NHD 2027 Category Guidelines – Documentary

Bucks Mont Regional National History Day Contest

For the 2027 Bucks Mont Regional NHD Contest, all student documentary projects will be submitted **virtually** and must follow the guidelines detailed below.

Documentary Category

A documentary is an audio/visual presentation that uses multiple source types such as images, video, and sound to communicate the historical argument, research, and interpretation of the topic's significance in history.

All student submissions will be judged on Historical Quality (80%) & Clarity of Presentation (20%)

- **Historical Quality:** This section focuses on the strengths of the historical argument, research, and relationship to the year's designated theme.
- **Clarity of Presentation:** This section evaluates how well the project communicates the argument using the tools of the category.

Rules for Student Documentaries

Please make sure to read your category's full rules in the official National History Day contest rule book prior to referring to the specific highlighted helpful guidelines. This rule book gives you specific information regarding contest divisions and categories.

1. Documentary Elements
    - Documentaries must be an original production.
    - To produce a documentary, students must have access to equipment and be able to operate it.
    - Documentaries must conform to all general and category rules.
2. Time Requirements
    - Documentaries may not exceed ten minutes in length.
    - Timing starts when the first visual image appears or the first sound is heard.
    - Timing ends when the last visual image or sound concludes, including source credits.
3. Entry Production
    - Students must create and produce their entries.
    - Students must operate all equipment, including recording and editing equipment, used in the production of the documentary.
    - Only students may write and narrate the documentary's script.
    - Only students and the person(s) interviewed may appear in the documentary.
    - Using materials created by others specifically for use in the entry is prohibited.
    - Students may use professional photographs, film, recorded music, etc. in the documentary, as long as all guidelines for source credits are followed.

4. Documentary Introduction
    - The documentary introduction must state **only** the title of the documentary and student name(s) before the start of the documentary.
5. Source Credits
    - The last portion of the documentary must be a list of acknowledgments and credits for sources of moving footage, interviews, music, and images that appear in the documentary. These source credits must be brief – not full bibliographic citations and not annotated. Items found in the same collection can be included together in one credit.
    - The list of source credits is included in the ten-minute time limit. They must be readable.
    - All sources used in the making of the documentary must be properly cited in the annotated bibliography as well.
6. All student documentaries, in addition to the film file, must include the following written materials in this order:
    - **Title Page** – the title page must include **only** the title of the entry, name of student(s), contest division, category, and applicable word count.
    - **Process Paper** – the process paper must be 500 words or fewer and must not include quotes, images, or captions. Your process paper must answer the following questions:
        1. How did you choose your topic and how does it relate to the annual theme?
        2. How did you conduct your research?
        3. How did you create your project?
        4. What is your historical argument?
        5. In what ways is your topic significant in history?
    - **Annotated Bibliography** – the annotated bibliography must list all sources that were consulted in the creation of the entry, must be sorted into primary and second sources, and must combine photos or other materials from the same collection into a single citation. Each annotation must be no more than two or three sentences and should explain the following:
        1. How you used the source
        2. How the source helped you to understand the topic
7. Preparation Requirements
    - All documentary video submissions must be saved as an .mp4 file.
        1. Name the video file as your last name and project title (i.e. LastName_ProjectTitle.mp4).
        2. If you are doing a group project, include all your group members' last names then the project title (ie.LastName1LastName2_ProjectTitle.mp4).
    - Save your required written materials as a PDF file.
        1. Name the file with your written materials as your last name and project title (i.e. LastName_ProjectTitle.pdf).
        2. If you are doing a group project, include all your group members' last names, then the project title (ie.LastName1LastName2_ProjectTitle.pdf).

Documentary Category- Bucks Mont Regional NHD Contest Submission Requirements
All required materials must be submitted to the Bucks Mont Regional NHD Contest website between Monday, January 4, 2027 @ 9:00 am and **Tuesday, February 16, 2027 @ 5:00 pm.**

1. Make sure you have registered and created a student login at the Bucks Mont Regional NHD Contest website. Please note that your teacher must also be registered before you can register or submit your project.
2. Log in to your student account on the Bucks Mont Regional NHD Virtual Contest website.
3. In the top right corner, click on your name and select "My Profile."
4. Click the "Entry" tab at the top of the page.
5. Next to "Written Materials" click the button that reads "Add File" to upload the PDF file with all required written materials for your project.
6. There are two ways to upload your video:
    a. Next to "Documentary Link" copy and paste the shareable project URL. This should link to a downloadable .mp4 documentary file.
    b. Next to "Video Upload" click the button that reads "Add File" to upload the .mp4 file with your documentary video submission.
7. Always remember to click "Save" before exiting this page.
8. You may delete and re-upload your project as many times as you like until the deadline on **Tuesday, February 16, 2027 @ 5:00 pm.** It is your responsibility to ensure your project is in the system by that time. No exceptions will be made.

For more information, please contact historyday@mercermuseum.org