



National History Day 2021-22

This introduction was adapted from the National History Day Theme Narrative for the North Carolina audience.

National History Day (NHD) chooses a different theme each year to unite all National History Day projects. While your topic must connect to the annual theme, the theme is broad enough for you to pick a topic from any time period, subject matter, or place. It is designed to help you go beyond the names and dates in your research to finding the **impact** and **significance** it has had on the past and may continue to have on the present and future.

During the 2021–2022 school year, NHD students will explore the theme of **Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences**. Some topics might be stories of both debate and diplomacy, while others might cover debate with little diplomatic effort or diplomacy without debate. Students must investigate to determine whether one or both of those themes are present in their narrative.

Think of debate and diplomacy as a chess game. Several pieces are on the board, each with its unique talents and abilities. Some moves are aggressive and designed to advance the player one step closer to checkmate. Other actions involve the sacrifice of certain game pieces to advance.

Defining Debate & Diplomacy

Debates are formal or informal discussions in which people argue opposing views.

Sometimes debates are on display during one main event, such as a political debate ahead of an election. Other times they play out over many days, months, or years in all sorts of formats such as newspapers, speeches, and protests. Some debates involve two sides, while others involve three or more perspectives.

When you first think of **Diplomacy**, you may think of international actions between two countries. Though examples of these actions in history can be considered for this theme, diplomacy in history can be seen in many different situations. **Diplomacy** is art of dealing with people in a sensitive and effective way. When considering diplomacy, look for **negotiation, compromise, and open communication** between opposing views – whether between two people, multiple groups, or many countries.

Debate and diplomacy can occur by themselves or be intertwined. Think of how a debate might lead to negotiation or a compromise, and how an act of diplomacy may start a new debate. Can a debate lack diplomacy? Think of examples of where two groups are fighting, but neither is willing to negotiate or be open to the other's ideas.

It is not a problem if your topic cannot connect to both debate and diplomacy but be sure not to ignore one if you are able to connect to both sides of the theme.

Defining Debate & Diplomacy

You must also consider the **successes, failures, and consequences** of debates or diplomatic exchanges. Were they successful, and for how long? Did they fail to resolve the issues or have unintended consequences? Did the choices lead to a cycle or debate and diplomacy? Ask questions about successes, failures, and consequences to help with your analysis of the topic. What do we consider a successful debate or diplomatic endeavor? Can a failure turn into a success or vice versa?

Important to Remember

As you hunt for topics, do not forget that the most important part of a NHD project is for it to demonstrate why your topic matters today. As NHD likes to ask, **“so what?”** Did the debate or diplomacy have a lasting impact on society? Did it inspire future events that might not have otherwise been possible? Remember that almost all debates or diplomacy are part of a larger story.

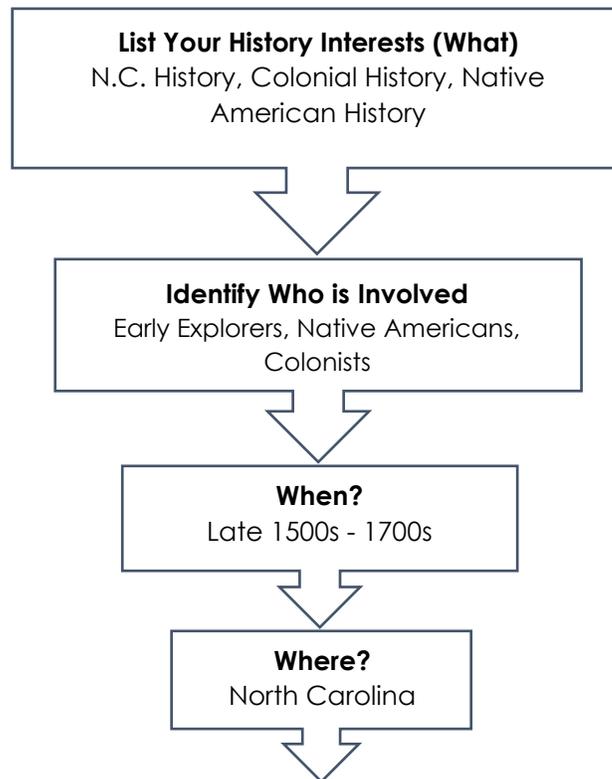
Ultimately, the answers to these questions must be found through **research**. Keep an **open mind** as you search your sources and discover **examples of debate and diplomacy in history**.

