SECTION 4A · STAGE-SPECIFIC COACHING FORM

4a Stage-Specific Coaching

Use in coaching conversations between contest levels · Select the section for your student's category

STUDENT NAME(S)	PROJECT TITLE	DIVISION & CATEGORY
		□ Elem □ Jr □ Sr □ Paper □ Exhibit □ Perf □ Doc □ Web □ Podcast □ Poster

THESIS / HISTORICAL ARGUMENT

CONNECTION TO THEME:

SECTION A · Paper · Performance · Documentary · Exhibit · Website

REGIONALS → STATE Sharpen the Foundation	STATE → NATIONALS Elevate the Analysis	NATIONALS PREP Compete at the Highest Level
HISTORICAL ARGUMENT	**HISTORICAL ARGUMENT**	**HISTORICAL ARGUMENT**
Can you state your thesis in one sentence? Does it make a historical claim — not just describe a topic? How?	Does your thesis account for competing perspectives or interpretations? Is it arguable? Explain.	Would a historian recognize your argument as a genuine interpretive claim? Explain.
THEME CONNECTION	**THEME CONNECTION**	**THEME CONNECTION**
How does your topic connect to the annual theme? Where does that connection appear in student-composed text?	Is the theme connection explicit in your argument, not just mentioned? Does it appear throughout? Explain.	Is the theme woven into your significance analysis, not just the introduction? How?

RESEARCH & SOURCES	RESEARCH & SOURCES	RESEARCH & SOURCES
Count your primary vs. secondary sources. What source types are missing (oral history, visual, document, artifact)?	Do your primary sources directly support your argument, or just relate to the topic? How?	Does every source in your bibliography actively support your argument, or are some just filler? Explain?
HISTORICAL CONTEXT	**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**	**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**
Where do you explain what was happening at the time and place? Is it enough for a reader to understand?	Is your historical context analyzed, or just described? What conditions made your topic possible?	Do you connect your topic to broader historical forces (economic, social, political) of the era? How?
MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES	**MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**	**MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**
Whose voices are present? Whose are missing that would matter?	Are perspectives actively analyzed, or just listed? Do they connect to your argument? How?	Do you address why people in opposition believed what they did — not just what they believed? How?
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE	**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**	**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**
Where does your project address the short-term and long-term impact of your topic?	Is your significance analysis connected to your thesis, or tacked on at the end? Explain.	Does your conclusion argue why this topic still matters — not just that it changed things? How?
STUDENT VOICE & PRESENTATION	**STUDENT VOICE & PRESENTATION**	**STUDENT VOICE & PRESENTATION**
Read a paragraph aloud. Is the analysis in your own words, or do sources dominate? Have you checked all rule compliance (word limits, process paper, bibliography format)?	Is your argument clear to someone who knows nothing about your topic? Have you addressed judge comments from regionals?	Have you addressed every judge's comment from state, or explained why you chose not to? Is your category-specific presentation (citations / exhibit design / dramatic arc / audio / navigation) polished?

SECTION B · Podcast · All Grade Levels · Nevada-Only: Advances to State Only

REGIONALS → STATE Sharpen the Foundation	STATE · No Further Advancement: Polish for Your Best Performance
HISTORICAL ARGUMENT	**HISTORICAL ARGUMENT**
Can you state your thesis in one sentence? Does your narration open with a clear historical claim? Explain.	Is your argument consistently supported throughout the podcast, not just stated at the start? Would a listener who only heard the middle still know your claim? How?
THEME CONNECTION	**THEME CONNECTION**
Where in your podcast do you explicitly connect your topic to the annual theme? Is it in your own words? Explain.	Does the theme connection appear throughout — in your narration, not just in the opening or closing? Explain.
RESEARCH & SOURCES (SHOW NOTES)	**RESEARCH & SOURCES (SHOW NOTES)**
What source types are in your bibliography? Are you missing primary sources (oral history, audio documents, recorded speeches)? Is your Show Notes list complete and in order? Explain.	Do your audio clips and quotes directly support your argument? Does your annotated bibliography include all music, clips, and interviews? Explain.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT	HISTORICAL CONTEXT
Does your narration give listeners enough background to understand the time and place of your topic? How?	Is context analyzed in your narration — explaining WHY conditions existed — not just described? How?
MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES	**MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**
Whose voices — through narration, audio clips, or interviews — are in your podcast? Whose are missing?	Are different perspectives analyzed in your narration, or just played and left without comment? Explain.
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE	**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**
Does your podcast conclude with analysis of short-term and long-term impact? Explain.	Is your significance woven into your narration throughout, or only mentioned in the last 30 seconds? Explain.
AUDIO & STUDENT VOICE	**AUDIO & STUDENT VOICE**
Is your narration clear and easy to understand? Is volume consistent? Is the time limit met? (Elem: ≤ 6 min / Jr/Sr: ≤ 10 min) Does your analysis sound like your own voice? How?	Does sound — music, clips, interviews — create a compelling listening experience that enhances your argument? Is your narration free of grammatical errors? Is student analysis balanced with supporting audio?

SECTION C · Poster · Elementary Division (Grades 4–5) Only · Nevada-Only: Advances to State Only

REGIONALS → STATE Sharpen the Foundation	STATE · No Further Advancement. Polish for Your Best Display
HISTORICAL ARGUMENT	**HISTORICAL ARGUMENT**
Can you point to your claim on the poster? Is it in your own words — not just a quote or description? Explain.	Is your argument supported by evidence on the poster — images AND your own analysis, not just one or the other? How?
THEME CONNECTION	**THEME CONNECTION**
Where does your poster connect to the annual theme? Is it in student-composed text? Explain.	Is the theme connection visible to a viewer who reads your poster without you explaining it? How?
RESEARCH & SOURCES	**RESEARCH & SOURCES**
Do you have a variety of source types in your bibliography? Are you missing images, primary documents, or books?. Explain.	Are all quotes and visuals credited on the poster? Does every image connect to your argument, not just decorate?
HISTORICAL CONTEXT	**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**
Does your poster show key people, events, and ideas that led to your topic? Can a viewer follow the story? Explain.	Is context analyzed in your captions and labels, or just described? What made your topic possible? Explain.
MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES	**MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**

Whose voices or viewpoints appear on your poster? Whose could you add? List below.	Are different perspectives visible through images AND text — not just one type of source? Explain.
SIGNIFICANCE IN HISTORY	**SIGNIFICANCE IN HISTORY**
Does your poster show the impact of your topic? Can a viewer see why it mattered? How?	Is impact analyzed in your own words — not just implied by images? Explain.
VISUAL IMPACT & PRESENTATION	**VISUAL IMPACT & PRESENTATION**
Is your poster flat (no protruding elements)? Is it within 30" x 40"? Is student-composed text under 350 words? Are all visuals and quotes credited? Process paper and bibliography submitted?	Does the structure guide a viewer's eye through the story? Do font and color choices enhance readability? Is your analysis clearly your own words, balanced with evidence?

TOP REVISION PRIORITY	SPECIFIC ACTION STEPS	CHECK-IN DATE