

Lynne O'Hara:

Good morning, good afternoon, and welcome. My name is Lynne O'Hara and I'm the Director of Programs at National History Day. We are thrilled to welcome you to NHD 2021. We are so excited to have so many teachers and students from all over the world join us. Normally when we're live in College Park, we do two days of teacher workshops. Well, we can't have anybody in College Park to do the teacher workshops with us, so we're bringing teacher and student workshops and opportunities out to you, every day during contest week Monday through Friday at 1:00 PM Eastern Time. And we're thrilled that you've decided to join us.

Lynne O'Hara:

A big thing that we do in our professional development during the national contest is to kick off the new year. This is kind of like the beginning of the school year for us in many ways. So when we started working a year ago on the Debate and Diplomacy in History theme: Successes, Failures, and Consequences, we had some feedback from the first time the theme was used. The feedback was from some of our teachers that the concept of diplomacy was a little tricky for some of our students to really kind of grasp. So when we talked about this a year ago, we said, we've got the people to go to. And we've been working for the last year with our friends from the National Museum of American Diplomacy. Not only did they write the kickoff article in this year's theme book, check it out at nhd.org/theme, but they have been gracious enough to join us to kind of help us talk through it, understand the concept, and then talk about some potential ideas to come out of it.

Lynne O'Hara:

Now, before we begin, there's just a few details we need to know. First off, you can see us. Hopefully you can hear us. We cannot see you or hear you, and that's intentional. So if you're eating your lunch, enjoy it. You do have access to a question and answer box, and please feel free to put any questions that you have about NHD, about the new theme, about the resources being shared in there. You may get a direct response to you. You also may get; we may save some of those questions. We're going to do a Q&A session at the end. And my colleague, Ashley Dabbraccio, who works with me in the programs department, is going to be in charge there and keeping an eye on that.

Lynne O'Hara:

You may notice that we do have a live captioning feature to help some of our students and teachers who need that. If that's something you don't need or don't want, simply click the live transcript button at the bottom of your screen, and that will turn it off. If you click it again, it'll turn it back on. So you have that option if it helps you. Please know that it is AI generated, it is not perfect, but it's pretty darn good.

Lynne O'Hara:

So, what I'd like to do now at this point is to turn the program over to our guests. Thank you so much. Lauren Fisher is the Education Director. Elizabeth Gearhart is the Education Programs Assistant at the National Museum of American Diplomacy. And we're also joined by Dr. Alison Mann, who's the museum's public historian. And they're going to give you a great introduction, share some resources. Once they're done, we'll talk about some other resources that we have available for students and teachers getting ready and thinking about next year already. And then we'll open it up to take your questions. So, now that we've got our intro done, I'd like to turn things over to Lauren Fisher at the

National Museum of American Diplomacy. Lauren, thank you so much for coming out and joining us today.

Lauren Fisher:

It is our pleasure, Lynne, and we are so delighted to help you, National History Day, who's a great partner of ours, kick off the 2021-2022 National History Day theme, Debate and Diplomacy. Clearly we're going to be addressing the second half of that theme, which is diplomacy. So our program today is, "What is Diplomacy?" And as Lynne mentioned, our Deputy Director Jane Carpenter-Rock has in the theme book an article called, "What is Diplomacy?", So make sure you check that out. That article is a great complement to our presentation today. So in concert these, we hope, offer you some great information and some potential topic ideas that you can consider for your upcoming project next year.

Lauren Fisher:

I'm going to kick us off today and then Elizabeth is going to come in and explore further some skills and tools of diplomacy. And then Dr. Mann will join the conversation and offer some project ideas and topic ideas for further exploration for you. And then ultimately we'll share with you our website and some sources and then turn to some questions. But first before we get to some slides, and we do have some slides that will guide our conversation today, which Elizabeth will share, but before we do, I just want to kind of put out some thoughts about, what is diplomacy? We think about diplomacy is the way in which people work together, building relationships, maintaining those relationships. So diplomacy is about people. And as people work together to solve problems, it's also about promoting interests and advocating for something that you want.

