

Organizing Your Information: Website

Websites can be organized in many ways, use your judgment to decide how this will work best for your particular topic.

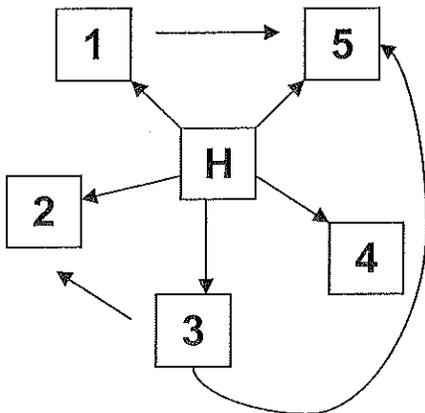
- **Segment your information in a logical way.** This can be done in multiple ways, for example: chronologically, topically, by location, etc. You may use any or all of these to divide your information into different pages.
- **Homepage:** Include all of the most important information here- your argument, title, names, and introduction. All pages must link to this page.
- **Unify your pages.** Use a common text, color, template/ layout, font, etc. to establish a flow that makes it easy for the viewer to understand your information.
- **Avoid visual clutter.** Don't include all the funky widgets you can find, this will overwhelm your viewer. Viewers will quickly see through the glitz if there is little substance.
- **Pay attention to structure.** Use the diagrams below to help you think about how your information is best presented.
- **Know the rules.** The website category has changed a bit this year. Don't make a "live website," (a www website), use a program that will let you save your work to a CD such as iWeb or Dreamweaver and check it on multiple browsers. New this year, all websites must list an annotated bibliography as one of the pages.

These diagrams offer some ideas about how to structure your web site.

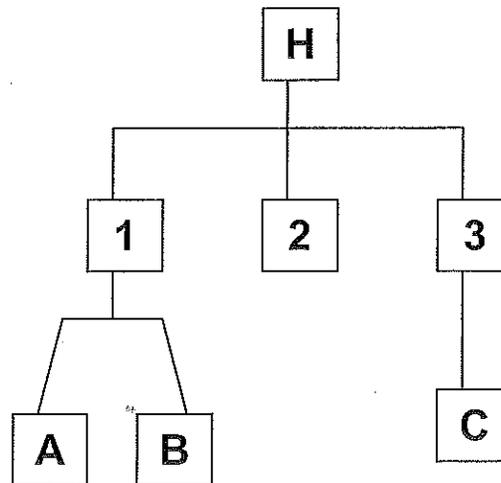
Linear Organization: This allows you to sequence the exact order your viewer goes from page to page.



Spider Web: This organization allows the viewer to explore the website in any way they choose. Viewers will assume that all of the information is equally important because it is only one step away from the homepage. Not all pages must link together.



Hierarchical Organization: Viewer may look at this type of website in multiple ways. By layering the information you show the viewer that some is more important than the rest. The closer the page is to the homepage, the more essential the information will be assumed to be.



This information is taken from the National History Day website, for more info and tips please visit www.nationalhistoryday.org.

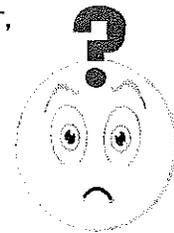
Preparing to Write: Organizing Your Information

Beginning the writing process can be very difficult because it is hard to know what information to include, and how to arrange it to tell your story. As a writer you will be acting as both a “scholar” and a “chef” to complete your project. Wearing your scholar hat will help you to decide what the most important information is to include. As a chef you must prepare your project in a way that works well for your particular topic. Below are some tips for how to navigate the writing process.



Top Tips on Writing for All Categories:

