

**11. Make backup copies of your project and make sure it plays on a variety of formats and machines.**

- Check with your teacher or event coordinator to double-check what technology is going to be available at the competition.
- History Day recommends that all students bring their documentaries as DVDs formatted to play on a standard, non-computer based DVD player (like the one attached to a TV set). Remember that this is different than saving your documentary on a DVD. When you format your documentary as a DVD, you should be able to play it on any DVD player.
- Test your documentary on different DVD players, including those not attached to a computer.
- If your project does NOT play on a standard DVD player, you may need to bring equipment with you to the competition.

## KNOW THE RULES

- ✓ NHD Rule Book – new edition revised for 2015
  - New rules for exhibits, websites, word counts, etc.
- ✓ Understand and follow the specific rules for each category – these are equalizers: time, size, and length limits, etc.

### Rules for All Categories

- ✓ Plagiarism – grounds for immediate disqualification
- ✓ Current Year – students may not build on a previous NHD project or reuse research
- ✓ Original Work – entries must be the original work of the student
- ✓ Conclusions must be your own
- ✓ Design and construction must be your own
- ✓ Objects may not be created by others for you to use
  - Examples: hiring an artist, having a friend design your set, having a parent build your exhibit
- ✓ Reasonable adult help
  - Teachers = guides, coaches
  - Parents = chauffeurs, financiers, proofreaders, cheerleaders.
  - Power tools are an adult's job

## QUALITIES OF A GOOD NHD PROJECT

Here are the qualities a judge will use to evaluate your NHD project. After you create your project, go through this list and ask yourself if you've met the criteria or incorporated the information into your project.

### Historical Quality: 60%

*The historical quality of your project is by far the most important criteria.*

- ☐ **My project is historically accurate:** All information in my project is true to the best of my knowledge.
- ☐ **I show analysis and interpretation:** My project doesn't just recount facts or tell a story. I interpret and analyze my topic. My project has a strong central thesis or argument that I prove. I can point to where I state my thesis in my project.
- ☐ **I place my topic in its historical context:** My topic didn't take place in isolation. I make sure to place my topic into historical context—the intellectual, physical, social, and cultural setting for my topic.
- ☐ **My project shows wide, balanced research and I use available primary sources:** These ideas all relate to the research behind your NHD project. Judges will look carefully at your bibliography to learn more about your research process. They want to see that you investigated multiple perspectives about your topic and that you looked at all sides of an issue. They are looking for research using both primary and secondary sources and want to see that you used a variety of source types.

### Relation to Theme: 20%

- ☐ **I clearly relate my topic to the theme:** My theme connection is clear in my project itself.
- ☐ **I demonstrate the significance of my topic in history and draw conclusions:** My project does more than just describe my topic. I explain why my topic is important in history or demonstrate its significance.

### Clarity of Presentation: 20%

- ☐ **My project and written materials are original, clear, appropriate, and organized:** I have an organized and well-written project. I was careful to avoid plagiarism and I have double-checked spelling and grammar in my project process paper, and bibliography.
- ☐ **My project has visual impact, uses multimedia effectively, and actively involves the viewer:** I thought about the overall design and organization of my project. I chose multimedia and interactive elements to help viewers understand my topic and prove my argument, if appropriate for my category.

From National History Day Handbook, "How to Create a Website" pg. 61