

HISTORY DAY CALIFORNIA

*Historical Significance* 

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Sponsored by: **CA Foundation for History Education**

NHD *Roadmap*



WE ARE HERE:



- ✓ Identify the theme (Turning Points in History)
- ✓ Choose a Topic
- ✓ Craft a Research Question
- ✓ Primary & Secondary Source Research
- ✓ Thesis Statement Construction
- ✓ Deconstructing a Project
- 📍 Historical Significance



... So, what is
Historical Significance?



Definition:

The principles behind the selection of what and who should be remembered, researched, taught, and learned



WHAT IS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE?



Make it
Significant

- How do historians determine what is important to learn about history?
- Why are some events included in a textbook or in a history lesson, and some are not?



... Two Components of
Historical Significance



RESULTING IN CHANGE

The event/development had deep consequences, for many people, over a long period of time.

REVEALING

The event/development sheds light on issues in history and contemporary life or was important at some stage in history within the collective memory of a group or groups.



THINKING LIKE A HISTORIAN



- **What impact did the turning point have on society, the economy, politics, the environment, etc.?**
- **In what ways did this turning point influence or change conditions beyond your topic?**
- **What is the historical significance that can be seen in current or recent events?**

Make it

A Turning Point



CORE OF A TURNING POINT ARGUMENT

1

2

3

CONTEXT

MAIN EVENT

SIGNIFICANCE

(set the stage for)


*(resulted in)
(revealed)*

... What's the difference? 

Effects vs. Significance



Effects are the results or impacts of different historical events or developments





Significance indicates events or developments that resulted in great change or revealed something about the past

TIPS FOR INCORPORATING SIGNIFICANCE




- **Distinguish between short-term and long-term significance**
- **Match your significance to your context**
- **Be specific!**
- **Support your analysis with evidence**

Identifying *Historical Significance*









Analyzing Past Projects



- We will show you an excerpt from a past project
 - You will use emojis to vote on which historical thinking skill you think the excerpt represents
 - We will reveal how judges interpreted the excerpt of the project
- 

ENGAGE WITH EMOJIS!

-  Historical Context
-  Thesis
-  Primary Sources
-  Connection to Theme
-  Multiple Perspectives
-  Historical Significance

On the toolbar,
click the
Reactions
button.



●●● Analysis of Past Projects



Project Excerpt

Although some of the tasks Girl Scouts conducted during WWII remained in the domestic sphere, their service ultimately forged a new frontier for female inclusivity in the workforce and shifted pre-war ideologies towards a future of independent women. Both the Wing and Mariner Scout divisions trained girls in the male-dominated fields of aviation and seafaring, pioneering employment for women. Moreover, the Girl Scout values emphasized patriotism and work regardless of sex, empowering a new generation of girls and challenging the gender norms of the time.

React with Emojis

- 👏 Historical Context
- 👍 Thesis
- ❤️ Primary Sources
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... Analysis of Past Projects




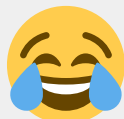




Project Excerpt

Before WWII, women often observed a subservient role and were not encouraged to work because of their alleged inferiority.

The Girl Scouts were founded with patriotic values in mind, and girls were trained to serve their community and country. This mindset was channeled into the vast amount of aid they conducted and their integration of female importance into the war effort.

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... Analysis of Past Projects




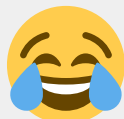




Project Excerpt

"Girl Scout membership in the US reached an "all-time high" in 1941, according to the annual report of the national organization. Total active membership was 670,747, an increase of 37, 541 over 1940. This included 29,362 troops in 6,565 communities in the US."

—*The New York Times*, March 1942

React with Emojis

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... Analysis of Past Projects



Project Excerpt

During WWII, the US government sent 127,000+ Japanese-Americans to internment camps for alleged espionage. Many prisoners died in these camps due to false accusations. Camp Girl Scout troops were established to occupy the children.

React with Emojis

-  Historical Context
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... Analysis of Past Projects



Project Excerpt

The Girl Scouts did not stop pushing for equality after WWII, participating in desegregation, Vietnam War relief, and environmental activism.

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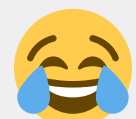




Project Excerpt

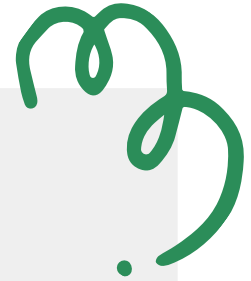
David Pesonen's leadership in the Battle for Bodega Head led to an improbable victory over PG&E in 1963 that changed the course of nuclear power on the California coast. Although victory at Bodega did not prevent all nuclear projects in California, Pesonen's battle became the model for grassroots protest against government agencies and utilities. Ultimately, Pesonen's leadership established an important foundation for participatory democracy in California, as it profoundly shaped the emerging environmental movement, exposed issues of earthquake safety in the nuclear industry, and reflected the changing role of citizens in governmental decisions.



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... Analysis of Past Projects



Project Excerpt

Leadership in Action

Even though Pesonen's ultimate goal was to conserve Bodega Head, he knew public safety was the issue that would defeat PG&E. Pesonen's strategy of citizen protest, legal intervention, and negative publicity combined to defeat the largest public utility in the country.

The People

Bill Kortum
"Using the food-chain argument from *Silent Spring*, we warned that cows nearby Bodega could ingest radioactive contamination from the grass."
Photo: Sonoma County Library
Quote: Bill Kortum

Joel Hedgpeth
"Joel Hedgpeth published *In Contempt of Progress*, a volume of poems against PG&E."
Photo: Sonoma County Library
Quote: David Pesonen

David Pesonen
"David launched a recall election against supervisor Nin Guidotti. The 'Nin-haters' collected signatures and held protests at meetings."
Doris Sloan, Interview

The Tactics

Karl Kortum
"Karl Kortum used his influence at the SF Chronicle to get letters and articles published."
Photo: Sonoma County Library
Quote: David Pesonen

Doris Sloan
"It was the start of people participating in democracy. Pesonen was marvelous at mobilizing us."
Photo: Sonoma County Library
Quote: Doris Sloan

David Pesonen
"I knew I had to get this fight to San Francisco. We held fundraisers and talked to politicians in San Francisco and Berkeley to get publicity."
David Pesonen, Interview

Bodega Day Benefit
BODEGA DAY BENEFIT
SUNDAY, JULY 20, 1963 - 4:00 PM TO MIDNIGHT
RAVENSQUAKE MCGOON'S
AND CLAY & SAN FRANCISCO
LUNN MURPHY'S JAZZ BAND
Sonoma County Museum

Rose Gaffney
"I wanted my land to go to the state parks and to a marine lab. Those PG&E boys told me they'd take my land anyway."
Photo: Sonoma County Library
Quote: Belle by the Bay

Jean Kortum
"Don't forget the importance of Jean Kortum. David realized he needed her political connections to get the attention of Secretary Udall."
Photo: Sonoma County Library
Quote: Thomas Welock

Doris Sloan
"Those balloons came down all over the Bay Area. We got a lot of exposure from the balloon stunt."
Doris Sloan, Interview

WARNING!
This balloon could represent a radioactive material of Strontium 90 or Iodine 131.
If you find a balloon from Bodega Head on Memorial Day, 1963, please - try to build a nuclear reactor plant at this spot, close to the world's biggest active earthquake fault.
Tell your local newspaper where you found this balloon.
Please stamp and return this card.
I found this balloon on _____ date
_____ place

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... Analysis of Past Projects



Project Excerpt

Participatory Democracy

As the gap closed between the experts and the people, access to information increased. People began to expect and demand the privilege and the responsibility to voice reasoned opinion in any public matter.



