THE DOCUMENTARY ROLL

It’s important to think about breaking up your documentary into smaller segments, just like an exhibit is divided into sections. It will be easier to organize your thoughts into these smaller parts. It’s also easier for your viewers to follow along when you have a well-organized documentary. Here are some general ideas about how you may want to organize your documentary. Remember: These are just ideas. As long as your project is organized you can create it however you want!

**Title** (15 seconds)

**Thesis Statement** (1 minute)

**Background/Buildup** (2 minutes 30 seconds)

**Main Event** (2 minutes 30 seconds)

**Short and Long-Term Impact** (2 minutes 30 seconds)

**Conclusion** (1 minute)

**End Titles/Credits** (15 seconds)

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Track 1: Student-read narration and oral history interviews

Track 2: Historically appropriate music and sound effect
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Title (15 sec.)

Thesis (1 minute)
- About 50 words
- Incorporate theme words
- Don't have to label "thesis" or put on screen
- Remember, it's the road map to your project

Background/Buildup (2 min. 30 sec.)
- Place your topic in historical context
- What information do we need to know to help us understand your topic?
- What outside people, ideas, or events were going on to influence your topic?
- Who are the main players and what are they doing to prepare for the main events of your topic?
- What are the events leading up to the main event?
- What was life like before the main events of your topic?

Main Event (2 min. 30 sec.)
- Major details about the main events in your topic
- Include specific details about the most critical people and events related to your topic
- This section generally covers a smaller time period (several months to several years)

Short and Long-Term Impact (2 min. 30 sec.)
- What are some of the immediate reactions to the main event, shortly after it happened?
- What changed? New laws? New ways of thinking?
- Who was affected by the event?
- How is the world different after the main events of your topic?
- What is the long term significance?
- Where there intended/unintended consequences?
- Did it influence other historical events?

Heart of the Story

Conclusion (1 minute)
- Restate your thesis
- Focus on the main points you want your audience to take away
- So what?
- Why is this topic important in history?
- Incorporate theme words

End Titles/Credits (15 sec.)
- Credit the main sources of audio and visual sources
- Thank people, organizations, and libraries who helped or contributed to your project.

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