

LESSON: RESEARCH – HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Essential Questions: 1. What is historical significance? 2. How does historical significance fit in my project?

Objective: At the end of this lesson students will be able to identify the historical impact and significance of their topic/historical narrative.

Grade Level: 6 – 12

Time Needed: 50 minutes.

Materials: Sources that students have already found and notes they have already taken.

Procedure

1. Ask the students: *Why is something considered important? How do we measure that importance? When is something interesting but not important?*
2. Ask students (and list on the board), something that they think is important to them and their family. It can be an idea, a person, an event, anything. Pick three or five and ask those students to share why it is important to them.
3. When they have all shared, ask a question and tell them to think for about 90 seconds before they respond: *“Why should that be important to me also?”* Tell all students to write three to five sentences about why I should care about their chosen item; tell me why it should be important to me also.
4. Ask a few to share. If you know a student will respond well, continue to challenge them to form their argument.
5. Let students know that with History Day, they have to illustrate the historical significance of their topic. They need to convince the reader that this is important. That is often seen in what the topic influences and causes. This is another research component. You can define the significance as:
 - a. An impact
 - b. A reaction
 - c. A legacy
 - d. Changes
 - e. Consequences
 - f. Lasting effects
6. These can be short-term and long-term. Finding them can be difficult as historical significance is different for each topic. Some are obvious, some are hidden, and that is why this is still a research component. Students should articulate the importance of events and any consequences or lasting effects in relation to the annual theme. How did your topic influence history? (Example: television vs. color television. One changes the way we communicate news and entertainment while the other was just an aesthetic improvement on the other.)
7. Have students look through the resources they have already located and figure out what parts will address historical significance. Then, see if they can find three to five more that focus on the historical significance.
8. As a group, share what students have found. Ask students to think about where they might go next.