Communication in History: The Key to Understanding
Theme Connections

“Communication in History” topics tend to fall into two buckets. You will need a different strategy to connect each of these topics to the annual theme.

**Can a topic fit both?**

Yes! Some topics may cross the line between the technology of communication and sharing a specific message. When your topic could fit into both categories, try using **Graphic Organizer 2**.

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**Theme Graphic Organizer 1**
New or different technology or ways to communicate

**Will help you to build your theme connection by:**
- Identifying the situation, problem, or opportunity
- Discussing the new or different technology
- Showing how it impacted communication and understanding

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**Theme Graphic Organizer 2**
People using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to communicate specific messages

**Will help you to build your theme connection by:**
- Discussing the situation, problem, or opportunity
- Identifying the message, who wanted to share it and why.
- Showing how the communication changed history and understanding
This organizer will help you think about your theme connection when your topic involves new or different technology or ways to communicate.

**Heart of the Story: New Technology**

What was the innovation? How did it improve communication? Understanding?

What was getting in the way of communication? What problems were people trying to fix with the new communication? Had people tried other solution? Why did they not succeed?

What was the immediate response? How did people react to the new technology? What and who did it help? What and who did it hurt? Did it lead to better communication and understanding? How?

What was the spark for your topic? What events, knowledge or people had a DIRECT influence on the creation of your topic?

What was the legacy/significance of your topic in history? Did this new technology last? If yes, why? If no, why not? Did it lead to other kinds of technology? Did the new technology affect other historical events in important ways?

**National History Day in Minnesota**

2021
This organizer will help you think about your theme connection when your topic involves **people using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to communicate specific messages.**

**What was the message?**
- What were they trying to communicate?
- Was it public or private?
- Whose beliefs or values were represented by it?

**How was it communicated?**
- Why did the author choose this format?
- Was it effective or ineffective?

**Why was it communicated?**
- What were people trying to change or do?
- What other points of view were not represented?

**“Heart” of the Story**

**What was the impact of the communication?**
- Who was the intended audience for the message? How did they respond?
- How did others respond to the message?
- What changed right away?
- What changed long term?
- Did the change affect all groups of individuals the same way?