NATIONAL HISTORY DAY® 2022

ESCAPING THE TOPIC MAZE

Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences

What is Debate?

Debates are often formal or informal meetings where people argue opposing views. Some debates have two sides, while others involve three (or more) perspectives.

What is Diplomacy?

Diplomacy usually means negotiating, compromising, and communicating with people or nations to find a nonviolent solution to a perceived problem.

Debate and diplomacy can occur independently or be intertwined.

1 Setting the Stage

- What interests you?
- Is there a time period you want to explore?
- What types of debates or diplomatic exchanges interest you?
- Are you interested in social, cultural, political, or economic topics?
- When did your topic take place? Where did it take place?
- Historical Context: How did other historical events affect the topic you have chosen?
- How did the time period affect the argument or the diplomatic exchanges?

Student Answer:

2 Identifying Debates and Diplomacy

- What debates took place? What were the topics of these debates?
- Did diplomatic exchanges occur? If so, between whom?
- Does your topic feature both debate and diplomacy? Or is only one present? Explain.
- How did people communicate their arguments or engage in diplomatic exchanges?
- **Multiple Perspectives:** Who were the people or groups involved in your story? How many different perspectives are involved? Did the people involved agree or disagree with each other?
- Did the people involved have different goals?
- **Wide Research:** What language(s), ideas, imagery, or arguments did people use to persuade?

Student Answer:

3 Successes, Failures, Consequences

- What was the outcome/result of the diplomatic exchange or debate?
- Did the outcome affect the relationships between people, groups, or nations?
- Historical Significance: What are the short-term consequences resulting from this event? What are the long-term consequences?
- Can an outcome be both a failure and a success? Why or why not?
- How does this topic impact the present day? What connections do you see between the past and present?
- Did the outcome change how different groups interact with each other?
- Did new challenges arise? When? Why?

Student Answer:

Historical Argument Question: How does the topic connect to the theme of *Debate & Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failures, Consequences*? Why is this story important to our understanding of history?