

# Using Weebly for History Day Websites

## The Basics

1. Log on to [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org). Click on the left-hand link "Start your website entry at the NHD web portal."
2. Fill in a username and password. Choose "student" or "teacher" from the drop-down menu.
3. Give your site a title. This title will appear on all of your website pages, so it should relate to your topic.
4. Click on the "Designs" tab and choose a design. This might change as your website grows, but it is helpful to have a design in place so you can visualize how your website is coming together.
5. Click on the "Pages" tab to add pages. Always start with "Home." Add the names of all the pages, including a page for the bibliography. The order of these pages can be changed at any time on this page.
  - a. The "Home" page must include students' names, entry title and division.
  - b. The "Bibliography" page must include the entire annotated bibliography. It works well if this is the last page.
6. To edit pages, either click on "Edit this Page" on the "Pages" tab, or click the "Elements" tab and choose a page from your navigation bar. Click on an element and drag it down into the body of the page. The element icon will appear; double-click on the icon and you will be able to start adding content. You can add multiple elements to a page.
7. Double-click on dummy text to start adding content. You cannot change fonts, but you can change font color, size, alignment or bold/italic/underline. There is a link option; students cannot use this option!
  - a. Students can copy and paste text if they want to use different fonts. Be aware that copying and pasting may create formatting issues.
8. When adding images, students can only upload from the computer they are working on or from a disk. The image size can be changed, but changing it within Weebly may make the image look unclear.
  - a. Students can change the border and position of the picture, or create a caption. Under "Advanced," students can also change the margins and add alt text.
9. At any time, you can delete an element by clicking on the red X in the upper right-hand corner of the element box. You can also move any element to another page by clicking the green arrow in the upper left-hand corner of the element box.
10. Under the tab "Site Settings," students should not create a site password. This may disable some viewers, including judges, from viewing the site. Students can choose to change the footer message, but it should be something appropriate to the project. Students should not include anything in Search Engine Optimization.
11. When students use the Help function, located in the upper right-hand corner, they should use only the first section, "Using the Weebly Editor," or all the sections that start with 1. The other sections are for functions that do not apply to History Day.
12. Every time students return to edit their site, they can go straight to <http://nhd.weebly.com/>.

## The Bells and Whistles

Under “Elements,” click on the “Multimedia” tab on the upper left-hand side of the page. There are a number of options, all of which require previous research or saving of documents into a file.

**Photo Gallery** – Students can add a number of photographs in one section. They can change the space between images, the borders and do minor cropping. There is not an option to add text to the images.

**File** – Students can add a file, such as a primary document. Once the file is added, students should be sure to change the File Name to something that adequately describes the file.

**Audio Player** – Students can add an audio file, such as the recording of a speech or a commercial. They can choose to allow the audio to automatically play or play only when clicked on.

**Video** – Students can add video clips of historic film footage or interviews. Video clips can be no longer than 45 seconds and should be previously saved to a disk or computer in order to use this function.

**Embedded Document** – Students can embed documents into their pages, rather than add a file that must be downloaded to view. Once the document has been downloaded, students can choose how viewers will see the file when the page is opened, but the Scribd formatting will remain so viewers can adjust the image.

**Flash** – Students can add a SWF file, which is an animated graphic. This function may not be entirely appropriate for History Day projects.

**Google Maps** – Students can add a Google Map of a particular place to orient their viewers. San Francisco is the default location. To change the location, click next to the map once it’s embedded, and a navigation bar will appear that will allow students to change the location and the width, height and zoom level of the map.

**Flickr Photo Slideshow** – This is similar to the Photo Gallery, except students must have a Flickr account. Once embedded, students will click on the Flickr element and enter their Flickr account e-mail address and other information specific to their account.

**YouTube Video** – Students can embed a YouTube video by entering in the YouTube Video URL for the appropriate video. The same rule applies for video length: no longer than 45 seconds.

Another advanced element they can use is the “hidden page.” Hidden pages do not appear in the navigation bar but can be useful as places to store more primary documents. Students can then link to these hidden pages from other pages. On the “Pages” tab, just select “no” from the “Show in Navigation?” dropdown menu. To link to a hidden page, highlight text or a picture and click the chain icon. Choose the correct hidden page to link to. To edit these hidden pages, choose the page on the “Pages” tab. The navigation bar will continue to be visible on the hidden page.

# Creating an Effective History Day Website

As with any other History Day category, research should be completed, text all written and images all collected before students begin building a website. Students don't receive their exhibit boards before they start research; they should not receive access to Weebly before they begin researching or even writing. With this new tool, it is of the utmost importance that students have written their text and chosen their images before they begin building a site.

## *Some hints on website creation...*

Create your own page, either to just become familiar with the system or to create a sample site or to create a tutorial for students.

Create a universal system for students' usernames and passwords so you can easily access their site at any time for grading, and eventually judging and submitting, purposes. The system I use for national registration is username = first initial + last name + last four digits of social security number; password = last four digits of social security number. You could substitute student ID numbers, or just leave it at student names and initials.

If students will be working on websites at home and at school, encourage them to save all text and images to both places, or carry all images and text on a flash drive.

Envision websites as the technological equivalent of exhibits.

- Exhibits should not have too many sections; websites should not have too many pages.
- Exhibits should not have "picture sections"; websites should not have "picture pages."
- Exhibits can use interactive elements to draw people in but should not rely on flash; websites should certainly use interactive elements, such as video or audio, but should not allow flashier elements to be the primary focus.
- Exhibits should follow a specific order (context, main point, impact); websites should follow a similar order in the navigation.

Requiring students to hand in paper copies of their text before they start site-building will help decrease the amount of Internet cut-and-paste.

Students are not allowed to use external links. If they want to use information from external websites, they should quote and cite that information on their pages instead.

Once the site is published, students should check the site on a number of web browsers (i.e. Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox).