

HIS 100 Project 1: Topic Exploration Worksheet Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

“If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday.”

—Pearl Buck

Your first longer term assignment in this course is to complete a topic exploration worksheet. The work you do on this topic exploration worksheet will directly support your work on two other longer-term projects—a research plan and introduction and a multimedia presentation—that are due later in the course.

One of the prime benefits of studying history is that it allows us to learn about who we are and where we came from. The people and events of the past can often shed light on the conditions and social norms of the present. Having historical awareness can inform various aspects of your life as well as future aspirations. Learning from past failures and successes can shape ideals and values for years to come.

In this course, there are three longer term projects that that will help you understand the fundamental processes and value of studying history. In the first project, you will choose a topic or theme from the research kit that is interesting to you (from the options provided) and complete a topic exploration worksheet that asks you to break down the event, investigate the types of research you might need to do to learn more about it, and develop research questions. In the second project, you will use this worksheet to complete a research plan and introduction. You will choose one of your research questions and do some secondary source research (using the sources provided in the research kit), speculate on primary source needs, and use the information to write the introduction and thesis statement for a possible research paper (the entire paper is not completed—just the introduction). In the third project, you will create a multimedia presentation that explores both major developments in historical inquiry as well as the value of examining history.

This topic exploration worksheet assignment will assess the following course outcome, which you focused on throughout Theme 1:

- Develop questions about foundational historical events that inform personal assumptions, beliefs, and values using evidence from primary and secondary sources

Prompt

Choose one of the provided topic categories that intrigues you. Answer the questions on the [Topic Exploration Worksheet template](#) Provided. You will do some preliminary research on your topic, as well as create a plan for what else you might need to learn.

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed:

- I. Describe what you **already knew** about the topic prior to this course, based on your personal history or experiences. This may include assumptions, beliefs, or values related to the topic. Be as detailed as possible.

- II. What questions do you still have about the topic that you would like to explore? From these questions, **identify two questions** about the topic that you would like to explore further in this course. Be sure to address why these questions are important to you personally and to society.
- III. Identify which **secondary sources** would help you address these questions.
- IV. Identify which **primary sources** would help you address these questions.
- V. Based on this research of your topic, detail what you have **learned** about it. Be sure to provide the web address of any internet sources.

Supporting Work and Resources

Throughout Theme 1, there are opportunities to work directly on different elements of the topic exploration worksheet.

- 1. In Learning Block 2-2, you will choose one of the available topics provided and discuss what you already know about the topic. This is Part I of the worksheet.
- 2. In Learning Block 2-3, you will be presented with problematic research questions. You will identify the problem and propose replacement questions. This will provide practice for the research question portion of Project 1. You will then develop some research questions related to your topic and describe why they matter to you personally and why they matter to society. This is Part II of the worksheet.
- 3. In Learning Block 2-4, you will work to finalize your topic exploration worksheet.

Project 1 Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Type your responses directly into the [Topic Exploration Worksheet template](#) and submit your completed worksheet to Brightspace for grading.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (85%)	Needs Improvement (55%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Already Know	Meets “Proficient” criteria and details provided demonstrate insight into the topic	Describes what was already known about topic in detail	Describes what was already known about topic but is cursory	Does not describe what was already known about topic	19
Identify Two Questions	Meets “Proficient” criteria and connections to personal and societal importance demonstrate insight into the topic	Identifies two questions about the topic, explaining why these questions are personally and societally important	Identifies two questions about the topic but does not explain the personal and societal importance, or explanation is cursory or has inaccuracies	Does not identify two questions about the topic	19
Secondary Sources	Meets “Proficient” criteria and range of sources demonstrates a strong grasp of the information needed	Lists the secondary sources needed to help address the questions	Lists the secondary sources but list is cursory or some sources listed are not secondary	Does not list secondary sources	19
Primary Sources	Meets “Proficient” criteria and range of sources demonstrates a strong grasp of the information needed	Lists the primary sources needed to help address the questions	Lists the primary sources but list is cursory or some sources listed are not primary	Does not list primary sources	19
Learned	Meets “Proficient” criteria and research used demonstrates an insight into the topic	Details what student has learned about topic based on research	Details what student has learned about the topic but does not rely on research, or is cursory or has inaccuracies	Does not detail what student has learned about the topic	19
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	5
Total					100%