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1st Draft

Learning Targets

- 4 I can use proper capitalizations in writing
- 4 I can explain the significance of a topic in history
- 2 I can evaluate how people in the past used their agency.
- 3 I can explain the process of my research in writing.

NHD PROCESS PAPER

The National History Day process paper is a **description of how you conducted your research, developed your topic idea and created your project.** All categories, except historical paper, must include a process paper with the entry. Each person will write their own process paper (and then select one to include in the final project). It should be no longer than 500 words.

Below you will see the guiding questions for each paragraph. There are sample paragraphs from Capital City students that you can use to help you guide your thinking.

Paragraph 1: How and why did you choose your topic? Give a brief description of your topic and why it is important in history.

SAMPLE: My topic, "El Grito De Lares" is about Puerto Rico fighting for independence from the Spanish. When we started NHD as a class we were given a list and we had the option of choosing our own topic. I watched how people started choosing from the list, but I didn't have a connection with any of the options. When I started exploring topics, I still wasn't excited. So I decided to do something that connected to my favorite moments in life. The first event that came to my head was my trip to Puerto Rico. So I went through a timeline of Puerto Rico provided by PBS and I saw "El Grito De Lares", the name caught my attention and I started to research what this event was all about. In general it was how Puerto Rico fought for independence and I really got excited, because many in Puerto Rico right now are advocating for independence from the US. It is a struggle that is still continuing. Also, Puerto Rico has a long history with this country, so its history is connected with ours and is also important to Latin American history.

YOUR TURN!

My topic, "The Women Warriors of Dahomey" is about an elite military group of women in West Africa who fought wars for the king of Dahomey. They were highly trained and fought in the Franco-Dahomean war, which was the war that Dahomey fought to prevent the colonization of the French. When I first began my project, I didn't know what to choose, but I did know who I wanted to work with. I chose my group first and then the topic. My group members and I knew that we wanted to do something that had to do with Africa. My World History teacher, Ms. Moye told us about the Women Warriors of Dahomey and we were intrigued. We were amazed how the most powerful military group in Dahomey was composed of women, we were also intrigued by

the fact that they were so disciplined and had forgo a family.

Paragraph 2: How did you conduct your research? What libraries did you use? What databases were helpful? If there was a person who was particularly helpful in identifying sources it's a good idea to mention them here. What were your most useful sources and why were they helpful to your project?

SAMPLE: I began my research by going to online databases such as EbscoHost and visiting the Northeast library and reading books on The Berlin Conference. I didn't just research how Africa lost their independence, I also researched how they regained their independence because they are equally important to me. The most useful source to me was a website called blackplast.org because it provided me with lots of background information about my topic so I could get an overall understanding of my topic. I was able to build upon all the information that I found on my topic because I connected everything I found to my thesis statement and also connected it to the NHD theme.

YOUR TURN:

I conducted my research using key words and looking them up in Google. My teacher also had a book that she made a copy for me and I read it. I used the school's library and DC Public Library research database. To begin my research I read an article that was posted in simthsonian.com and that's where I go my basic information. To go more in depth I read the book that Ms. Moye gave me, entitled The Women Warriors of Dahomey by Stanley B. Alpern. In reading The Women Warriors of Dahomey book, I learned about how the Women Warriors trained and their discipline. I also learned about some of the wars that they fought in and about the Franco-Dahomean war. I learned that they lost only because the French had better weapons. We found two primary sources, one by Frederick E. Forbes and the other by Richard F. Burton. They were both travelers who kept journals of what they saw in their travels through Dahomey.

Paragraph 3: Why did you choose your project presentation category (i.e. exhibit, documentary etc.)? How did you create your project (example-if you used any software for a documentary)?

SAMPLE: We choose to create an exhibit because we knew we were creative and able to present our information in a interesting way. Our idea wasn't so successful but we had a back up plan. Our first idea was to create an actual newspaper the judges would be able to hold but unfortunately we could not. So we turned a tri-fold board into a newspaper and displayed our information in a creative way. This was possible with the help of our art teacher Mr. Cuevas.

YOUR TURN:

We chose to do an exhibit board because we knew that we can be more creative with it. At first I was hesitant to do an exhibit board because I don't like to do them. I feel like there is less information I can add and it's harder to fix. I had a change of mind because in English class, I did a project with Jason Perla and we were very creative. That's when we decided that we would do an exhibit board. We were thinking in doing an exhibit board and a documentary or a website, but realized that we didn't have enough time. We then chose to only do an exhibit board, but work with the art teacher, Mr. Cuevas to create a 3D model of a women warrior based on a primary source sketch of one. Jason Perla did the introduction and the first subtopic, Precious Ogu did the second subtopic and pictures, and I did the third subtopic; Precious and I did the conclusion together. All of us did the background image of our exhibit board and we did the 3D model.

Paragraph 4: How does your project relate to embody the NHD theme of "Triumph and Tragedy in History"? How did your person group use their agency (ability to make choices)? Why is this a historically significant event?

SAMPLE: Our project relates to the theme of Conflict and Compromise because King Menelik II came into conflict with the Italians when they wanted to invade and colonize his country of Ethiopia. The Italians tried to trick Ethiopia through a treaty, which was an insincere attempt at compromise. Menelik prepared in advance for the arrival of the Italians and was able to beat them at the Battle of Adwa. This is an especially significant event because Ethiopia was the only African country in the "Age of Imperialism" to successfully beat a European colonizer. They became a symbol of hope and resistance for their neighbors, which had become colonized. Menelik used his agency by learning from other colonial conquests around him and planning ways to meet the Europeans with the weapons and alliances other African groups did not have.

YOUR TURN:

Our topic embodies the NHD theme Triumph and Tragedy in many ways. The Women Warriors of Dahomey had both triumph and tragedy. They were triumphant because they were a strong disciplined elite military women group. They won many wars and gained many territories for Dahomey because of it. They also suffered tragedy because they lost the war against the French. The French wanted to colonize Dahomey and Dahomey was against it. They then went to war, but unfortunately lost to the French. My topic shows both triumph and tragedy. The Women Warriors of Dahomey used their agency in many ways. They decided to fight in battles against men even though they knew they could be defeated and could be injured or die. They also used their agency by deciding to follow the requirements the king had set forth, to not get married or have children. Something different they could have done was not fight in any battles. They knew that there was a high chance that they would be injured or killed, they could have decided not to fight. They didn't have many constraints other than the fact that they couldn't get married or have children.