

HANDOUT: ORGANIZING YOUR INFORMATION: PERFORMANCES

Writing a script is the essential first step in creating a performance. It will guide how you structure your acting, props, and costumes. Below are some tips for beginning to write your script.

Quick Tips for Writing Scripts:

- **Identify the key information first.** Find the quotes, speeches, characters etc. that you know you must include and work the performance around these.
- **Balance drama with historical evidence.** Using quotes, speeches, or excerpts from sources like newspapers can be an excellent way to incorporate evidence and detail that a great performance requires.
- **Prepare a performance.** Don't prepare an oral report that simply states facts. You need characters to come alive and interact with each other and the audience. Try to engage the audience by asking questions or creating dramatic scenes.
- **Choose the type of voice you want to use.** You can use first person and third person perspectives to tell your story. In some cases you may want to use both to convey your points.
- **Choosing characters.** Select characters that can tell the most in your story. Don't overcomplicate the storyline with too many.
- **Block.** As you write your script, include the actions and placement of your characters.
- **Avoid clutter.** Too many props, costumes, or characters will overwhelm your performance.
- **Length.** Scripts are usually 4-5 pages.
- **Your research is still central.** You want each piece to tie back to your main argument and thesis.
- **Practice, practice, practice.** You won't use your scripts on stage, so make sure to practice your performance.