

8th Grade Georgia Studies

I am excited that you will be in my class next year. I cannot wait to get to meet and know you. I hope that all of you are excited about coming back for a brand-new school year.

I am giving you a head start in beginning to start your National History Day (NHD) project. This year's theme is:

Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences.

I would like for you to read the information that was provided to us by the National History Day organization explaining this topic. Take your time in reading this and understanding the theme. The theme drives your project. Many of you who participated in NHD did great work, but your projects lacked meeting the theme.

I would then like for you to list ideas of topics you would like to explore. Choose only things that you are interested in. One key is that the event had to take place 20 years ago in the past. There are exceptions to this. The reason being is that it takes time for historians to research and report their findings and then have their peers look at their work and validate it.

The reason for you to have several ideas is because as you begin to research your project you may find that you cannot find research to support your topic. That will lead to frustration. So the summer is a perfect time to sit back and begin to look and research your project so that when you come into my classroom you will already have the knowledge that there is material out there to assist you in your endeavor.

I would then ask you to go and view the NHD website at NHD.org and look through how to start your project. In addition, it would be prime time to view the rules and instructions listed there. This will enable you to have a great discussion with me during the first week of school.

Finally, I want to explain that this is not a Google piece of work. This means that the internet is a great place to get some understanding of your chosen topic, but it cannot be the means for your research. That will be from books, encyclopedias, diaries, magazines, archives, and possibly personal interviews. A great place to find all of these is on Galileo. This program can be found in the student section in the MCSD website. You will need a password to access it. This year's password is "notebook."

Finally, begin thinking of how you will present your idea. If you love to write, then choose the individual history paper. If you enjoy computers, then use the website builder. If you are interested in movie making, then the documentary is up your alley. If you are an actor or actress or a play write, then choose the performance. Lastly if you like to create exhibits, then the exhibition is yours. Remember if you choose the exhibition your board will be six feet tall and not the small 3-footer.

Have a great summer and I cannot wait to see what it is your topics will be. They will be taken up on the first week of school.

Sincerely,

Mr. Shively