Lauren Fisher:

Diplomacy as we think about it, it's also the strategy of how people get what they want. We think about diplomacy as a practice. Diplomacy is also a profession, and the people who practice diplomacy professionally are diplomats. Diplomats use diplomacy in working together to build relationships, maintain relationships, and to solve problems. And as we look at how diplomats practice diplomacy, what's revealed is that diplomacy has a lot of different dimensions to it, which makes it really interesting. The mission of our museum is to share stories of American diplomacy and the work of diplomats. Therefore, because we're the National Museum of American Diplomacy, a lot of the stories that we share reveal this idea of international relationships. It's about how countries and nations and governments work together.

Lauren Fisher:

The stories that we share are both historical and contemporary. And because we offer a lot of historical stories, what we also help to reveal is that diplomacy is integral to the founding of our nation and it's so much a part of the history of the United States. And we're going to help to highlight that today. So because the National Museum of American Diplomacy shines a light on international relations and how our US government interacts and uses diplomacy, it also shines a light on the federal agency called the State Department which motivates and sort of its mission is to conduct those international relationships for our government.

Lauren Fisher:

Today let's think about diplomacy as a profession carried out by diplomats. Let's think about diplomacy as relationships between countries and governments. And let's also think about it as a practice. And so

before we sort of dig into sort of really what diplomacy is, I thought we would take a wide angle approach and introduce to you what the State Department is, introduce to you our diplomats and some of their work. First of all, let's think about the US federal government. We have three branches of government: the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. Well, we're going to focus in on the executive because it's the executive branch, which of course is led by the US president, and that president, part of our president's duties and part of their job is to oversee the federal agencies.

Lauren Fisher:

If we go to the next slide, there are lots of federal agencies. The job of our federal agencies is to sort of administer and oversee the function of our US government, our national government. An example of a federal agency might be the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury, Department of Education, Department of Transportation. Well, we're here today to talk a little bit about the Department of State, and the US Department of State is crucial to the origins of our country. It was the first federal agency to be created after the Constitution was ratified and the job and the mission of the US Department of State in fact is to handle and maintain and to build those relationships between the United States and other countries. So diplomats work for the US Department of State. Next slide, please.

Lauren Fisher:

And of course the US president oversees the Department of State. And so the job that our diplomats have is to advance the interests of our country abroad. And by advancing those interests, we are working overseas, we're working here in Washington DC as well, and we're promoting the safety, security, prosperity of our citizens abroad. Next slide, please.

Lauren Fisher:

When we think about what our diplomats are doing, they're working abroad, some of them are working in Washington DC at the headquarters of the State Department. What are they working on with other diplomats? And of course, other countries have their own diplomats. So what are we working on together? Well, they're working on what we call global issues, and global issues is a big subject area under international relations. And so some of the global issues that our diplomats are working on are arms control and security issues. They're working on energy and environmental issues. They're working on law enforcement, helping governments create safe environments in their countries.

Lauren Fisher:

They're working on humanitarian issues and health. Like we saw with the COVID-19 pandemic, our diplomats were abroad making sure our citizens who were abroad were safe and secure and could get home. We're now making sure that our countries have access to the vaccine. So that's another aspect of our diplomats' work. They're also out there building those relationships with citizens in other countries as well. They're promoting trade and business opportunities for US businesses abroad. So the work of diplomats abroad is very diverse in terms of global issues. Next slide, please.

Lauren Fisher:

Now let's take a little bit of a closer look at who is conducting diplomacy, who is working on these global issues abroad with other countries? Well, I would be remiss if I didn't introduce to you our US Secretary of State who is appointed by the president to oversee all of the functions of the State Department. And of course our Secretary of State changes when our presidential administration changes and our US

Secretary of State currently is Antony Blinken who just joined at the early part of the year. He is thought to be our nation's top diplomat right behind the president. And so Secretary Blinken, as he meets with counterparts around the world, he is representing the president in those international relationships. Next slide, please.

Lauren Fisher:

Of course, there are many others who are conducting diplomacy. We have ambassadors who are appointed by the president representing him or her in those special issues abroad. We have foreign service officers who are at the core of our functions abroad. And here you see a picture of Lucile Atcherson, who was the first female foreign service officer who joined the State Department in 1922. She was a suffragette. So she's very important in the history of the State Department. Where you have foreign service officers who are posted abroad, we also have civil servants who are domestically posted in Washington DC who are communicating with our counterparts in our embassies abroad.

