

## DOCUMENTARIES

### Helping students create documentaries

As with other History Day categories, strong research is the basis for a high-quality documentary. A thesis that explains the significance of the topic in history is also critical.

Work with students to follow the steps outlined in the handout, *Creating a Documentary*. Below is some advice on helping students create storyboards, which are an effective way of developing the rough draft of a historical documentary.

A storyboard is a visual display of the script divided into segments. Each segment is represented by an appropriate image (slides, video clips) for that segment. This technique is used by media production professionals to help them decide which pictures will best suit the script. Creating a storyboard allows students to see which visuals fit best, which still need to be made, and what songs need to be recorded.

- Students can create a storyboard by using index cards or by drawing boxes on a piece of paper.
- Each card or box represents one image and the text or narration that goes with that image.
- Students may also include background music or sounds that need to be recorded.
- Students should roughly sketch visual ideas on the upper portion of the card or box and place the part of the script that goes with that image on the lower part.

- Each segment should be numbered to make certain that it remains in proper sequence. Students can attach the cards to a board or piece of paper to look at the entire flow of the presentation and determine what changes need to be made.

The Documentary Storyboard form can be used to help students with the process.

### Teacher materials for Section II, Documentaries

- Documentary Checklist
- Documentary Calendar
- Documentary Storyboard



# DOCUMENTARY CHECKLIST

## DOCUMENTARY EVALUATION

- Improve title to better stress the theme
- Make your thesis more evident in your documentary
- Place more emphasis on:
  - Chronology of event(s)
  - History Day theme
  - Impact of your topic
- Other
- Your content should be more specifically focused on \_\_\_\_\_
- Include a title slide or clip
- Give more specific examples to illustrate your points
- Get rid of irrelevant information that does not relate to thesis
- Include fewer details and more analysis in your script
- Emphasize the "big ideas" about the topic
- Give more specific details (names, dates)
- Your documentary needs to be better organized
- Improve introduction
- Improve conclusion
- Develop a stronger thesis
- Improve visual aspect by \_\_\_\_\_
- Improve audio aspect by \_\_\_\_\_
- Speak more clearly
- Speak more slowly
- Try to create the "mood" of your topic better
- Include direct quotes in your project
- Choose different background music

## WORK HABITS

- Needs to demonstrate better organization
- Did not meet all checkpoint deadlines
- Did not sufficiently accept feedback
- Did not seek feedback from others on the project
- Did not do sufficient revisions of project
- Needs to demonstrate more effective group work skills (groups only)

# DOCUMENTARY CHECKLIST (cont.)

## RESEARCH

- \_\_\_ Increase number of primary sources used
- \_\_\_ Increase number of secondary sources used
- \_\_\_ Connect your topic to the issues of the time period

## QUALITY OF WRITTEN WORK

- \_\_\_ Type in readable font and font size
- \_\_\_ Make written work neat and free of errors
- \_\_\_ Written work was not stapled in correct order

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- \_\_\_ Make sure you know the definition of a primary source
- \_\_\_ Write entries in correct form
- \_\_\_ Correct indentation problems
- \_\_\_ Include annotations for each entry
- \_\_\_ Lengthen annotations (minimum 3 sentences each)
- \_\_\_ Entries must be alphabetized

## TITLE PAGE

- \_\_\_ Type in correct format
- \_\_\_ Correct spelling/grammar errors
- \_\_\_ Title page must be neat and clean

## MOCK INTERVIEW

- \_\_\_ Improve posture
- \_\_\_ Improve voice projection
- \_\_\_ Show more eye contact with audience
- \_\_\_ Convey more confidence when speaking
- \_\_\_ Answer questions more confidently

## MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

- Researched at a very high level
- Gave an effective oral presentation
- Completed high-level written work

- Finished paper is well written
- Truly incorporated the theme into the paper
- Worked with partner(s) cooperatively

# DOCUMENTARY CALENDAR

<b>STEPS</b>	<b>DUE DATES</b>
Get organized for research (paper management, choice of category and choice of individual or group work) Select a topic	
Background reading for historical context	
Narrow your topic Gather, record, and organize information	
Analyze and interpret sources	
Develop a thesis	
Identify pictures and video that matches script <i>Tip: Audio shapes the selection of visual images</i>	
Create a storyboard <i>Tip: Use index cards or draw boxes on paper, with each card or box representing one image and the sound or text that will go with that image</i>	
Produce video	
Evaluate and revise	
Proofread	
Complete process paper	

# DOCUMENTARY STORYBOARD (Student handout)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## VIDEO STORYBOARD FORMAT

Notes	Visual	Audio