History on Display

Judge how well presentation choices serve an audience.

SS24.HS.9b "Evaluate the effectiveness of different methods of presenting historical findings to an audience."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one strength and circle one limit for each of the three methods, then number two audience needs that could change which method works best.

Presenting the Triangle Fire

1 On March 25, 1911, a fire at New York City's Triangle Shirtwaist Factory killed 146 garment workers. Many workers were young immigrant women. Imagine a museum that wants visitors to understand both what happened and how historians know. Its curators consider three ways to share their findings: an audio program, a printed exhibit panel, and a short video. Each format can use records from the fire, including witness testimony and photographs. Yet a format succeeds only if it makes evidence clear to its intended audience. Speed, access, and the chance to inspect sources all matter.

2 The audio program features actors reading brief excerpts from witness testimony, followed by a historian explaining which records support each claim. Hearing different voices may help visitors connect with individual experiences, and listeners can walk while they listen. But a noisy gallery can drown out speech, and visitors who cannot hear need a transcript. The printed panel instead pairs short claims with dated quotations and source labels. Visitors can pause to compare a claim with its quotation. However, its small space cannot include long testimony, and crowded text may discourage readers.

3 The three-minute video combines a narrator's summary with archival photographs, on-screen citations, and captions. For a class with only five minutes at the exhibit, it offers a quick overview that students with or without hearing can follow. Still, fast-changing images can leave little time to check a quotation or study a citation. A visitor researching how one witness described an exit might prefer the panel, then consult the full testimony using its source label. No method is best for everyone. An effective presentation matches its evidence and pace to a particular audience and makes important limits visible.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why might the audio program help a visitor connect with individual workers more than the panel would? What must the museum provide for visitors who cannot hear it?

2. For a visitor checking whether a claim matches its evidence, why is the panel useful? Name one trade-off.

3. How well would the video serve a class with only five minutes at the exhibit, including students who cannot hear? Give one strength and one limit.

4. A visitor wants to study one witness's account of an exit. Which method should the visitor start with, what should they do next, and why is the video alone less useful?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A local history club has researched a 1920s neighborhood streetcar strike using dated newspaper reports and workers' letters. In four or five sentences, choose between two methods from the passage for sharing its findings with families at a busy open house, explain a strength and a limit of each, and show how you would make your choice accessible and its evidence checkable.

ANSWER KEY

History on Display

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HS.9b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one strength and circle one limit for each of the three methods, then number two audience needs that could change which method works best. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why might the audio program help a visitor connect with individual workers more than the panel would? What must the museum provide for visitors who cannot hear it?	**Hearing actors read testimony gives individual accounts distinct voices. The museum must provide a transcript.**
2	For a visitor checking whether a claim matches its evidence, why is the panel useful? Name one trade-off.	**Dated quotations and source labels let the visitor compare a claim with evidence at their own pace. The panel has limited space, and crowded text may discourage readers.**
3	How well would the video serve a class with only five minutes at the exhibit, including students who cannot hear? Give one strength and one limit.	**Its three-minute overview and captions suit the class, but fast-changing images may leave too little time to check quotations or citations.**
4	A visitor wants to study one witness's account of an exit. Which method should the visitor start with, what should they do next, and why is the video alone less useful?	**Start with the panel, then use its source label to find the full testimony. The video's pace leaves little time to study a quotation or citation.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would choose a printed panel over a short video for families at the busy open house. A panel would let visitors compare a claim about the strike with a dated letter, but crowded text might turn them away. A video could give a quick overview, but its citations might disappear before visitors could read them. I would offer a large-print version of the panel and label each quotation with its date and source. Families could read at their own pace and trace the claims to the evidence, even in a noisy room.

Accept other supported comparisons that connect a method's strengths and limits to the stated audience. For Part 3, look for a clear choice between two methods, a strength and limit of each, and specific plans for access and checking evidence.