Lauren Fisher:

So we have civil servants who also work at the State Department and cultural ambassadors. And cultural ambassadors have a really interesting role. These are citizen diplomats who might be accomplished artists or athletes or musicians. In this case, we see Chloe Kim here who was a cultural ambassador. She was a 2014 medalist in the Sochi Olympics as a snowboarder. She was appointed to meet citizens of other countries and to share her knowledge and skill of skateboarding with others. And that's an important tool of building relationships that our diplomats and our state department uses in helping other countries better understand who we are as the United States. Next slide, please.

Lauren Fisher:

When we think about the global issues that our diplomats are working on, where are they working? Well, I've mentioned a few places. Certainly they're working in Washington DC but they're also working in US embassies abroad. And in most countries that the United States has a relationship with, or a diplomatic relationship with, so between United States and let's say Colombia, the country of Colombia, we have our US embassy in Bogota, which is the capital of that country. And our embassy is in the capital and that's where that bilateral relationship is nurtured, and bilateral meaning two sided. And so bilateral relationships is one aspect of diplomacy where our diplomats are nurturing that relationship between our country and that host country, example of Colombia.

Lauren Fisher:

And we also have what is called missions in host countries. And so sometimes countries are so large like China or Russia where we have our US embassy in the capital of that country, but because the country is so large, our diplomats might have a little satellite embassy in another city in that country and that is where we call a US mission, I'm sorry, a consulate. And so that's where it gets really interesting where we have diplomats who are working abroad in countries all around the world.

Lauren Fisher:

And we also have something called missions. I mentioned we maintain the bilateral relationships between United States and another country. Where you have an organization like the UN, which is a multilateral organization, that means many countries are member organizations, so we call it a multi-lateral many-sided organization. And in the case of the UN, we have a US mission to the UN and because

the UN is headquartered in New York City in the United States, we have our US mission in that city. So those give you an idea of the many different places that our diplomats work. Next slide.

Lauren Fisher:

And so let's just kind of put a magnifying glass on an embassy for a minute just to kind of think about who's working at an embassy. Certainly you have an ambassador. An ambassador, again, is appointed by the president, confirmed by the Senate and he or she is overseeing and responsible for all of the functions out of that embassy. And because the embassy is like the little mini microcosm of the US government in that country, there's a lot of different jobs and a lot of different things that are happening out of the US embassy. We have political officers and those political officers are paying close attention to what's happening politically in that host country. And they're connecting, building and maintaining relationships with that government in that host country.

Lauren Fisher:

Likewise, we have economic officers and they're paying close attention to what's happening with the businesses in that country and looking for business opportunities for US companies in that country. We have political affairs officers and their responsibility is to cultivate relationships with the media in that country to help communicate to the citizens of that country who we are as the United States and inspiring and getting people of that country, of that host country, interested in our exchange programs as a way of deepening and better understanding who we are as the United States.

Lauren Fisher:

Many people don't realize that at a US embassy abroad, we have locally employed staff or citizens of that host country working inside of our US embassy there. This is very important to our mission in that country and it helps our diplomats deepen and better maintain those relationships with that country as well. So the locally employed staff in our embassies are critical to our success and because our foreign service officers, our political officers and economic officers and public affairs officers rotate after two years of working in one country, because they rotate, those locally employed staff members are critical to the consistency of when new officers come in, they really help to create that consistency between us and that country. Next slide.

Lauren Fisher:

What do diplomats do? To recap, as I've mentioned, we're there to represent the US interests in that country, creating jobs and business opportunities. We're also there to help US citizens who might be traveling or living in that country. We're there to help that host country better understand who we are, to tell the story of the United States. And we're also there issuing visas to interested people in those countries to visit us. We issue visas so they can legally visit the United States.

Lauren Fisher:

So that kind of highlights what we're doing abroad. And I think we have one more slide, maybe not. That kind of gives us sort of a highlight of who we are. Before I turn it over to Elizabeth who's going to take a little bit of a closer look at that practice of diplomacy, I just want to sort of recap. The State Department is that part of the federal agency that represents the US government abroad in our embassies, consulates and missions. We have foreign service officers who are working in those embassies, missions and consulates. We have also civil servants working in DC promoting and working alongside our colleagues abroad. And we're there promoting the interests of the United States, and we've done this

