

# My Family's Place in History

**Overview:** This project is designed to allow you to conduct authentic and original historical research on a topic that may have been overlooked by the historians we have read so far, your family. Your job over the next two and half months includes conducting research on your family, linking that research to the topics and trends discussed in class, developing an in-depth understanding of one event or period of history experienced by your family, and creating a written, verbal, or digital presentation of your findings.

## Essential Skills Utilized:

- Analyzing Evidence: Content and Sourcing
  - o This requires the ability to describe, select, and evaluate relevant evidence about the past from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, archaeological artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary sources) and draw conclusions about their relevance to different historical issues. A historical analysis of sources focuses on the interplay between the content of a source and the authorship, point of view, purpose, audience, and format or medium of that source, assessing the usefulness, reliability, and limitations of the source as historical evidence.
- Contextualization
  - o This requires the ability to connect historical events and processes to specific circumstances of time and place as well as broader regional, national, or global processes.
- Synthesis
  - o This requires the ability to develop understanding of the past by making meaningful and persuasive historical and/or cross-disciplinary connections between a given historical issue and other historical contexts, periods, themes, or disciplines.
- Argumentation
  - o This requires the ability to create an argument and support it using relevant historical evidence. Creating a historical argument includes defining and framing a question about the past and then formulating a claim or argument about that question, often in the form of a thesis. A persuasive historical argument requires a precise and defensible thesis or claim, supported by rigorous analysis of relevant and diverse historical evidence. The argument and evidence used should be framed around the application of a specific historical thinking skill (e.g., comparison, causation, patterns of continuity and change over time, or periodization). Furthermore, historical thinking involves the ability to examine multiple pieces of evidence in concert with each other, noting contradictions, corroborations, and other relationships among sources to develop and support an argument.
- Using Evidence to Support an Argument
  - o This requires the ability to examine multiple pieces of evidence in concert with each other, noting contradictions, corroborations, and other relationships among sources to develop and support an argument.

**Final Product:** The format of your final presentation of this project is up to you. It could be an essay, class presentation, video documentary, or interactive website. You may choose to complete the final presentation with a classmate working on the same topic. Regardless of the format, each student must include the follow:

- A research question derived from pages 11 to 21 of the AP US History Curriculum Framework located here <http://www.apunitedstateshistory.org/2015%20Framework.PDF> (5 points)
- A thesis that proposes an answer to the research question that is historically accurate and relevant (10 points)
- The historical context surrounding the topic or movement discussed. This should include the events leading to your topic and events occurring simultaneously that influence your topic. These events could be both inside and outside the United States. (10 points)
- At least seven primary source documents (14 for a group of two) that provide specific evidences to prove your thesis. At least two of these documents must come from your family. Documents must be explicitly used in a logical manor to support your thesis. (15 points)
- For each of the seven documents, explain the significance of the author's point of view, author's purpose, historical context or the author's intended audience. (15 points)
- A detailed explanation of at least one pieces of historical evidence not found in your documents that supports your thesis (10 points)
- Synthesis: identify and explain how your topic relates to other similar events or movements in American history. Explain how this pattern makes your topic a worthwhile and valuable topic of research in the larger context of American history. (10 points)
- Present your finds as a cohesive argument that is organized in a logical and fluid way. (15 points)
- A work cited page that conforms to the requirements of Centennial's English Department. (5 points)

## Procedure:

### Step 1: Decide on a topic

- Talk with your family (near and far). Ask the following questions?

- *Did anyone in our family take part in or experience a significant historical event or movement?*  
(This could be anything from fighting in the Civil War to campaigning for Barak Obama to moving to the south during the Sunbelt Migration to marching with Martin Luther King to immigrating to the United States)

If the person/people are deceased...

- *Did they keep a scrapbook, diary, mementos, photographs or newspaper clippings about their role?*
- *Would I be able to see and duplicate these documents?*
- *Is there a living family member or friend who spoke with them in detail about their experience?*
- *Would this person be willing to be interviewed?*

If the person/people are living...

- *Are they willing to be interviewed about their experience?*
- *Do they know other people who might also be willing to be interviewed?*
- *Did they keep a scrapbook, diary, mementos, photographs or newspaper clippings about the experience?*
- *Would I be able to see and duplicate this documents?*

- Make a list of the events or movements mentioned by your family.

- Compare this list the AP US History Curriculum Framework (pg 24 to 90) located at <http://www.apunitedstateshistory.org/2015%20Framework.PDF>

- Chose a topic based on the following criteria:

- Does the event or movement relate to an element of the Curriculum Framework? (a Roman numeral or letter)
- Can you obtain at least two primary source documents with information related to your family's role in the event or movement? (This could be an interview, diary entry, newspaper clipping, photograph, personal letter, government document, memento...)
- Is this something you are interested in?

### Step 2: Develop a research proposal **Due February 26<sup>th</sup> at 8pm**

- Complete the research proposal form located at: <http://goo.gl/forms/vvV1GrXY7F>

### Step 3: Conduct background research

- Utilize your textbook and the databases available through the Learning Commons to develop expertise on your topic. <http://chsmylearningcommons.weebly.com/catalogs.html>

### Step 4: Family research

- If you are working with written documents, consider the following questions as you read or view.

What is the Document?

When was the Document created?

