

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
<p>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.</p>	
<p>Many unions were soon formed and workers struck for better wages throughout the nation.</p>	
<p>However, the Act created controversy as some felt it worsened the Depression. It also created conflict between the two major union organizations.</p>	