since the beginning of our country. All right. Now I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to Elizabeth to help take a closer look at the practice of diplomacy.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Thank you so much, Lauren. All right. Now that we know a little bit about who diplomats are and what they do and where they do their job, let's take a look at how they do it. Taking a step back for a second, let's give you guys a definition. That's what we're here for today. The definition of diplomacy can be a little tricky because depending on who you might ask, the definition of diplomacy could change. But listen, that's okay. That's why at the museum, we've broken down the definition of diplomacy to its bare bones. Diplomacy is the art and practice of building and maintaining relationships. That's it. This is often done through conducting negotiations with different people from all over the world. It requires a level of skill and tact and mutual respect for your counterparts across and on that negotiation table.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Getting into how diplomats do what they do. We have identified the skills of diplomacy. Now, I'm not going to read these all out for you guys, but it's important to know that we have three different categories: relational, operational, and informational skills. I'll give you my favorites. One, composure. We all know it can kind of be a little difficult to work with somebody who can't keep their cool. Might be a little bit of a hothead. So diplomats, it's their job to maintain their composure in a situation that could very easily get heated.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Another one I'd like to point out is analysis. This is a difficult skill. Some people are born with this. You have to have a sense of intuition when you walk into a room, you know like what's actually going on here? What are we feeling but not being said? Analysis is also a skill and a practice in like doing your homework and your research before you get into those really important conversations. Like let's think about what's the crisis at hand? Why is this important? Why are we talking about it? What do I want out of this? What's the goal, repercussions, consequences not only at the situation at hand, but we need to analyze who was around the table with us or who might not be around the table with us. What's their point of view? What do they want out of this? What is their end goal? Analysis is thinking about all of these things before the negotiation or conversation, during, and yes, after too because as we know, global issues don't have an end date. It's a continuous progression of problem-solving and solutions that we've put on the table.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Finally, I point out advocacy. Now, advocacy is two different things that we like to think of. One, a US diplomat, they're always advocating for the best interests of the United States, just like how a German diplomat is always going to be advocating for the best interest of Germany. Same difference. Advocacy is also speaking up and with or possibly for people who might not be at that negotiation table or might not be having their heard at that negotiation table. So as a diplomat, you need to be thinking about what's in the best interest of everybody behind me, not just you yourself as a diplomat. Like you need to be thinking about the bigger picture.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Now, we have the tools of diplomacy, different from the skills of diplomacy. Tools of diplomacy, they're a little different because a diplomat has a lot at their fingertips to ensure the security and the prosperity

of their nation. But a tool isn't a one-size-fits-all thing. A hammer and a screwdriver are not interchangeable tools. So it's up to a diplomat to take all the skills that they have there, whatever they come to the table with, and figure out, all right, which tool is going to best help me get what I need and want out of the situation? What's going to really make some moves here in this conversation? This is not an exhaustive list of tools, but around the outer ring there you see we have a few different examples of tools.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

And tools can also be framed as incentives and disincentives. If we want to take trade, for example, two countries could get together and say, "Hey, you produce a lot of wheat. We could buy a lot of your wheat. So let's agree that we will buy 45% of your wheat exports." That's a really good trade agreement and that would make those two countries less likely to make a decision or say something that could jeopardize their relationship. You don't want to jeopardize that sweet trade deal. So that would be an incentive. We could also think of a trade as a disincentive or a sanction. We see this in the news sometimes; like if one country goes to another and says, "Hey, we don't like what you're saying. You better knock the attitude off or we're going to put a trade embargo on you. That's when we're not going to buy or sell or trade any of your goods, putting a dent in your economy." That's going to make that other country think, "Hmm, maybe I shouldn't do X, Y, Z."

Elizabeth Gearhart:

So in all, it's a Diplomat's job to look at all of these tools, assess what will work best, and figure out if they want to use it as an incentive or disincentive through all of those skills and tools that they try to embody. I'll add that diplomats are always working to improve their skills. This is a learned process and people spend their lives studying the art and practice of diplomacy. So listen, I know these are big, kind of convoluted topics. So thankfully for you guys, we have the diplomacy simulation program. Now, just a quick plug here. These are programs that we have on our website that we'll show you, in a few, that allow participants or students, whoever it may be, to be assigned a crisis and a role in that crisis as a diplomat to try to work together with people, their counterparts, who are also assigned maybe possibly an opposing role to work towards a solution before the crisis gets out of hand.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Now, we have three brand new hot off the press historical simulations here that we'll show you. I know we're talking about history today. So this puts diplomacy in a historic perspective. These are events that actually happened. You can try your hand out of two and really get a full understanding of what diplomacy is and what it means, what it means to be a diplomat. So check them out. And with that, I kick it back over to Lauren.