Narrowing Down a Topic

As you choose your topic, also remember not to be too broad. A topic such as, “Debates on Slavery before the Civil War” might seem like a good choice at first, but it covers way too many years, people, and places to have a clear thesis and stay within the word or time limits of your project category. Narrowing that topic down to examine a specific person or event in the fight to end slavery, will help focus your research and the **historical argument** you would like to present.

Creating a Topic Funnel

This chart shows an example of how you can use **Who, What, When, and Where** questions to narrow down your broad history interests into right-size topic ideas.



The Narrowed Down Topic Ideas

- Manteo: A Diplomat for His People
- The Debates & Failed Diplomacy that led to the Tuscarora War
- Establishing the 1767 Cherokee Boundary Line

See the next page for more topic ideas in North Carolina history

NC History Topic Ideas

These topic ideas explore possible connections to this year's theme within North Carolina history. Though sorted by type of history, many topic ideas fit into multiple sections so explore the list carefully. Some ideas will need to be narrowed down based on how you would like to approach the topic. A great place to start exploring many of these topics is on www.NCpedia.org.

African American History

Freedmen's Conventions in 1865 and 1866
David Walker's Appeal
Golden Frinks
Montford Point Marines
1970 Oxford Protest of Death of Henry Marrow
NC Green Book Locations
Wilmington Insurrection of 1898

Civics and Government

1669 Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina
Committees of Correspondence
Fontana Dam and the Road to Nowhere
Halifax or Mecklenburg Resolves
Installation of 1-40 Raleigh to Wilmington
NC Prohibition Vote
NC State Language Debate of the 1980s
Placement of NC Capital
The Walton War: NC & GA Boarder War 1804
Winston and Salem Merged
NC Battle for the Parkway

Education

1971 Durham Save Our Schools Charrette
Rosenwald Schools
Palmer Memorial Institute
N.C. Debates on Teaching Evolution
Speaker Ban Law
Benjamin Hedrick's "Defence"
NC History Exceptional Child Education
Native American Education

Environmental or Agricultural History

Highest Mountain Debate: Mitchell and Clingman
Placements of Toxic Waste Incinerators in NC
1976 Creation of NC Aquariums
Dairy Pasteurization Movement in NC
Big Tobacco and NC Farming
1990s Movement to Confront Hog Waste
Establishment of Hunting Seasons in NC
Creation of State Parks in NC

Fight for Equality

North Carolina Sit-ins
Dorothea Dix: Treatment of the Mentally Ill in NC
Jacob Henry's Speech
1986 Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade in Durham

Industrial or Labor History

Burlington General Textile Strike of 1934
Gastonia Strike: The Loray Mill 1929
Harriet-Henderson Cotton Mills Strike
1991 Imperial Food Products Plant Fire
Passage of Child Labor Laws in NC
Migrant Worker Rights in NC

Maritime History

Placement NC Lighthouses & Lightships
Creation of Life-saving Stations in NC
North Carolina Privateers
Blackbeard's 1718 "Gracious Pardon"
Debate of Slavery and Status of Black Sailors in NC
The Jones Act and Impact in NC

Military History

Debating War with Britain (War of 1812)
Loyalist Fate after War (Revolutionary War)
Negotiations at the Bennett Place (Civil War)
The Fall of Saigon and Ambassador Graham Martin (Vietnam War)
The Surrender of Raleigh (Civil War)
Regulator Movement

Native American History

Chief Yonaguska and Resisting Removal
Manteo and the Roanoke Island Settlers
Tryon Mountain: 1767 Cherokee Boundary Line
The Tuscarora War
Tom Blunt and the English Government
De Soto or Juan Pardo Expeditions in Western NC
John Stuart: Indian Agent
John Lawson Exploration
Colonial NC Indian Trade Commission
Lowry War in Robeson County
Fights for Govt. Recognition of many NC Tribes

Political History

1964 War on Poverty Tour-Rocky Mount NC
North Carolina Congressional Gerrymandering
Helms-Hunt Senate Race
John J. Parker U.S. Supreme Court Nomination
Ratification of the Federal Constitution in NC
Stanly-Spaight Duel

Sports History

Debates on Football Safety in NC
Desegregation of NC College Sports Teams
Baseball Games with Union Prisoners (Civil War)
Debate on Women in Sports in NC
First Three-point Shot in College Basketball (WCU)

Women's History

Edenton Tea Party
Equals Right Amendment
Gertrude Weil & NC Women's Suffrage
Lillian Exum Clement's Election
NC Women's Work to Save Many Historic Sites
Salisbury Bread Riot
NC Council on the Status of Women