

How did we choose our topic and how does it relate to the annual theme?

We discovered the topic, Joan of Arc, after looking at teacher recommendations. Joan really spoke to us because she was a young woman, just 17 years old, who was not much older than us. And she made an impact on the history of France. Seeing a young lady be true to herself and make a difference is inspiring.

Although a 17-year-old girl may not seem like a frontier at first, she is a prime example. In her lifetime, she pushed the societal frontier barrier of gender roles. She stood up to the norms of the time. Joan chopped her hair off, wore men's clothing, and actually led troops into battle. Being a soldier, Joan challenged the frontier barrier by reconquering land that had been previously taken by the English.

How did we conduct our research?

Our research began with a basic Google search on her name to help us learn about her life and develop a plan to move forward. After that, we looked at reliable sources, such as textbooks, tradebooks, and encyclopedia, to get a more in-depth storyline of her life. When looking through the sources, we took plenty of notes so that we would be able to share her story with accurate information. We also watched some documentaries about our Joan to learn about her from different perspectives. Pictures were a hard part of our project because there are hardly any images from Joan's time.

How did we create our project?

We created a website for this National History Day project because we felt a website would allow us to provide quality work in an efficient manner. We never really needed to be in the same room to work on the website, so we could collaborate asynchronously. We decided on a layout together and split up parts of the project, where it was possible. Other times, we worked together to make sure we were on the same page with our ideas. After our research concluded, we started to piece together our storyline with pictures, quotes, and our own words to help tell her story.

What is our historical argument?

Joan of Arc, in 1428, led soldiers into Orleans to save the French people who had been under attack. In her life, Joan challenged the frontier of gender roles and expanded France's frontier by reconquering land taken by the English. Her death was an inspiration for the French soldiers and she is now a saint in the Catholic Church.

In what ways is our topic significant in history?

Joan of Arc inspired the future of France. After Joan's death in 1453, the English were driven out of France. France claimed the land and still control it today. In 1456, a court declared her innocent. In 1920 she was declared a saint by the Catholic Church. Today, she is viewed as a heroine and the patron saint of France.