Lauren Fisher:

Yeah. Awesome. Thank you so much. All right. Now we've gotten a great foundation in, what is diplomacy: the skills, the tools, a bit about the State Department, the roles of diplomats and how we represent our country abroad. Now I'm going to invite our friend and colleague Dr. Mann to the conversation to help us think about some project ideas and to highlight some people, events, agreements, global issues and the ways in which these are brought into history. So Alison, thank you so much for joining us to highlight some potential project ideas for our students and teachers to dig in next year.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Thanks Lauren. Hi everybody. Hi National History Day community. I'm so happy to be here. We're going to kind of go through these slides rather quickly. I'm glad it's recorded because I have a feeling there's going to be a lot of questions and I want to make sure that there's adequate time to answer those questions. Go ahead and watch it if you want to revisit these topics to think about for your projects. What are the approaches you can take? Just focus on a person. Oh, and you know what, I wanted to mention Lauren and Elizabeth, I often get the question, what's the difference between foreign policy and diplomacy. Foreign policy is ideas, it's objectives. It's the direction and goals of the United States government. Diplomacy is people oriented. It's the implementation of the foreign policy. So I just wanted to point that out because it's an important distinction.

Dr. Alison Mann:

If you focus on working on individuals, take a look at who they are but also focus on how they implemented diplomacy for the foreign policy objectives of their time. We have Benjamin Franklin, America's first diplomat, Ebenezer Bassett, who was our country's first African-American chief of mission or ambassador, Eugenie Anderson, our first woman ambassador. And also I want to point out Robert G. Newman, who was a Holocaust survivor. We actually have his suitcase in the museum's collection. He came to the United States with that suitcase only and later became a diplomat and represented the United States. Eleanor Roosevelt, a diplomat in her own right as well as being the wife of Franklin Roosevelt. And then Lauren and Elizabeth, you talked about cultural ambassadors and sports ambassadors. On our website we have a highlight in our facing diplomacy project of Dr. Sammy Lee who was a swimmer. He was an Olympiad and he represented the United States in the '60s. Let's go onto the next slide.

Dr. Alison Mann:

You can look at events. All of these events here, we've got a lot of information on our website that Elizabeth and Lauren will do a quick run through of the site to help you find those resources. The Iranian Hostage Crisis where diplomats were held hostage for 444 days in 1979. The Fall of the Berlin Wall significantly changed the political sense of power internationally. And then a couple of documents. People don't ordinarily think about the Emancipation Proclamation as a foreign policy document nor the Declaration of Independence, but they are. So those are interesting things to look at. The idea of the events of McCarthyism and the Lavender Scare, which was the persecution of LGBT individuals who were diplomats, some saying that they were somehow disloyal. And then you mentioned, Elizabeth, the Barbary Hostage crisis. It's a fascinating moment in the 1790s when there's so much at stake for the United States. Let's go on to the next slide.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Agreements. These would be treaties. These are formal, signed, Elizabeth, you mentioned tools. When people sit down and they have meetings, what do you come to in agreement as a result of that tool of using the meeting? You can look at the Treaty of Amity and Alliance with France in 1778 which helped the United States win the war, win its independence. The Louisiana Purchase. I really liked too about, Elizabeth, how you mentioned advocacy. Louisiana Purchase is very interesting to look at because technically it was a treaty selling a huge swath of territory to the United States, but where was the native Americans? Who was there to advocate for them as they occupied that land?

Dr. Alison Mann:

The Kellogg-Briand Pact. We have this pen in our museum that signed that pact that was a pie in the sky agreement to end all war forever in the 1920s. They might want to take a look at that. The Camp David Accords which brought about peace between Israel and Egypt brokered by the United States. You might want to take a look at an agreement that had to do with limiting nuclear arms like the INF Treaty of 1987, that picture is below, or maybe the Dayton Peace Accords that ended the war in Bosnia and took place in Dayton, Ohio. Let's go onto the next slide.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Issues. This is wide ranging. The only thing that I would advise is try to go back as far in history as you can because issues are modern as well. You want to make sure that you look at historic context. And people often will ask historians, well, when does an event become history? There's no really good answer to that, but generally 20-ish years. I kind of broke that rule when I put the Haiti earthquake of 2010, but it's just to give the students an idea of the sort of things that you can look at because disaster assistance is really a more modern phenomenon, like a 20th century, 21st century phenomenon.

