

HIS 200 Project 1 Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

History is for human self-knowledge . . . the only clue to what man can do is what man has done. The value of history, then, is that it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is.

—R. G. Collingwood

Historical awareness informs various aspects of our lives. We live in a time of rapid change, and we often think more about the future than the past. However, studying history can help us better understand our own lives in the context of the places we live and society in general. In America, specifically, the government is informed by its citizens. If the ideals of society shift, that shift will eventually move throughout the different levels of government, effecting widespread change.

For the projects in this course, you will select a historical event that has impacted American society in some way. You may select an event that was discussed in the course, or you may select your own event, with instructor approval. You may consider using the event you chose to work on in your Perspectives in History class, if that event is something you wish to investigate further through this assessment.

In Project 1, you will develop a plan for an essay on this historical event. The plan will include a brief description of the selected historical event and the resources you will use in your research. In addition, you will identify an audience for your essay and decide how to communicate your information to this audience. In Project 2, you will write an essay analyzing the historical event you selected, examining its impact on society as well as its impact on you personally.

Project 1 addresses the following course outcomes:

- Select appropriate and relevant primary and secondary sources in investigating foundational historic events
- Communicate effectively to specific audiences in examining fundamental aspects of human history
- Apply key approaches to studying history in addressing critical questions related to historical narratives and perspectives

Prompt

Your writing plan should answer the following prompt: Select a historical event that has impacted American society. Develop a plan for writing your essay, describing the historical event, selecting appropriate resources for your research, and identifying an audience for your essay. The purpose of this writing plan is to provide you with a way to gather your thoughts and begin thinking about how to support your thesis statement. *The following critical elements will be assessed in a 1- to 2-page word processing document.*

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed:

- I. Describe the **historical event** that you selected. Why is this event significant?
- II. Describe at least two **secondary sources** that you could use to research your historical event. Your sources must be relevant to your event and must be of an appropriate academic nature. In your description, consider questions such as: What are the similarities and differences in the content of your sources? What makes these sources appropriate and relevant for investigating your event? What was your thought process when you were searching for sources? How did you make choices?
- III. Describe at least two **primary sources** that you could use to research your historical event. Your sources must be relevant to your event and must be of an appropriate academic nature. In your description, consider questions such as: How do these sources relate to your secondary sources? What do they add to your understanding of the event? What makes them appropriate and relevant for investigating your event?
- IV. Based on your review of primary and secondary sources, develop a **research question** related to the historical event you selected. In other words, what would you like to know more about?
- V. Identify an **audience** that would be interested in your historical event and research question. For example, who would benefit most from hearing your message?
- VI. Describe how and why you can tailor your **message** to your audience, providing specific examples. For example, will your audience understand historical terminology and principles associated with your event, or will you need to explain these? How will you communicate effectively with your audience?

Project 1 Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your writing plan should adhere to the following formatting requirements: 1–2 pages, double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (85%)	Needs Improvement (55%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Historical Event	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and description is exceptionally clear and contextualized	Describes selected historical event and its significance	Describes selected historical event and its significance, but with gaps in detail or clarity	Does not describe selected historical event and its significance	15.8

Secondary Sources	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and description of resources demonstrates strong understanding of information needed to investigate foundational historic events	Describes at least two relevant and appropriate secondary sources that could be used to research the historical event	Describes at least two secondary sources that could be used to research the historical event, but with gaps in appropriateness, relevance, or detail	Does not describe at least two secondary sources that could be used to research the historical event	15.8
Primary Sources	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and description of resources demonstrates strong understanding of information needed to investigate foundational historic events	Describes at least two relevant and appropriate primary sources that could be used to research the historical event	Describes at least two primary sources that could be used to research the historical event, but with gaps in appropriateness, relevance, or detail	Does not describe at least two primary sources that could be used to research the historical event	15.8
Research Question	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates insight into connection between research and question	Develops research question related to the selected historical event based on review of primary and secondary sources	Develops research question related to the selected historical event, but question is not based on review of primary and secondary sources	Does not develop research question related to the selected historical event	15.8
Audience	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and identification of audience demonstrates insight into event and question	Identifies an audience that would be interested in event and research question	Identifies an audience that would be interested in event and research question, but audience is not appropriate for event and question	Does not identify an audience that would be interested in event and research question	15.8
Message	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates sophisticated understanding of how to effectively communicate with specific audience	Describes how and why message can be tailored to audience, providing specific examples	Describes how and why message can be tailored to audience, but with gaps in examples	Does not describe how and why message can be tailored to audience	15.8
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	5.2
Total					100%