



Communication in History: The Key to Understanding Breaking Down the Theme & Generating Topic Ideas



The two key terms to work with this year are COMMUNICATION and UNDERSTANDING, so let's explore those words.

Communication: *a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior*

Understanding: *achieving a grasp of the nature, significance, or explanation of something*

(Definitions courtesy of Merriam-Webster <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>)

Watch the NHD theme video [Communication in History: The Key to Understanding](#) and use this organizer to take notes and brainstorm ideas; do not limit yourself to examples from the video. Space has been provided for you to record sites or organizations that may be helpful for research.

1. Many inventions related to communications are identified throughout the video. List the ones you saw or heard. Can you think of others? Have any of these inventions had an impact on an event in history?

Research links and resources:

2. Spoken communication comes in many styles. Besides President Roosevelt's fireside chats, what are some other examples of spoken communication?

Research links and resources:

3. Written communication dates back thousands of years and takes many forms. List some examples of how people use writing to communicate.

Research links and resources:

4. For communication to exist, it must be heard or received, not just initiated. What are some ways that show a person or group understands information they've heard or received?

Research links and resources:

5. Gatherings can be held to communicate. How might a gathering be used to promote, or protest, information or an idea? List some examples and consider what resulted because of the gatherings.

Research links and resources:

6. Communication plays a key part in civics and government. The theme video shows how cultural exchange (diplomacy) and federal agencies are used as methods for nations to communicate with their own citizens or other nations. Find your own examples of these:

Diplomacy

Federal Agencies

Research links and resources:

7. Communication is part of the political process. How do political leaders/parties communicate with their constituents or governing bodies?

Research links and resources:

8. Language is important in communication, whether it is spoken, written, or expressed physically. How might communication be impacted if language is restricted?

What are examples of a language that was created or used for a specific purpose of group of people?

Research links and resources:

9. Many events in history have resulted from miscommunication. These events could be attributed to errors with technology or translation, or even personal disputes. List some examples of events in history that were caused by miscommunication. Did the results have a positive or negative impact?

Research links and resources:

10. No matter who is communicating, differing perspectives will always play a role in understanding. How can you as a researcher be sure to examine the various points of view?

11. Have you ever heard the saying, "A picture is worth a thousand words"? What do you think it means? How can images be used to communicate?

Research links and resources:



HINT: Remember to consider the **impact**, not just the history, of your potential topics.