



ACTIVITY OVERVIEW



Q4 • History Fair

High School • All School

Activity Overview

Geography and history are deeply connected. The Q4 History Fair invites high school students to investigate significant historical topics related to New Mexico and to examine how events, ideas, and places shape shared identity.

Through structured research, historical argumentation, and public presentation, students explore how New Mexico's experiences connect to broader national narratives. Particular emphasis may be placed on examining New Mexico in 1776 and its relationship to the American Revolution. Students develop analytical skills while recognizing how historical events create common ground across communities.

Activity Structure

Students participate in a schoolwide History Fair modeled after National History Day. Projects may take a variety of formats (paper, exhibit, performance, documentary, or website), allowing students to demonstrate historical understanding through diverse media.

Students may work individually or in small groups and are encouraged to connect their topic to New Mexico's historical development, cultural identity, and geographic context.

Before the Activity

School leaders determine the date, location, and format of the History Fair. Teachers review National History Day guidelines and establish project expectations, milestones, and research requirements.

Students are introduced to the annual theme and encouraged to consider how it relates to:

- New Mexico in 1776
- The American Revolution
- Broader historical connections to identity and place

Teachers provide guidance on annotated bibliographies, historical argumentation, and the development of a clear thesis.



During the Activity

- Students engage in structured research and project development.
- Students gather and analyze primary and secondary sources.
- Students develop annotated bibliographies and process papers.
- Students craft a historical argument supported by evidence.
- Drafts are refined into final projects.

At the Fair

- Projects are displayed and organized by theme or historical focus.
- Students present their work to peers, staff, families, and judges.
- Students respond to questions and demonstrate understanding of their research.
- The fair emphasizes inquiry, communication, and evidence-based reasoning.

After the Activity

Following the History Fair, students reflect on their experience. Educators may guide discussion using questions such as:

- How does a history fair compare to other academic exhibitions?
- How did your chosen medium shape your understanding of the topic?
- Which project did you find most informative or inspiring?

Schools may host an awards ceremony, recognize participants, and submit selected projects to the New Mexico National History Day competition.

Educator Notes

This activity is adaptable to school size and available resources. High school implementation emphasizes research rigor, analytical thinking, and historical argumentation.

The focus is on inquiry, interpretation, and civic understanding, not competition alone.

Additional planning guides, research tools, and National History Day resources are available in the Educator Resources document.



Connection to Statewide Theme

The History Fair supports the theme of Common Ground and Historical Identity by encouraging students to examine how historical events shape shared understanding. By researching New Mexico's role within broader national developments, students recognize that identity is rooted in place, experience, and collective memory. Historical inquiry becomes a means of understanding how communities across New Mexico are connected through common stories and shared pasts.