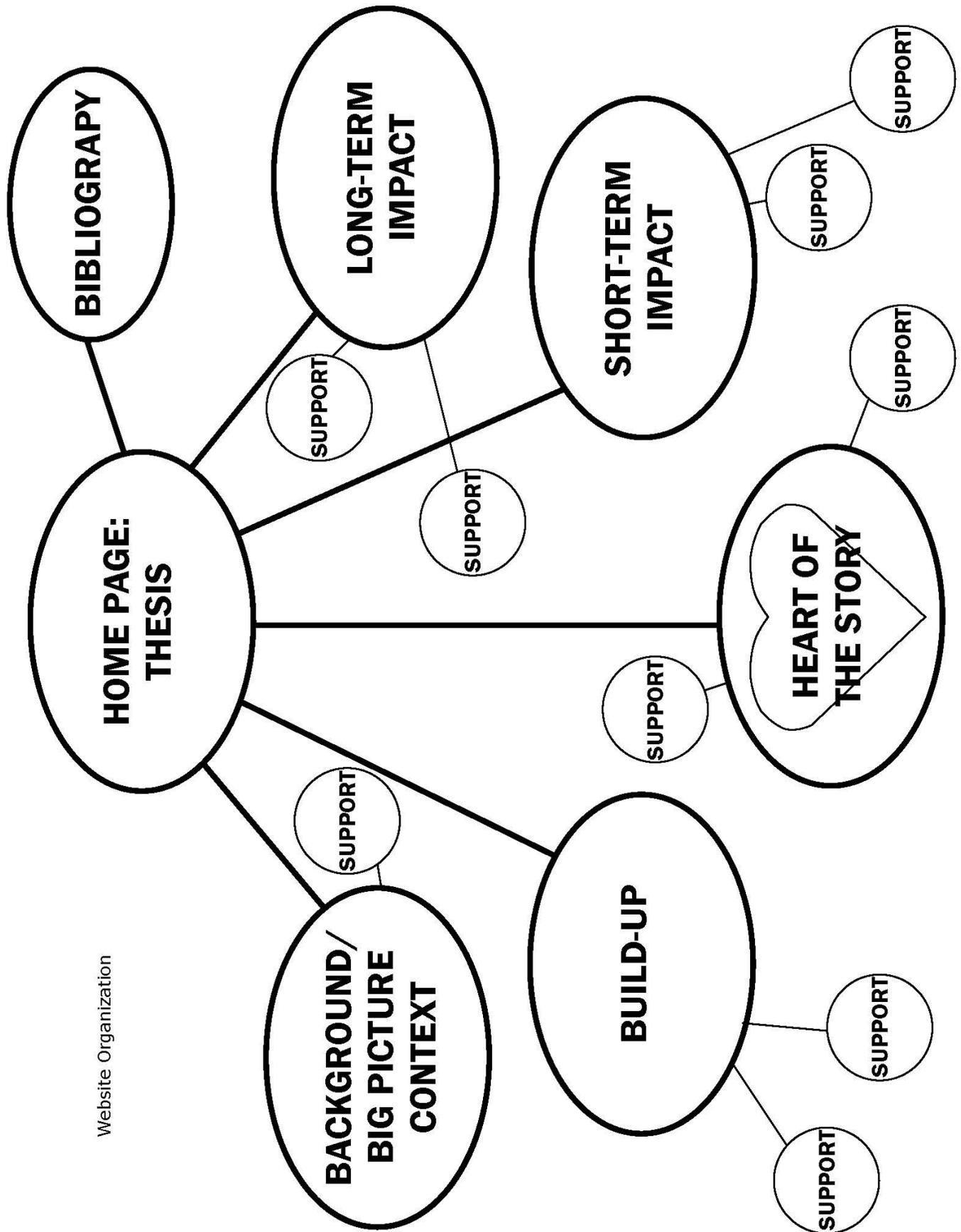
- **Break it down.** Instead of trying to write everything in one night, create an outline or guide that lets you write in smaller pieces. Using this as a guide for your project will also help viewers and judges more easily understand your project. Also, if you have divided the writing responsibilities up, make sure your writing style is cohesive in the end.
- **Use your thesis to guide you.** Everything included in your project should lead back to supporting your thesis. This should also help you divide information into smaller, more manageable pieces.
- **Seek advice.** Remember you want your project to be easily understood by anyone, so if your friends have that “huh?” look on their face, you may want to consider revising your work.
- **Keep it short and to the point.** Make sure you do the work for the viewer; no one goes to a museum to read a book. Before writing it is important to analyze your information so you know what to argue.
- **Once is not enough.** It is crucial to have at least one re-write of your information. Writing is a process, and the first draft will likely be inadequate for most projects.
- **Use an active voice.** Things rarely just “happen” in history, someone or something is usually propelling it. Instead of saying “the Berlin Wall *came* down in 1989,” try, “the Berlin Wall was *taken* down in 1989.”
- **Viewers can't read your mind.** You have been working on this topic for months, for some of the viewers and judges this may be the first time they encounter it. Don't assume they know anything about what you are presenting.



Strategies for the Writing Process

- **Start by identifying the most important quotes, excerpts, images, etc.** Write these on notecards that you can arrange on a table.
- **Write it out on paper first.** Writing key points on notecards and then moving them around into different configurations can help you segment your work. This can also be a good way to save drafts you may want to come back to later, rather than having just erased them on the computer.
- **The best place to start is to start.** Don't let your time go to waste because you are afraid of “getting something wrong” or not writing it perfectly the first time. Once you write something on paper it is much easier for others to advise you and help you work on your writing.

Website Organization



WORKSHEET: WEBSITE ORGANIZATION

Begin planning out the pages you need in your website. Each page should directly support your thesis statement. Remember: These are just some beginning ideas. You may want to include more pages, fewer pages, or create subpages on your website. Just keep in mind the ease of navigation for your viewer.

