

National History Day (NHD) students will spend the 2018–2019 school year delving into a topic based on the theme *Triumph & Tragedy in History*. You will ask questions that lead you down the path of discovery of not just what occurred, but how it occurred and, most important, why it happened and what the consequences were. As you set out to research your topic, you will discover the basic facts first, but then you will need to look deeper. You will go on to examine the factors that contributed to the development of your event, its influence on history, and the effect it had on the community, society, nation, and the world.

Throughout this academic year, you will need to ask yourself these questions and more:

* **How did your topic create change?**
* **What *is* triumph & how can you define a historical event as a triumph? (Merriam Webster defines triumph as a *“victory or conquest by military force or a notable success”*)**
* **Can one person’s triumph be a tragedy for someone else?**
* **Can someone suffer from tragedy and triumph at the same time?**
* **How can someone triumph after tragedy?**
* **Can triumph lead to tragedy?**

No matter which topic you decide to research, be sure to place it within its historical context. Examine the significance of your topic in history and show development over time. Begin by reading secondary sources, and then move on to seek out available primary sources. Using your research skills, you should be able to clearly explain the relationship of your topic to the theme, *Triumph & Tragedy in History*. Based on that understanding, you can develop quality papers, performances, exhibits, websites, and documentaries for National History Day.

***excerpted from nhd.org***

U.S. HISTORY SAMPLE TOPICS

**•** The Winter of Valley Forge: Triumph and Tragedy in the Continental Army

• The Missouri Compromise: Unable to Hold Off the Tragedy of the Civil War

• Smallpox and Inoculation

• Posthumous Portraiture: Creating Artistic Triumph out of Tragedy

• The First Battle of Bull Run: Anticipated Union Triumph Leads to Tragedy

• Mormon Migration to Utah

• Hudson River Valley School: Triumph of Nature

• The Battle of Little Bighorn

• The Triumphs and Tragedies of the Transcontinental Railroad

• D-Day: Triumph Despite Tragedy

• Banning of DDT: Rachel Carson’s Triumph

• Loving v. Virginia: Tragedy of Time, Triumph of Love

• The Great Raid on Camp Cabanatuan

• Rerouting the Chicago River: An Engineering Triumph

• The Creation of the Atomic Bomb: Scientific Triumph or Human Tragedy?

• Impressment of Sailors: An American Tragedy?

• The Tragedy of McCarthyism

• The Three-Fifths Compromise

• The Tet Offensive

• American Settlers Versus Native Americans

• Little Rock Nine: Triumph and Tragedy of Integration

• Reconstruction: Tragedy Follows Triumph

• The Jungle and the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906

• Alice Paul and the Woman Suffrage Movement

• Executive Order 8802: Security over Civil Liberties

EUROPEAN HISTORY SAMPLE TOPICS

• The Triumph of Gutenberg’s Printing Press

• Nazi Art Looting During World War II

• The Crusades: A Tragedy of Religious Proportion

• The Battle of Bosworth Field: The End to the Wars of the Roses

• Triumph and Tragedy of the French Resistance in World War II

• Treaty of Versailles: Triumph or Tragedy?

• The Marshall Plan: Economic Reconstruction of Europe

• Galileo: The Tragic Consequences of Triumph in the Skies

• The German U-Boats in the Battle of the Atlantic

• The Great Fire of London: Rebuilding Act of 1667

• The Easter Rising: The Triumphs and Tragedies of a Rebellion

• King Charles I: A Tragic End for the Monarchy

• The Founding of the European Union

• King Henry VIII Versus the Catholic Church

• The Division of Berlin After World War II

• Battle of Waterloo: New Beginnings from the End

• Marco Polo: Economy of the Silk Road

• Vincent Van Gogh: The Triumph and Tragedy of Genius

• Christopher Columbus: Triumph or Tragedy?