Dr. Alison Mann:

The idea of migration, refugees, and resettlement, that's been going on for a very long time throughout all of the United States history. You might want to take a look at what happened after the Holocaust when there was so much upheaval of peoples and the creation of the state of Israel, which was currently occupied by Palestinians. So you could take a look at the issue of what happens when you have people migrating to an area where there already are people living there. So that's an interesting topic to look at. Arms control, you can take a look at. And financial aid. How does giving cold hard cash factor into the way that the United States is trying to achieve its foreign policy goals.

Dr. Alison Mann:

And science and the global environment. This is also wide ranging. I put here the flu pandemic. A lot of people don't know that it was Department of State employees who would be the ones overseas collecting all the data, collecting all the science and reporting it back to the United States. These were numbers of people infected, how the host countries were dealing with the infections. That's an interesting topic. Let's go on to the next slide.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Diplomatic practice. Again, people oriented. This has to do with what Elizabeth and Lauren were talking about, these skills and tools. You can take a look at the very early cultural exchange between the United States and China when the first US ship, the Empress of China sailed over to Canton in China in 1784, and the first diplomat to open up that lucrative market between the United States and China. You can take a look at sports diplomacy. We have some items in our collection that we like very much that have to do with Ping Pong Diplomacy. And this would be a very famous sports event between Americans and Chinese ping pong players when the relationship between those countries was at a hard freeze, and this will predate Nixon's trip to China.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Jazz diplomacy, fascinating. The United States Department of State sent out jazz diplomats in the 1950s and 1960s to Soviet blocked countries that were generally closed off. The United States might have an embassy there, but their relationship was terrible. This ushered in a new form of diplomacy where you would have Americans who were representative of their country. They were citizen diplomats, as Lauren

was talking about, who would then try to reach the people. When it became clear that the relationship between the governments wasn't working, then you make those connections between people and it was helpful in that era that by making the relationships between the people, that the people of that nation would then change the government, which eventually is what we know happened.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Giving gifts. Taking a look at Protocol, the official gift giving and the Ceremony of Protocol is another way to look at it. We have several resources on our website about gift-giving because you want to give gifts that represent you. And then when you receive gifts, they are representative of the country that you are receiving the gift. Fascinating topic in its own right. Also the practice of shuttle diplomacy. This is the use of technology really for the first time. This is when Henry Kissinger literally was on a plane shuttling back and forth between Egypt and Israel and doing face-to-face negotiations trying to end that war between those two countries. Let's go onto the next slide. Those are our resources. I think that I blew through that pretty quickly, but we recorded it.

Lauren Fisher:

No, no. That's great. Thank you so much because I know that after Lynne is going to say a few words, and then Elizabeth and I are going to direct people and show people where our website is and where they can find some of these wonderful stories and artifacts as well because that's really an important part of how we tell our stories about American diplomacy is through our artifact. So Alison, I know you have to run, so I just want to thank you for being with us today.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Thank you for inviting me and good luck to everybody out there on their projects and I hope that you find the resources on our website helpful. So thanks everybody.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Thanks Alison. Bye.

Dr. Alison Mann:

Bye-bye.

Lauren Fisher:

And now, Lynne, I know you have a few words right before we shift to our website and then questions.

Lynne O'Hara:

Absolutely. Kind of think of it this way. We talked about the overview of what do diplomats do now, because we have to understand the concept to be able to take it back in history. Then Elizabeth gave us some of the tools, what are some of the things that diplomats do? Because I think those tools help inspire you to look at some of these historical events. Then Dr. Mann gave us some examples. Now, let's throw some other ideas, places that you might find some resources. And Elizabeth, I'm going to go fast, so be ready. First off, our theme book landing page, the new book is up. Not only is the new book up, but the video and the graphic organizer are also up. And we know you've been watching that video on YouTube because it got very popular when we secretly put it on about a week ago. So check out those resources.

