

“Teachers Rule:” Guidelines on Teacher Discretion in Shaping a Classroom History Day Assignment

These guidelines apply to National History Day in Minnesota Regional/District contests and the Minnesota State History Day contest.

Within the structure of the *National History Day Contest Rule Book*, teachers have the ability to make important decisions to shape the implementation of the program within their own classroom.

“Teachers Rule” is Minnesota History Day’s philosophy to support the ability of teachers to make decisions about the following aspects of NHD in ways that are best suited to their curriculum and available resources:

1. **Individual/Group Size:** Teachers may limit the option to work alone or in a group. While NHD permits groups of up to five students, teachers may limit the group size to less than five (but not more than five).
2. **Group Member Selection:** Teachers may determine how student groups are formed. Teachers may require parental “sign-off” on group work.
3. **Topic Selection:** Teachers may choose to limit student topic selection to a certain time period, geography, content area, etc. to better fit the content of the course in which NHD is being used. Teachers may create lists of topics that are not permitted in their class or require parental/ administrative “sign-off” on topics. Teachers may limit the number of duplicate topics within a contest year.
4. **Category Choice:** Teachers may choose to limit the category options (Documentary, Exhibit, Paper, Performance, Website) available to students. Teachers may also choose to limit the number of projects in a certain category being created at the school.
5. **Advancing from School-Level Contests:** It is up to the teacher or teachers at the school-level to determine which projects advance to the Regional/District level of competition. Teachers may ask students to volunteer, make these decisions on their own, host a competitive school event with volunteer judges, or a combination of the above to determine which entries advance.

When possible, Minnesota History Day encourages disputes between student participants, parents, and teachers to be resolved on the school-level. While we will not overturn school-level decisions on implementation-related decisions (such as those listed above), we can help provide clarification and discuss possible additional options.

Please contact Minnesota History Day staff with any questions about these guidelines.