

How to Create an Award Winning Heritage Fair Project

Celebrate your learning by presenting your research at a district Regional Heritage Fair. Here are some tips to help you achieve an award-winning project:

- Read the award criteria very carefully before commencing your heritage fair project.
- Begin by creating an annotated bibliography that includes both primary and secondary sources. Try to avoid tertiary sources such as Wikipedia and school textbooks. Decide on what format you will use (i.e. MLA, Chicago, APA) and format your bibliography accordingly (your teacher may also have a format preference).
- Plan a visit to a local museum or archives, or study their web resources, to learn more about the heritage of New Brunswick. Add what you discover to your annotated bibliography.
- Do your own research. That way, you'll be able to speak knowledgeably about your project on fair day.
- When you think your bibliography is complete, ask your teacher to review it and to provide you with some feedback.
- Now you are ready to prepare a thesis statement! After carefully examining your evidence and sources, draft a thesis statement. An easy way to do this is to think about your argument.
 - What is it that you want to say?
 - What is your *Big Idea*?
 - How is this different from what others have said?
 - What new information do you have to contribute?
 - Try this formula for writing a thesis statement:

Although _____,
nevertheless, I think that _____
because (and list your evidence):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

After you have followed this formula to draft your statement, rewrite it in your own words. Remember, if you are quoting someone else or copying their ideas you have to give them credit in a footnote or in-text citation.

- Ask your teacher and fellow students for feedback on your thesis statement. This way you will know if your argument is solid and defensible.
- Now begin sketching out your project board, always maintaining a focus on your thesis statement. Be certain to present your primary source evidence as visuals.
- Think of your project as a museum exhibit. Try to engage your visitors with all of their senses: sight, smell, taste, and touch.
- Prepare written component as an essay (with a bibliography) or as a PowerPoint presentation (also with a bibliography).
- Make certain you include three-dimensional objects such as artifacts or a model. Also, consider dressing in costume or taking on a character role.
- On the day before your fair presentation, study the New Brunswick Regional Heritage Fair judging questions. That way, you'll be able to prepare for the types of questions the judges will ask you. Practise your presentation with your family and friends.
- When presenting your project, be certain to look your recipient directly in the eyes and talk to them directly. Do not read from your notes, but speak from memory (or from the visual clues on your poster board).
- **Smile! This is your day!**
- **On the day of your fair presentation... Remember to have fun and celebrate your achievement!**