

# Tips for Creating an Effective Exhibit

An exhibit is a visual representation of your research and interpretation of your topic's significance in history, much like a small museum exhibit. Here are some tips to help you create a quality display for National History Day.

- Integrate your topic into the **design of the board**. Include the timeline as part of your design.
- Choose your **color scheme** by considering what colors best represent the ideas you are presenting.
- Make sure the **title** and **subtitle** are prominent features of your exhibit. If possible, the subtitle should reflect the theme.
- Organize the exhibit into logical **subject headings**.
- Use clear and concise **captions** and **text** to
  1. Identify pictures, documents, or objects
  2. Interpret information for the viewer.
- **Type** all of the wording for your exhibit using a basic font that is easy to read. **DO NOT USE ALL CAPS**. Use the same font throughout your exhibit. Be sure the size of the font is large enough to read easily.
- **Proofread** all the writing on your display. Have a reliable reader proofread, also.
- **Choose items carefully** for your exhibit. You should not have a lot of “white space,” but you don't want your board to look crowded. Clarity and organization are the most important design goals of an exhibit.
- **Back typed material, photos, and other objects** with construction paper, tag board, or mat board to make these materials stand out.
- Be sure you have **straight edges** on your photos, words, and other objects. Use a paper cutter if possible.
- Keep **margins** equal on all panels.
- Be **neat, neat, neat!**

Although you will be able to explain your exhibit during the initial judging, a successful exhibit must be able to explain itself. This makes it important to design an exhibit so that the photographs, written materials, and illustrations are neat and easy to understand.