



New York State Student Research Awards Guidelines

The New York State Archives announces its thirty-first annual Student Research Awards program to promote and recognize excellence in student research. The main purpose of the awards program is to encourage students to explore the wealth of historical records held in historical records repositories in New York State. The program also serves to increase cooperation between schools and organizations that administer historical records useful for education.

Requirements

- Students, working individually, in groups, or a class, develop projects such as research papers, papers reconstructing the past, exhibits, documentaries, performances, PowerPoint entries, websites, or proposals for the designation of a historical marker, property or district.
- Projects must include an annotated bibliography and use historical records.
- Projects are not required to focus on New York State history; however it can be more convenient and engaging to conduct research using historical records that are found locally in libraries, historical societies, local governments, businesses, community organizations, and with individuals and families. Often, the most successful research projects examine an event from a local point of view.
- This is a research award contest and, therefore, the final product should answer a research question. Research questions do not have a yes or no answer and can be answered in different ways based on the evidence found in historical records. Research questions often begin with: How, What or Why. For example: Why was New York influential in the outcome of the Civil War?; How did the Erie Canal impact the economy of individual communities?; Why do people break the law?; and How does popular media influence culture?
- Students are encouraged to work closely with their teachers, school library media specialists, public librarians, and local historians while working on their projects.



Awards

The Student Research Awards program is a statewide competition open to all New York State students in grades 4-12. A total of three (3) awards will be given; one each for students in the following divisions:

- Grades 4-5
- Grades 6-8
- Grades 9-12

Each award consists of a framed certificate and a cash prize. To qualify for an award, all entries must:

- Show a heavy reliance on information from historical records
- Provide an annotated bibliography
- Provide a URL in the annotated bibliography for each online historical record found on the Internet
- Provide a signed entry form

Projects that do not show evidence of the use of historical records; or do not include an annotated bibliography or signed entry form will be disqualified.

Deadline

Entries must be submitted by email to archedu@nysed.gov no later than 11:59pm on July 1, 2021. Please include your name and grade in the subject line. Mailed entries must be postmarked no later than July 1, 2021. Award winners will be notified by mid-September.

The results of the competition will be formally announced during Archives Month in October 2021. Entries submitted for competition must be researched and developed during the July 1, 2020 –June 30, 2021 school year. Mailed projects can be sent by FedEx, UPS, or USPS to:

Student Research Awards
New York State Archives Partnership Trust
9C49 Cultural Education Center
Albany, New York 12230



Entry Format Descriptions and Guidelines

Students may submit a project on any topic. Entries must show analysis of the topic, not just the facts, and be presented in the student's own words. Project formats include:

Research Papers

Two categories of research papers are eligible for an award:

- (1) Traditional research paper, based on a subject of choice;
- (2) A research paper that reconstructs the past by analyzing and interpreting the issues and events mentioned in a historical story, ballad, folksong, folktale, diary, letter, poem, or an oral history interview.

(For example: a student uses an 1863 letter written by Colonel Barber in Virginia to his wife in upstate New York as part of a study to reconstruct the colonel's life, in order to show the impact of the Civil War on the life of a New York soldier and his family.) Students must use historical records to analyze and interpret the issues and events mentioned in the folksong, diary, letter, poem, etc. they are using.

Papers must be:

- No less than 1,000 words
- Typed in 12-point font and double-spaced
- Include an annotated bibliography and citations (footnotes or endnotes)
- Saved as a pdf
- Submitted by email along with the entry form or mailed to the address on the entry form

Documentaries and Performances

- Documentaries and performances must be uploaded to YouTube and the link included on the entry form.
- Please submit the entry form and the script with the annotated bibliography as a pdf attachment.
- Be sure to cite any music and persons interviewed in the annotated bibliography. Entries should be no longer than fifteen (15) minutes.
- Websites
- There is no word limit on websites. Website entries must have a valid URL address listed on the entry form.
- Entrant(s) must ensure that the entry is accessible over the summer months. Entrant(s) names must appear on the website.
- The entry form containing the website address should be submitted by email.

Exhibits

- This category does not limit the size of the exhibit, but no larger than 24"x 36" is preferred.



- Tri-folded exhibits are welcome. Images of the exhibit should be submitted by email along with the entry form if you choose not to mail the original exhibit.
- Copies of the exhibit labels, text, and any additional information that accompanies the original exhibit must be submitted with the entry.
- Student-composed written materials on the exhibit should contain no more than 500 words including labels and captions. This limit does not apply to quotations or documents that may be used as an integral part of the exhibit. In fact, students are encouraged to incorporate copies of historical documents that can do the speaking for them and use quotes from historical figures. This allows the students to use the student-composed words to analyze and narrate the topic.
- Information should be properly cited.
- Original exhibits can be mailed to the address on the entry form.
- The exhibit should be shipped in a reusable carton; exhibits will be returned to the entrants if shipped this way.
- The State Archives is not responsible for any damage or loss suffered by the exhibit in shipment.

PowerPoints

- PowerPoint presentations can be viewed as a virtual exhibit.
- There is a 500-word count limit for student-composed words including labels and captions. Citations and quotations do not count in the word limit. Students are encouraged to incorporate images of historical documents that can do the speaking for them and use quotes from historical figures. This allows the students to use the student-composed words to analyze and narrate the topic.
- Information should be properly cited.
- PowerPoints should be saved as a pdf and sent by email along with the entry form.

