

Youth History Day

Teacher Guide

TEACHER GUIDE

AUDIENCE

Grades 4-5

STANDARDS

Social Studies

· Grade 4: C.S. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18

· Grade 5: C.S. 2, 3

English Language Arts

· Grades 4 & 5

RI.1, RI.2, RI. 3, RI. 4, RI.5, RI. 6, RI. 7, RI.8, RI.9, RI.10, RF. 4, W.2, W.4, W.5, W.6, W.7, W.8, W.9, W.10

Social and Emotional

· B3.1, C1.2b, C1.3b, C3.2b, D1.2b

Introduction

How can fourth and fifth grade teachers successfully participate in Youth History Day? This guide will help you implement the 2025 Theme of Rights and Responsibilities with your social studies curriculum, while also integrating reading and writing standards. This cross-curricular project has flexibility in how it is introduced and can be differentiated to meet the needs of any classroom.

A sticking point in implementing Youth History Day may be the research phase of the project. As 4th and 5th grade students are still beginners when learning to research, analyzing sources, taking research notes, writing thesis statements, citing sources, etc., support in helping students comprehend their research topic is necessary. Using topics connected to history standards provided by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce is one way to help. Students benefit from having background knowledge that ties into their topic, providing them with the scaffolding and confidence as they research their project. The rest of this document lists topic ideas and sources connected to the Social Studies Standards for grades 4-5. This makes Ohio Youth History Day fully integrate social studies, reading and writing!

There are no minimum or maximums set for the number of primary and secondary sources students should be using. In general, a balance between primary and secondary sources is best. Some topics will naturally have more primary sources than others, for example a 20th century topic will have more primary sources compared to an ancient topic. This is acceptable if students show that they are incorporating both kinds of sources in their research.

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Vocabulary

Rights	Freedoms or privileges that individuals possess as human beings or as citizens of a society
Responsibilities	Expectations of individuals as members of society
Theme	The main subject being discussed or described
Thesis Statement	The central or main idea of a research project that identifies a claim about a topic

Rights and Responsibilities:

An Explanation for Educators

You may have heard of ideas like the right to vote or the right to free speech. But what actually is a right? **Rights are the freedoms or privileges that people enjoy as members of a society or simply by being humans.** They are the rules about what people can do or what is owed to them based on laws, social agreements, or ethical beliefs. For example, the right to vote allows us to participate in our country's democracy. Think about the different groups you are a part of. They may be local – like your family, school, sports teams – or they may be bigger – like being a member of a state, nation, or the world. Being a member of these groups, or societies, gives you a set of rights. There are different types of rights. You've most likely heard about rights like civil rights and human rights, but there are also political rights, social rights, and economic rights.

Responsibilities are the expectations of individuals as members of society. As members of societies with rights, we also have responsibilities. For example, citizens of the United States who can vote have responsibilities like staying informed about issues and candidates, following voting procedures, and respecting the privacy of other voters' choices. The different societies, or groups, that you are a part of each have responsibilities. For example, being a member of a sports team comes with various responsibilities to ensure the team functions well and achieves its goals. There are personal responsibilities, like attending practices and following team rules, and team responsibilities like supporting your teammates. You also have ethical responsibilities like playing fairly. And these are just some of the responsibilities that you have as a team member! Now think of all the other groups you're a part of. Each of those groups has their own sets of responsibilities. Just like there are different types of rights, there are also different types of responsibilities. We have legal, civic, social, and ethical responsibilities.

While we can think about a right separate from a responsibility, this year's NHD theme asks you to consider how they work together. It's important to look at how responsibilities and rights work together in history when you are choosing a topic. A right can impact a responsibility, and a responsibility can impact a right. It's important to remember that there isn't a cause-and-effect relationship between the two ideas.

Rights allow individuals to enjoy freedoms and protections, while responsibilities ensure these freedoms are exercised in a way that maintains order, respects others, and promotes the well-being of the community. In an ideal, balanced society, rights and responsibilities work together to build a place where we live harmoniously. However, most societies are ever evolving and require citizens to recognize their human and ethical responsibility to fight for rights that are not yet guaranteed. Sometimes this can lead to a tension between the responsibilities and rights.

Let's see how a right and responsibility can impact each other, using the Underground Railroad as an example.

A Right Impacting a Responsibility

The right to equality, where all people should be treated equally under the law, inspired many to challenge the institution of slavery. This belief in the right to equality led individuals to act on their ethical responsibility by providing safe houses, resources, and guidance to freedom seekers, despite the personal risks involved.

A Responsibility Impacting a Right

Some of those who participated in the Underground Railroad felt a civic responsibility to uphold justice and fight against the unjust system of slavery. Their actions, such as advocating for abolition, directly supported the movement towards equal rights for all individuals, ultimately contributing to the abolition of slavery.

