Sample Topics

The following list provides examples of topics related to this year’s theme. The list is not inclusive; rather, it provides a starting point for teachers and students to brainstorm about ideas for National History Day entries. Students should keep in mind that many excellent research topics can be found by investigating their own local history. Choosing one of the topics below will not increase or decrease a student’s chances of doing well at a National History Day contest.

People or Events

Lyndon B. Johnson’s Stand for the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii
Dalton Trumbo and the Hollywood Ten
John Carlos and Tommie Smith, 1968
Mexico City Olympics: Civil Disobedience While on the Medal Stand
Ernesto “Che” Guevara: The Fight to End Oppression in Latin America
George C. Marshall and his Plan: Taking a Stand for Relief in Western Europe
Prince Klemens von Metternich: Taking a Stand against the Enlightenment
Belva Ann Bennett Lockwood: Taking a Stand by Running for President
Disaster at Kent State, 1970: Protest Ends in Tragedy
Bartholomé de Las Casas: Standing Up to the Church for Human Rights in the Americas
Teddy Roosevelt and Muscular Christianity: Taking a Stand for Being a Man
Aisha Abdul-Rahman: Islamic Scholar and Feminist Philosopher
Taking a Stand for Women, Faith and Equality: Olympia Brown, Activist and First Female Minister
Omar Al-Mokhtar: Resisting the Italian Colonization of Libya
Standing and Singing for Equality: Marian Anderson’s Concert in Washington, DC
John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: Advocating Together for the Rights of Men and Women
Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Free Press, and the Fight to End Lynchings
Martin Luther: The Stand that Started the Reformation
Protecting the Environment: John Muir and the Ecology Movement
Malcolm X: Radicalism and Civil Rights
Mahatma Gandhi: Freedom Through Nonviolence
Defiance in Leaps and Bounds: Jesse Owens and the 1936 Berlin Olympics
Elvia Alvarado: Standing Up for the Poor of Honduras
A Last Stand: The Fall of Lt. Col. Custer and the Battle of Little Big Horn
Terrence Powderly and the Haymarket Square Riots: How Refusing to Take a Stand Led to the Downfall of the Knights of Labor
Ideas
A Stand for States' Rights? The Civil War and the Question of Secession
Vatican II: Taking a Stand for Religious Reform
The End of European Witch Hunts: Communities Take a Stand to Stop Hysteria
The Philadelphia Eleven: Taking a Stand for Women in the Episcopal Church
A Stand for All: The United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Standing on Our Own: Black Control of the Abolition Movement
Taking a Stand Against Foot-Binding: A Political and Cultural War in China
Taking a Stand against Taking a Drink: The Temperance Movement in Victorian America
The Egyptian Feminist Union: Taking a Stand for Women in Egypt
United We Stand—Or Do We? Cooperation Among New Left Organizations in America
Taking a Stand and Leading the Way: New Zealand Grants Women Suffrage, 1893
The War Hawks: Congressmen Take a Stand for the War of 1812

Many Ways to Take a Stand: Comparing the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference
Civil Disobedience and Non-Violence in American Politics, from the Quakers to the Hippies
Shay’s Rebellion: Storming the Courthouse
Chinese, American, and European Resistance to the Japanese Occupation of Nanking in World War II
Remembering the Alamo: Few Stand Against Many
Taking a Stand in the Senate: History of the Filibuster
Loving v. Virginia, 1967: Interracial Couples Take a Stand for Equal Marriage Rights
The Anglo-Zulu War: Opposition to European Control in Africa
Taking a Stand on the Stand: History of the Fifth Amendment
Standing and Signing: History of Change Through Petitions
Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness: Writing Fiction to Take a Stand
Singing To Express a Stand: Bob Dylan and 1960s Protest Music
We Will Not Stand for This: History of Sit-Ins within the Labor and Civil Rights Movements
Operation Valkyrie: German Military Officers Taking a Stand against Hitler

Strategies or Methods
Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot of 1605
Striking at the Lowell Mill: Standing Up for Themselves
From Slave Uprising to Sovereign Nation: Haiti’s War for Independence

National History Day 2006 Curriculum Book
Jews, Romans, and the Great Revolt of 66 CE: A Stand Gone Wrong

The Failed 1784 Peasant Uprising: Romanians Take a Stand for National Identity and Economic Prosperity
Never Was So Much Owed by So Many to So Few: The Royal Air Force and The Battle of Britain