Chad Ecklund

"It was people wanting participatory democracy, wanting a say in decisions and wanting an end to arbitrary decisions made by elected officials. Whether someone was a student of an allegedly impersonal university or a citizen of a rural community, an unresponsive government offended shared values."
Doris Sloan, Interview



Wanda Clark

"At Diablo, organizers studied what worked at Bodega. They targeted PG&E and the scientists on all levels - mass protest, legal intervention, expert testimony."
Thomas Welock, California History

"The emergence of an active, outspoken public has had enormous implications for Sonoma County and beyond. These issues remain a balancing act. Water, power, waste disposal and their relationship to population growth continue to be on the political and environmental agenda. All of them have a legacy that stretches back to the transformative battle over Bodega Head."
Eric Starkey, Interview



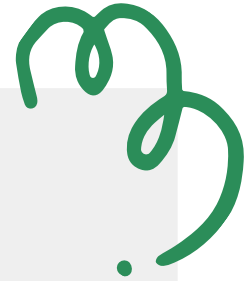
Sonoma County Museum









Sonoma State Special Collections



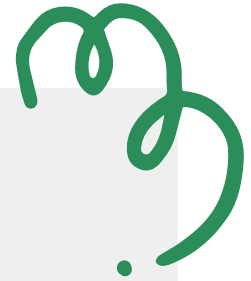
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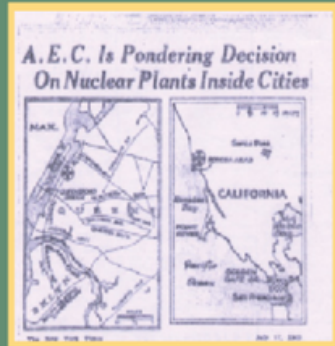
... Analysis of Past Projects




Project Excerpt

Nuclear Power


Seismic safety became an issue for all nuclear power plants. The battle for Bodega Head exposed issues about nuclear policies and public safety.



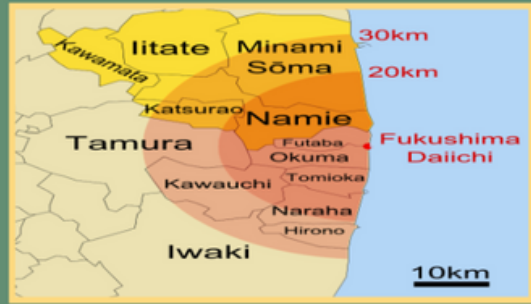
"Today, there is only one active nuclear power plant on the coast of California, and I've had a part in the defeat or closure of three of them."



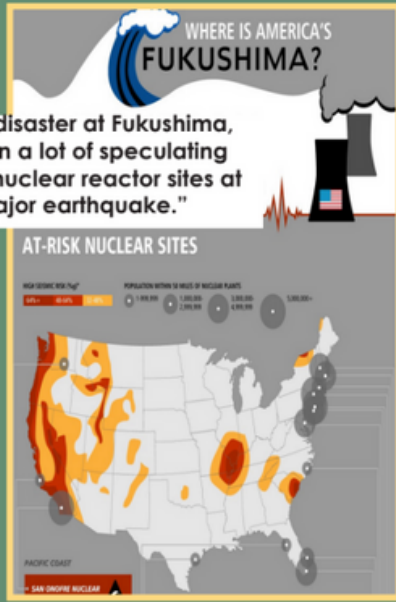
"Friends of the Earth embraced the anti-nuclear limited growth position as a matter of morality and conscience. The outcome of the battle at Diablo Canyon was to help curtail nuclear power development in the United States."



"The recent closure of the San Onofre plant protects the almost 10 million people who live nearby from the possibility of a tsunami-earthquake similar to the one in Japan."



"Since the disaster at Fukushima, there's been a lot of speculating about U.S. nuclear reactor sites at risk for a major earthquake."




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Make it *Historically Significant*



- **Establish relevance of the topic to the historical record.**
 - **Demonstrate a significant legacy of the topic and make broad connections.**
 - **Demonstrate how an event, person or development is significant either by showing how it is embedded in a larger, meaningful narrative OR by showing how it sheds light on an enduring or emerging issue.**
- 



HISTORY DAY CALIFORNIA 2023



QUESTIONS