When you are deciding how rights and responsibilities work together, try asking some of these questions:

- If I have a right to BLANK, what responsibilities do I have?
- If I have a responsibility to do BLANK, is there a right I am entitled to?
- Are there rights that certain individuals or groups are missing? What responsibilities do other members of society have to ensure equal rights for all people?

- Have individuals or society failed at fulfilling their responsibilities? How does that failure impact rights?
- What tension exists between rights and responsibilities in this topic?

Tips and Tricks/Lesson Plans

You oversee selecting a format for Ohio Youth History Day that best meets the needs of the students in your classroom. There are various ways to implement the project's major aspects with differentiation, scaffolding, and extension in mind. Here are some ideas that may be helpful when beginning the research phase of Ohio Youth History Day:

Free Research Option (Extension)

- Most aligned with what Ohio History Day students in the Junior and Senior divisions are doing.
- Students can choose ANY topic in history that connects to the National History Day Theme of the year.
- Students will need to find sources to research that match their theme.
- Student choice can be very engaging.

Guided Choose your own Adventure (Scaffold)

- Teacher selects 2 or 3 topics that connect with the National History Day Theme of the year.
- Students select one topic from those that they would like to research.
- Teacher can pre-prepare the primary and secondary sources that students will be researching with.
- Students can have more support with content by working on topics that they have learned about in social studies lessons or will be learning about in class.
- Students still get to have a choice in their project.
- Save time on finding sources and have more control over the types of sources students use.

Teacher Selected Topic (Differentiation)

- Best option for students and teachers who are brand new to research projects.
- Teacher selects the topic and provides the sources for research.
- Most supported option where students can work together with the teacher to research sources as a whole group.
- Students can still choose how to show what they learned, but the teacher has full control over the content they are researching.
- Save time on finding sources and have more control over the types of sources students use.

Lesson Plans

Below are some lesson plans we created to help students become familiar with researching historical topics and can serve as great starting points for beginning the Youth History Day project.

1. [Introduction to Youth History Day PPT](#)- What is National History Day? What is the 2025 theme?
[Teacher Guide](#)
2. [Selecting and Narrowing Down a Topic PPT](#)- What makes a good research topic? What is a broad versus narrow topic?
[Teacher Guide](#)
[Topic Selection Worksheets](#)
3. [Creating Thesis Statements PPT](#)- What is a thesis statement? How do we write a thesis statement for a historical topic?
[Teacher Guide](#)
[Thesis Statement Checklist](#)
4. [Big Picture PPT](#)- What is a primary source v. a secondary source? How can we use images (photos, paintings) from the past to analyze and learn more about a topic?
[Teacher Guide](#)

5. [Finding Trustworthy Sources PPT](#)- How do we determine if a source is trustworthy? How can we evaluate websites for trustworthiness?
[Teacher Guide](#)

Topic Ideas: Rights & Responsibilities in History 2025:

This section includes possible topics for students to research that connect to 4th and 5th grade social studies standards and the 2025 NHD theme. The table includes a description of the piece of history, some guiding questions about rights and responsibilities, and a starting point for sources of research for each topic. These are suggestions that can be used or not. After listing out some primary and secondary sources there are examples of thesis statements that again can be used with your students as a model OR if you choose a more differentiated option of research can be used by your whole class to guide their project.

4th Grade:

<i>Topic/Dates</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Research</i>	<i>Category</i>
Ohio/American Indian Wars (late 1700s-early 1800s)	Tensions between settlers to Ohio and the American Indians led to battles over terms of treaties. Some of these wars included: Harmar's Defeat, St. Clair's Defeat, Battle of Tippecanoe, & the Battle of Fallen Timbers. Why did each side believe they had the right to the land? Did the settlers honor the American Indian rights established in treaties?	Ohio History Center Archives, Columbus, Ohio: Online Catalog http://www.ohiohistory.org/collections--archives/online-collections-catalog/	American Indian History
Tecumseh (1768-1812)	Tecumseh was born in 1768 in Old Piqua along the Mad River. He was a member of the Shawnee Nation and eventually became a great leader. He believed that no single group or tribe owned that land and advocated for American Indian nations to work together to stop the advancement of white settlers. Why did Tecumseh feel it was the American Indian nations' responsibility to stop white advancement? What rights was he fighting for?	Ohio History Center Archives, Columbus, Ohio: Online Catalog http://www.ohiohistory.org/collections--archives/online-collections-catalog/	American Indian History

