



Definitions of Superior, Excellent, and Good Evaluations

	Superior	Excellent	Good
Historical Quality (60%)			
Entry is historically accurate	Free from historical inaccuracies	Minor inaccuracies that do not detract from the overall quality	Inaccuracies that do detract from the overall quality
Shows analysis and interpretation	Strong analysis/interpretation of facts	Most facts analysis/interpretation	Mostly recounts facts with little analysis/interpretation
	Strong thesis or argument that considers multiple viewpoints	Solid thesis or argument	Thesis or argument is evident
Places topic in historical context	Places topic in intellectual, social, physical, and cultural settings	Places topic in more than one of the following settings: intellectual, social, physical, and cultural	Places topic in at least one of the following settings: intellectual, social, physical, and cultural
	Clearly and effectively reflects historical perspective – the cause and consequences of an event	Reflects historical perspectives – the cause and consequences of an event	Does not reflect historical perspectives – the cause and consequences of an event
Shows wide research	Uses a variety of primary and secondary sources and considers multiple viewpoints	Uses a variety of primary and secondary sources	Little use of primary and/or secondary sources or little variety in sources
Uses available primary sources	Primary sources directly related to topic by time or presentation	Primary sources directly related to topic by time or presentation	Primary sources directly related to topic by time or presentation
	Significant quality and diversity of primary resources	Significant quality or diversity of primary resources, but not both	Limited use of primary sources
Research is balanced	Well-balanced consideration of multiple viewpoints and perspectives	Considers multiple viewpoints but may be unbalanced	Consideration of only one viewpoint
Relation to Theme (20%)			
Clearly relates topic to theme	Entry topic clearly and effectively relates to theme	Entry topic clearly relates to theme, but includes elements that are unrelated	Theme mentioned in entry, but relevance not clear
Demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions	Fully answers question, “Why is this topic important?”	Answers the question, “Why is this topic important?”	States why this topic is important but does not draw conclusions
	Draws in-depth or insightful conclusions about the topic’s significance	Draws some conclusions about the topic’s significance	
Clarity of Presentation (20%) (Refer to specific entry category rubric and Judges’ Instructions)			
Specific Qualities vary by category	All aspects on specific entry category rubric (including process paper and bibliography) are evident	Most aspects on specific entry category rubric (including process paper and bibliography) are evident	Some aspects on specific entry category rubric (including process paper and bibliography) are evident
	All aspects on specific entry category rubric are evident	Most aspects on specific entry category rubric are evident	Some aspects on specific entry category rubric are evident

Typical Questions to Ask Students

Begin by asking students an easier question that they may have already discussed with their teacher. This will build their confidence and make them more comfortable during their interview. Some examples of “icebreaker” questions are:

- * Why did you choose this topic?
- * Could you explain to me how your project relates to this year’s theme?
- * What was your favorite primary source and why?
- * As you researched what surprised you the most about your topic?
- * What were the greatest obstacles to your success? How did you overcome the obstacles?

Move on to more challenging questions that will prompt students to analyze their topic and relate them to broader themes in history. Examples of higher-level questions are:

- * Did you find conflicting information in your sources? If so, how did you deal with the conflicting information?
- * When you were conducting research, what sources did you find the most valuable and why?
- * How did your thesis evolve from the time that you started your research to the point when you actually started assembling your project?
- * What improvements can you still make on your project?
- * How did you find primary sources? Did using primary sources change any opinions you had about your topic?
- * What do you think was the single most important factor that caused (the event in question) to occur?
- * How do you think your topic influenced history?
- * If the student has a topic in a content area in which you are familiar, then ask appropriate questions.

Evaluating Entries

- You are evaluating the work of young students. Expect quality, but do not hold them to graduate student standards.
- Your comments should be constructive and positive.
- Do not make negative comments, and be careful how you phrase your comments.

- It's your job to inform them – in a constructive and positive manner – how they can improve so they can be more successful next time.
- Your goal is for the students to understand why you evaluated their work the way you did.