Title

Brainstorm a creative title for your website and write it here.

Navigation

Think about which pages would best support your thesis statement and write them below. Remember—you can add as many or few pages as you want as long as you're organized.

Home

Thesis Statement

You will want to include your thesis on your homepage, but do not have to label it "thesis". Write your thesis here and use it as a guide to decide which pages you want to include on your website.

Process Paper & Bibliography

HANDOUT: USING THE NHD WEBSITE EDITOR FOR HISTORY DAY WEBSITES

The Basics

1. Log on to www.nhd.org. Click on the left-hand link "Start your website entry at the NHD web portal." You can also go there directly: <http://nhd.weebly.com/>.
2. Fill in a username and password. Choose "student" or "teacher" from the drop-down menu.
3. Give your site a title. This title will appear on all of your website pages.
4. Click on the "Designs" tab and choose a design. This might change as your website grows, but it is helpful to have a design in place so you can visualize how your website is coming together.
5. Click on the "Pages" tab to add pages. Always start with "Home." Add the names of all the pages, including a page for the bibliography. The order of these pages can be changed at any time on this page.
6. The "Home" page must include students' names, entry title and division.
7. The "Process Paper" page should include the entire 500-word document.
8. The "Bibliography" page must include the entire annotated bibliography. It works well if this is the last page. Instead of pasting your bibliography into your website, try saving your bibliography as a PDF in your word processing program and then uploading the PDF to your website as a file. This way, you will only have to format your bibliography once.
9. To edit pages, either click on "Edit this Page" on the "Pages" tab, or click the "Elements" tab and choose a page from your navigation bar. Click on an element and drag it down into the body of the page. The element icon will appear; double-click on the icon and you will be able to start adding content. You can add multiple elements to a page.
10. Double-click on dummy text to start adding content. Once you start editing text, a new menu will appear to let you change font color, size, alignment or bold/italic/underline. Remember that you cannot link to pages outside of your History Day website.
11. It's best to write and save your text in a word processing program – not in the NHD Website Editor, which doesn't have a spell-check, grammar-check, or word count. You can then copy and paste your text into the NHD website editor when you're ready. To avoid problems with formatting, be sure to paste as "plain text."
12. When adding images, students can only upload from the computer they are working on or from a disk. The image size can be changed, but changing it within the NHD Website Editor may make the image look unclear.
13. At any time, you can delete an element by clicking on the red X in the upper right-hand corner of the element box. You can also move any element to another page by clicking the green arrow in the upper left-hand corner of the element box.
14. Under the tab "Settings," students should not create a site password. This may disable some viewers, including judges, from viewing the site. Students can choose to change the footer message, but it should be something appropriate to the project.
15. Every time students return to edit their site, they can go straight to <http://nhd.weebly.com/>.

The Bells and Whistles

Under “Elements,” click on the “Multimedia” tab on the upper left-hand side of the page. There are a number of options, all of which require previous research or saving of documents into a file.

- **Photo Gallery** – Students can add a number of photographs in one section. They can change the space between images, the borders and do minor cropping. There is not an option to add text to the images.
- **File** – Students can add a file, such as a primary document or a PDF of their bibliography. Once the file is added, students should be sure to change the File Name to something that adequately describes the file.
- **Audio and Video** – Students can add audio or video files, such as the recording of a speech, commercial, historic film footage, or interviews. Audio and video clips should be saved to a disk or computer first, then edited to the appropriate length before uploading to the website. Students have four minutes total time for all multimedia clips together. Individual clips are no longer limited to 45 seconds each. Students can choose how to divide up this total four minutes.
- **Flash** – Students can add a SWF file, which is an animated graphic. This function may not be entirely appropriate for History Day projects.
- **Google Maps** – Students can add a Google Map of a particular place to orient their viewers. San Francisco is the default location. To change the location, click next to the map once it’s embedded, and a navigation bar will appear that will allow students to change the location and the width, height and zoom level of the map.
- **Slideshow** – This is similar to the Photo Gallery, except viewers can sift through images, much like Flickr.
- **Video** – Students can embed a video by downloading the file from their computer. Videos can be no longer than 45 seconds.

Another advanced element they can use is the “hidden page.” Hidden pages do not appear in the navigation bar but can be useful as places to store more primary documents. Students can then link to these hidden pages from other pages. On the “Pages” tab, just select “no” from the “Show in Navigation?” dropdown menu. To link to a hidden page, highlight text or a picture and click the chain icon. Choose the correct hidden page to link to. To edit these hidden pages, choose the page on the “Pages” tab. The navigation bar will continue to be visible on the hidden page.