What was going on in America and the world at the time?

Where was the document created?

What was going on this area of the country or world at the time?

Why was the document created? Look beyond the obvious!!!

Who created the document?

Who was the intended audience?

What historical information can we pull from the document?

Can the document be trusted? – Why or why not?

- If you are going to conduct an interview, please view these helpful videos first

-Overview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sOmEpi2STM>

-Writing interview questions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RjxqXAT9Jc>

Remember to consider the requirements of the project as you develop your questions.

-Conducting the interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1zinUXYEKs>

-Consider preserving your interview in the Library of Congress, for more details visit <https://storycorps.org/diy/>

#### **Step 5:** Conduct Additional Research

- Find the additional documents to help answer your research question. Many documents can be found at the links below.

<https://sheg.stanford.edu/us>

<http://www.archives.gov/research/>

<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/collections>

<http://www.loc.gov/library/libarch-digital.html>

<http://www.smithsoniansource.org/display/primarysource/search.aspx>

Consider these questions as you read evaluate the documents

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#### **Step 6:** Develop a Thesis and Project outline.

- Utilize the format here <http://apunitedstateshistory.org/#How to write a DBQ> to organize your research
- Submit the proposed thesis and outline for review via GOOGLE Classroom by March 21<sup>st</sup>

#### **Step 7:** Revise and finalize your project. Due May 9<sup>th</sup>

**Rubric:**

Requirement	Point Allocation				
<b>Research Proposal</b>	<b>2 points</b>	<b>1 point</b>			
	Submitted correctly and on time	Submitted late or incorrectly			
<b>Thesis and Outline (first draft)</b>	<b>3 points</b>	<b>1 point</b>			
	Submitted correctly and on time	Submitted late or incorrectly			
<b>Research question</b>	<b>5 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>			
	Question relates directly to AP Framework; it is clear and historically relevant	Question relates to framework but is unclear or not historically relevant			
<b>Final Thesis</b>	<b>10 Points</b>	<b>8 points</b>	<b>6 points</b>	<b>4 points</b>	<b>2 points</b>
	Thesis is historically accurate, defensible, relevant, and address all parts of the research question	Thesis includes all required elements but is unclear or confusing	Thesis is missing one requirement	Thesis is missing two requirements	Thesis is missing three requirements
<b>Historical context</b>	<b>10 Points</b>	<b>8 points</b>	<b>6 points</b>	<b>4 points</b>	<b>2 points</b>
	Situates the argument by explaining five of the broader events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question	Situates the argument by explaining four of the broader events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question	Situates the argument by explaining three of the broader events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question	Situates the argument by explaining two of the broader events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question	Situates the argument by explaining one of the broader events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question
<b>Primary Source Documents</b>	<b>15 points</b>	<b>12 points</b>	<b>9 points</b>	<b>6 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>
	Uses the content of at least seven primary source documents to support the stated thesis (with two from students family)	Uses the content of at least six primary source documents to support the stated thesis (with two from students family)	Uses the content of at least five primary source documents to support the stated thesis (with one from students family)	Uses the content of at least four primary source documents to support the stated thesis (with one from students family)	Uses the content of at least three primary source documents to support the stated thesis (with one from students family)
<b>Author's point of view, author's purpose, historical context or the author's intended audience</b>	<b>15 points</b>	<b>12 points</b>	<b>9 points</b>	<b>6 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>
	Explains the significance the requirement accurately in six or seven documents	Explains the significance the requirement accurately in five documents	Explains the significance the requirement accurately in four documents	Explains the significance the requirement accurately in three documents	Explains the significance the requirement accurately in two documents
<b>Outside Historical Evidence</b>	<b>10 Points</b>	<b>8 points</b>	<b>6 points</b>	<b>4 points</b>	<b>2 points</b>
	Provides and explains an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond the documents to support the thesis	Provides an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond the documents to support the thesis	Provides an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond the documents that is relevant to the argument	Provides an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond the documents that is not relevant to the argument	Provides vague generalizations that are relevant to the argument
<b>Synthesis</b>	<b>10 Points</b>	<b>8 points</b>	<b>6 points</b>	<b>4 points</b>	<b>2 points</b>
	Identifies and explains how topic relates to two other similar events or movements in American history and explain how this pattern makes your topic a worthwhile and valuable topic of research in the larger context of American history.	Identifies and explains how topic relates to one other similar events or movements in American history and explain how this pattern makes your topic a worthwhile and valuable topic of research in the larger context of American history.	Identifies and explains how topic relates to one other similar events or movements in American history or explain how this pattern makes your topic a worthwhile and valuable topic of research in the larger context of American history.	Identifies how topic relates to one other similar events or movements in American history	Explains how topic relates to general trends in American History with no specific evidence
<b>Cohesive Argument</b>	<b>15 points</b>	<b>12 points</b>	<b>9 points</b>	<b>6 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>
	Project presents research findings in a clear logical order that makes an organized arguments to support the stated thesis. Each requirement of the project is integrated into the overall argument in a logical and cohesive way	One problems with the stated requirement	Two problems with the stated requirement	Three problems with the stated requirement	Four problems with the stated requirement
<b>Work Cited</b>	<b>5 points</b>	<b>3 points</b>			
	Submitted correctly	Submitted incorrectly			