

Salisbury University
Documentary Filmmaking **sharma**

Historical Documentary Quality Checklist (adapted from National History Day)

Historical Quality – 40%

- My documentary is historically accurate: All the information in my documentary is true to the best of my knowledge. My project offers a historical interpretation/argument that is supported by evidence.
- I show analysis and interpretation: My documentary doesn't just recount facts or tell a story. I interpret and analyze my topic. My documentary has a strong central thesis or argument that I prove. I can point to where I state my thesis on my script.
- I place my topic in historical context: My topic didn't take place in isolation. I made sure to place my topic into historical context – the intellectual, physical, social, and cultural setting for my topic.
- My project shows wide, balanced research and I used available primary sources: I investigated multiple perspectives about my topic and looked at all sides of an issue.

Historical Analysis—20%

- I present a thesis in my project and back it up with information drawn from my research.
- I have demonstrated historical significance and impact: My project offers an answer to the “so what?” question. I explain why it is important to know about these events in history.
- I have shown change over time and cause and effect: My documentary offers an explanation of what things changed over time and why the changes took place.
- I demonstrate significance of my topic in history and draw conclusions: My documentary does more than just describe my topic. I explain why my topic is important in history or demonstrate its significance.

Sources—20%

- My project uses a depth and range of available primary sources: I consulted a wide variety of sources from the time period of my project (newspaper accounts, diary entries, photographs, archival accounts, and other first-hand accounts).
- My project uses a depth and range of secondary sources: I used accounts written by historians and other experts to understand the issues involved in my topic and their long-range significance.
- I make effective use of sources in my documentary: Sources are used as evidence for points made in my narration.

Clarity of Presentation—20%

- My documentary tells a coherent, well-organized story: I made sure my documentary is easy to follow and understand.
- I used the documentary medium effectively: My topic lends itself well to telling a story through visuals and narration. I was careful to use the technology appropriately to emphasize my historical message.
- My documentary and written materials show attention to detail and make an impact: My documentary script and images are carefully written and selected. I have proofread and edited my annotated bibliography.