Lynne O'Hara:

Our theme book is full. Literally there are hundreds of ideas. I know teachers right now: thinking about lesson plans for next year might not be at the top of your agenda. But while these resources are made for teachers, students, if you take a peek at them, there'll be some really interesting ideas. So three different content resources, our brand new Building a More Perfect Union lesson book that looks at the concept of how do we make America a better place and how do individuals and groups. We'll be talking more about that tomorrow and Thursday in our one o'clock hour. We also have resources on World War I and its legacy. One of the most famous diplomatic events is the Treaty of Versailles. But there's so much more than just the treaty. Check out the theme book.

Lynne O'Hara:

We also have a resource called Herstory, which tells the story of women in American history. All of our resources I should mention are written by teachers for teachers. They're practical, they've got ideas, lessons, primary sources, things you can use right away. In addition to that, teachers, I'm going to give you a little teaser. Coming this September, we have a brand new teacher guide that we've been working on with our partners at the Library of Congress. This is designed to help you narrow down the student research and historical argumentation process. This is coming out in September, we're in final edits right now. And if you want to learn more about it, we have our inspiring student research webinar series. We're accepting applications through July 16th, and we have spots for over 100 teachers from all over the country at no cost to them. So check that out. Nhd.org/pd.

Lynne O'Hara:

All right. On top of that, the diplomacy simulations that were mentioned earlier. We've been so excited to work with the museum on these. These premiered literally last week. Go check them out. They're really cool. Especially for our world history teachers who don't have as many resources with our national partners, go check those out. I think they'll give you some really cool ideas for doing simulation-based learning in your classroom. And three of them, quite frankly, that are ready to go.

Lynne O'Hara:

All right, some other resources to get you going. Teachers, virtual teacher bag. We used to do big bags at the contest, now it's all virtual. More than 30 partners have dropped in and will continue to drop in resources. So check these out. There's all kinds of good stuff in there. Make sure you know what's coming up. We have our newsletter we come out once a month and make announcements for special things. So if you're not on that list, you should be on that list because that's where the latest and greatest information comes out. Teachers, we also have our online courses. We have several courses that are going to run this fall. We do have a summer course. Technically the registration deadline was Friday, but I have a couple of spots left. So if you're interested, please get in touch with me today because I'm settling these sections out this afternoon.

Lynne O'Hara:

All right, let's see what else we have. Our YouTube channel has been growing with everybody being stuck at home, but this is where we're going to post. If you want to see the latest and greatest of what we're putting out, go to our YouTube page, hit that subscribe button and you'll get the latest information. And, I don't know why you're not following us on social media but you should be following us on social media. This is where we put new information, new videos, new resources. And the one thing about History Day is we're always throwing out new resources. So you want to make sure that you

follow them so that you can see them, you'll get great ideas, students, for your projects and teachers, to inspire your students. Okay. Let me turn things back over to Elizabeth to talk about the resources specific to the National Museum of American Diplomacy. And then we've got some great questions in the queue that we're really excited to take.

Lauren Fisher:

Right. I'm going to take it. I'll take it, but I love following you on social media. I love following NHD and love the resources you put out. I'm also going to make a pitch for our audience to follow the museum as well @NMADmuseum, @N-M-A-DMuseum. And as well, we have lots of content that we tweet out and post and we also host a monthly diplomacy classroom program which is completely appropriate for students and teachers that takes a deeper dive into a topic or a person. So by following us on social media, you'll get all that information.

Lauren Fisher:

Here we are at our website, diplomacy.state.gov. It's also on our website that you can join our mailing list as well, which is more email-based. And I want to mention one thing because half of the theme is debate. When we think about diplomacy, that art and practice of building and maintaining those relationships and solving problems, and Elizabeth mentioned negotiating as a big part of that. And the way in which we work together to help everybody get what everybody wants but also advocating for what we want, it's a delicate balance. It's finding common ground.

Lauren Fisher:

And finding common ground, debate might be part of that where you're debating points or ideas. But at the end of the day, we have to concede and let something go often before everyone can begin to move towards agreement. So debate is something that might be a part or in those talks or negotiations between people, but diplomacy is that art and practice of getting everyone to work together to move towards a solution. So that's where I wanted to mention that because debate is also a half of the theme that all of you will explore.

Lauren Fisher:

Here's our website, our landing page. I'm going to ask Elizabeth just to scroll up. This is our main page, or scroll down. Just, yeah, down the website, there we go. I just wanted to happen upon right there where you say Her Diplomacy and Facing Diplomacy. Right here are some resources that you can click in and meet some women in diplomacy. And by exploring the person, the diplomat, she is placed in a historical context. So you can look at the historical context as well or the event that she has placed in her work, as well as a new initiative that we've just started called Facing Diplomacy that looks at sort of the diversity within the diplomats who've worked for the Department of State.