Proposals for a Historical Marker

Proposals must be:

- The result of research using historical records
- No less than 1,000 words
- Typed in 12-point font and double-spaced
- Include an annotated bibliography and citations (footnotes or endnotes)
- Saved as a pdf
- Submitted by email along with the entry form or mailed to the address on the entry form
- All proposals submitted to the State Archives for designating historic properties, districts, or markers are for Student Research Awards purposes only. To officially nominate a site for the State and National Register of Historic Places, visit the website of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Field Services Bureau. To nominate a site for a historic roadside marker, visit the William G. Pomeroy Foundation website (currently only nominations for events dated between 1740 and 1916 are accepted).



Competition Rules

- All entries must be nominated by teachers, library media specialists, or administrators in the school attended by the student or groups of students. Adult community members such as municipal historians and public librarians may also nominate students.
- Both individual students and groups of students (including the entire class) may be nominated. All projects must be completely student-created.
- Entries from home-schooled students are welcome.
- Oral history interviews are not eligible for this awards program. However, such interviews may be used as a historical item as part of a research paper that reconstructs the past (see Research Papers).
- Entries prepared for other competitions (such as National History Day) are eligible if they meet other relevant criteria, especially the use of historical records in research.
- Any plagiarism will result in disqualification.
- An annotated bibliography is required for ALL entries.

Annotated Bibliography Instructions

- The bibliography should list all primary sources (including historical records) and secondary sources used in preparing the entry. The annotations for each source must explain how the source was used and how it contributed to the project.
- Students may use the MLA-style or Chicago Manual of Style formats. Students must choose one style format and be consistent throughout the entry.
- Students must list the primary sources used first and then list the secondary sources used in their research. The bibliography may be as long as necessary.
- When using Internet sources, students must provide the URL to the specific historical record used, not just the general website of the repository.
- Students are encouraged to work with their teacher or school library media specialist while preparing the annotated bibliography. For guidance, visit Purdue University's Online Writing Lab. Examples of annotated bibliographies developed by elementary, middle, and high school students can be found on pages 7 of these guidelines.

The examples below were taken from previous entries of the Student Research Award contest. Students may use these examples to help create their own annotated bibliographies. For further instructions on creating an annotated bibliography, visit Purdue University's Online Writing Lab.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Knapp Frost, Samuel. The Society of Friends Cemetery and Quaker Burial Group, Grace Marker Inscription. Photograph. Westbury Historical Society. 06 May 2017

We used this photo to verify the founding of the Religious Society of Friends in 1702. The grave marker identifies the existence of the Quaker Meeting House in 1776, and that the house was occupied by British and Hessian forces during the Revolutionary War.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Porter, Marjorie Lansing. Ballad Recordings. 1956. TS 73.2, Marjorie Lansing Porter: Ballad Collecting and Lore Stories, Plattsburgh State University Special Collections.

This was a manuscript that Marjorie Porter wrote which had information on her ballad recording and about collecting songs in general. I used this source because it explained a lot about the people she collected songs from. This manuscript provided me her perspective on her work and why she thought it was important. I quote this article extensively in my paper.

HIGH SCHOOL

Letter to Edwin Oviatt, November 12, 1909. Rack 7, Shelf 4, Herbert Parsons Yale Alumnus, Knapp House Archives. Rye, NY

While not signed, the letter is from a Yale alum and penned early in the twentieth century, so one could assume they are from a nineteenth-century graduating class. This provided the entry with a unique perspective on how the college athletics were viewed prior to their expansion in the early/mid-twentieth century.

Judging Process

The Student Research Awards judges include teachers, historians, and archivists. The judges will select the award recipient(s) for each division based on the following criteria:

- To what extent has the student used historical records?
- Does the bibliography display a variety of historical records?
- To what extent has the student used information from these documents?
- Is the entry historically accurate?
- Does the entry demonstrate an understanding of historical context?
- Does the entry show analysis of the topic, not just the facts, and is this analysis presented in the student's own words?
- Does the entry show evidence of creativity and imagination in interpreting information from historical records with other information?
- Does the final product answer a research question in-depth, using analysis and interpretation of the historical records?



Entry Checklist

As you prepare an entry for the competition, use this summary as a checklist.

- Did you use historical records in conducting your research?
- Have you completely filled out the entry form, submitted an annotated bibliography, and attached all necessary documents and images to the email?
- Did you include citations if required?
- Does the final product answer a research question in-depth, using analysis and interpretation of the historical records?
- Does the entry fulfill all length and time requirements?
- Are exhibit entries packed in reusable cartons?
- Are documentaries and/or performances uploaded to YouTube and include a script?
- Have you tested all the links associated with the entry?
- Did you provide a URL on the entry form for your website, documentary, or performance entry?
- Did you provide URLs for all online sources listed in your annotated bibliography? Each online source must link to the specific record, not just the institution's homepage.
- Did you meet the July 1, 2021 deadline?

For More Information

Visit Student Research Award FAQs for answers to the questions asked most frequently. If you still have questions, please contact Jordan Maul at (518) 474-0245 or via email archedu@nysed.gov