<p>Treaty of Greenville (1795)</p>	<p>After the defeat of American Indian tribes at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, General Anthony Wayne joined leaders of several Indian Nations from Ohio to sign this treaty. It determined that the land north and west of the established line belonged to the American Indian Nations and the land south and east of the line was established for white settlement. It also established rights for trading posts on American Indian land and allowed American Indians to still hunt in the area. Was this a fair deal? What did each side stand to gain and to lose? Whose responsibility is it to uphold these rights?</p>	<p>Ohio History Center Archives, Columbus, Ohio: Online Catalog http://www.ohiohistory.org/collections-archives/online-collections-catalog/</p>	<p>American Indian History</p>
<p>The Ohio Constitution (1802-1803)</p>	<p>During the Ohio Constitutional Convention of 1802, the Ohio Constitution was drafted to be presented in US Congress for approval for Statehood. In 1803 the constitution was approved by Congress and Ohio was declared on of the United States of America. What new rights were drafted in the constitution for Ohio citizens? What rights were withheld from some citizens in the document? What is the responsibility of a state government to a federal government?</p>	<p>OHS: Collection. State constitution, 1802. [State Archives Series 2674]; Collection. Journal, 1802. [State Archives Series 1317]</p>	<p>Early Ohio</p>
<p>Underground Railroad in Ohio (Mid-19th Century)</p>	<p>Ohio boasted several prominent abolitionists who played a vital role in the Underground Railroad. Some freedom seekers settled in Ohio while others continued the journey to Canada where they were free from the Fugitive Slave Law. At least eight cities,</p>	<p>Rankin House and John Parker House in Ripley, Ohio http://www.ohiohistory.org/museumsand-historic-sites/museum--historicsites-by-name/rankin-house http://johnparkerhouse.org/</p>	<p>African American History</p>

	<p>including Ashtabula, Painesville, Cleveland, Sandusky, Toledo, Huron, Lorain, and Conneaut, along Lake Erie served as ferrying points to transport freedom seekers to Canada. Why did conductors feel a responsibility to freedom seekers? What rights were freedom seekers looking to gain?</p>	<p>National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Cincinnati, Ohio http://freedomcenter.org/</p> <p>Ohio History Center Archives, Columbus, Ohio: Online Catalog http://www.ohiohistory.org/collections--archives/online-collections-catalog/</p>	
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4th Grade Sources

Primary Sources

[Arthur St. Clair Letter to President George Washington](#)
[Northwest Ordinance](#)-National Archives
[Northwest Ordinance](#)-National Constitution Center
[Letter about Draft for War of 1812](#)
[Print of the Attack on Fort Meigs](#)
[Letter about Siege of Fort Meigs](#)
[Uncle Tom's Cabin Poster](#)
[Extracts from Mr. Rollin's Journal](#)-Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma Digital Collection
[Places of the Underground Railroad](#)
[Benjamin Lundy Portrait](#)
[Ohio Inventors](#)
[Declaration of Independence](#)
[The Battle of Yorktown](#)
[Federal Territory of 1785 Map](#)
[Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States](#)
[Northwest Territory Executive Journal](#)
[Arthur St. Clair Letter to James Ross](#)
[Maxwell's Code](#)
[Greenville Treaty Line Map](#)
[Treaty of Greenville in Letter to George Washington](#)
[1804 Map of the United States](#)
[1806 Map of the United States](#)
[Rufus Putman Ohio Map 1804](#)
[Myaamia Perspective of Treaty of Greenville Part 1](#)
[Part 2](#)

Secondary Sources

[InfOhio](#)
[Historic American Indian Tribes of Ohio](#)
[War of 1812](#)
 Liberty! How the Revolutionary War Began by: Lucille Recht Penner
 The Revolutionary War- Cornerstones of Freedom by: Josh Gregory

The Crossing: How George Washington Saved the American Revolution by: Jim Murphy
 George Washington: Leading a New Nation by: Matt Doeden
 What is the Declaration of Independence? By: Michael Harris
 Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad by: Michael Martin
 Who was George Washington? By: Roberta Edwards
 Who was Harriet Tubman? By: Yona Zeldis
 History Smashers: The American Revolution By: Kate Messner

4th Grade Thesis Statements

The Declaration of Independence set up the principles on which the United States of America would be built. This was *the first time a new nation included a list of rights* that they wanted to guarantee to their citizens-Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness- in addition to *responsibilities*. While the declaration is imperfect, it is the blueprint for rights and responsibilities in America, **that continues to be used 250 years later.**

In the 1850's when there was great debate over the use of slavery in the United States, conductors, like Harriet Tubman, on the Underground Railroad *risked everything to help enslaved folks on their path to freedom*. Conductors saw it as their *responsibility* to help freedom seekers gain the *rights* promised to white Americans. **An estimated 100,000 people escaped on the Underground Railroad between 1820 and 1861.**

Topic Ideas: Rights & Responsibilities in History 2025

5th Grade:

<i>Topic/Dates:</i>	<i>Description:</i>	<i>Research:</i>	<i>Category:</i>
The Codex Mendoza (the 16 th Century)	The Codex Mendoza is an Aztec codex, believed to have been created around the year 1541. It contains a history of both the Aztec rulers and their conquests as well as a description of the daily life of pre-conquest Aztec society. The codex is written using traditional Aztec pictograms with a translation and explanation of the text provided in Spanish. In what ways did societies such as the Incas or Aztecs create and enforce ideas of rights and responsibilities in society? How did the Codex's painted images depict the history of the Aztecs and their conquest by the Spanish during the sixteenth century in Mexico? Why was it	Codex Mendoza The Codex Mendoza with Dr. Daniela Bleichmar	Ancient Civilizations

	created? In what way did it define gender roles or issues of discipline?		
Inca Civilization (1200 to 1533 AD)	The Inca Civilization was the largest ancient civilization in pre-Columbian America. They resided in modern-day Peru and had a flourishing society with their own rights and responsibilities. How did the Incas structure their society? What led them to success in the early 13 th century?	Ancient Peruvian Art from Archeology of the Empire of Incas Inca Civilization Exploring the Early Americas: Pizarro and the Incas	Ancient Civilizations
European Explorers (15 th to 17 th century) Columbus Cortez Pizarro Hudson Ponce de Leon Magellan Cabot Champlin Cartier	Beginning in the 15 th century, European countries sponsored trips around the world and sent explorers in search of gold, spices, riches, and land that they could claim as their own. These European Explorers believed they had a responsibility to their country of origin to find and conquer more land and goods that their leaders felt they had the right to own. These explorations forever changed the way we view the world and had some devastating effects on the ancient civilizations who had occupied these "unexplored" lands. Who has a right to the land? What responsibilities did European Explorers take on?	The Age of Exploration- Primary Sources Letters from Hernan Cortes Letters of Cortés The Journal of Christopher Columbus European Colonization of the Americas World Explorers-PBS Education	European Explorers

5th Grade Sources

Primary Sources

[Codex Mendoza](#)

[Mayan Vase](#)

[Ancient Peruvian Art from Archeology of the Empire of Incas](#)

[Letters from Hernan Cortes](#)

[Letters of Cortés](#)

[The Journal of Christopher Columbus](#)
[Exploring the Early Americas: Pizzaro and the Incas](#)
[The Age of Exploration-Primary Sources](#)

Secondary Sources

[InfOhio](#)

[The Codex Mendoza with Dr. Daniela Bleichmar](#)

[Mayan Civilization](#)

[Mexico and Central America](#)

[Inca Civilization](#)

[Aztec Civilization](#)

[Life in the Province of the Aztec Empire](#)

[European Colonization of the Americas](#)

[World Explorers-PBS Education](#)

Travel with Great Explorers: Explore with John Cabot by: Cynthia O'Brien

Travel with Great Explorers: Explore with Henry Hudson by: Tim Cooke

Travel with Great Explorers: Explore with Ponce de Leon by: Cynthia O'Brien

Travel with Great Explorers: Explore with Jacques Cartier by: Marie Powell

Travel with Great Explorers: Explore with Christopher Columbus by: Cynthia O'Brien

Travel with Great Explorers: Explore with Samuel de Champlin by: Cynthia O'Brien

What was the Age of Exploration? by: Catherine Daly

Who was Marco Polo? By: Joan Holub

Who was Christopher Columbus? By: Bonnie Bader

Who was Ferdinand Magellan? By: S.A. Kramer

Who was Ponce de Leon? By: Pam Pollack

5th Grade Thesis Statements

The Age of Exploration from the early 15th century to the 17th century featured many European explorers who were sent by their governments to learn more about the world around them. European explorers felt it was their responsibility to their country and their right as white men to conquer lands occupied by advanced civilizations like the Aztec and the Inca. These civilizations had an established right to live there, *however this was ignored by the European Explorers who devastated these peoples with disease and war.* **The Age of Exploration changed who had power in the world.**

The *Codex Mendoza* was created by the Aztecs in the 16th century to depict the conquests of the Spanish and to provide the Emperor of Spain information about their society. The *Codex Mendoza* depicts the rights and responsibilities determined by the Aztec society in Mexico before they were conquered by Spain. The codex shows the *importance of gender roles and discipline within their society*, giving us a glimpse into one of the earliest civilizations. **Many future civilizations use the same ideas to build their societies.**