Lauren Fisher:

Okay, go ahead and scroll up. I'm going to have her stop right here at Diplomacy 101 and Diplomacy Explorer. As you are thinking about what is diplomacy, here are some research resources to further sort of explore the roles of diplomats abroad, the missions and the embassies. So if you wanted to take a deeper dive into the foundations of what is diplomacy and what is the State Department, there are resources here for you to kind of get at that sort of contextual foundational information.

Lauren Fisher:

And then finally at the bottom of our homepage, you see the latest updates from us. And as you scroll across, these are stories. As you see, our historical things were mentioned. You see Sammy Lee, cultural ambassador that Alison mentioned. As you click into this story, you will see some objects from our collection as you see the Composure and Leadership of Ambassador Aurelia Brazeal. As you click and read these one page stories of a diplomat or in a time period or an event, you get a sense of how our historians write about diplomacy and you can get some ideas of how maybe you want to frame your project or present your projects and how they integrate the skills and the tools into their writing.

Lauren Fisher:

So, as you look at the various examples here, you might not want to do a story about passports or the Great Seals of the United States, but by reading these examples, you have a sense of how historians have written about diplomacy in history. So I invite you to peruse those stories. And now I'm going to kick it to Elizabeth who's going to cruise back up to the top of the website and look at the toolbar at the top.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Yes. All right. There is so much buried in here that you guys can take a look at. First, I want to pop into education resources. This will give you, again, kind of explore through those Diplomacy 101, those core concepts that we talk about when we look into a specific historic diplomatic event. Here, again, are diplomacy simulations. they're talking about what is diplomacy, going over those definitions again. Here we have global issue-based videos. Let's take a quick look at our simulations. They are, again, a great resource of wrapping your head around what it means to be a diplomat. These are the first historic simulations that we have. Let's click into here real quick.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Now, you'll see that we provide you a quick little brief of what the simulation will be. Some primary sources on the side, kind of putting it into context between what the State Department looked like then, what the United States looked like then. And then here you'll find all of those paper materials ready for download, including teacher guide, student guide, all of those primary sources on that margin right here and more. And special for these is our historian interviews. These will provide a lot of good context from actual historians, one of them being our great Dr. Alison Mann. Providing some historical context to what this crisis really was, what it meant for those involved and talking about what happened afterwards, what actually happened, that you can check out after students have completed the simulation. See how they lined up with what actually happened.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Let's go back up here and check out online exhibits because we would love to have you in person but we're not open yet. We have some good exhibits online that you can explore. First up, those being Dayton Accords that Dr. Mann mentioned earlier. That's a good one. Her Diplomacy. Again, looking at specific women within the State Department. Finally, Bringing Americans Home, Gliffa. This goes back to the McCarthyism and the Lavender Scare. And here we have our Berlin Wall Interactive Timeline. This is a great one to see the true scope of how it started all the way to the end of the fall of the Berlin Wall and what it looks like now. So that'll give you a good idea of the Berlin Wall.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

And Faces of Diplomacy, going back to who are our diplomats, what do they do? And then finally we have Diplomacy is Our Mission here. With these, you can get some good historical ideas and get some contemporary context to diplomacy through Diplomacy is Our Mission. So we encourage you to check those out. Take some time, scroll through our website. We know you've got the time, that's all I've been doing.

Lauren Fisher:

Awesome. Thank you so much. And thank you, Lynne. This has been super fun and I know we have some questions, so we'll go ahead and get those started and hopefully we can answer them.

Lynne O'Hara:

Absolutely.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

We have a ton of questions in the queue right now, so I'm going to toss them your way and see what we come up with for answers. All right. First question up. Lynne, this is more an NHD question, so I'm going to toss it to you first. Students would like to know, how do they pick a topic and does it have to be an event in history that relates to this year's theme?

Lynne O'Hara:

Okay. Yes, it's got to relate to the theme. But I don't want the theme to intimidate you or scare you because I think what's most important is to look at areas of history that you have an interest in, and then look to see different ways because debate and diplomacy are part of almost every single event in history because it's not just... Think about what Elizabeth was saying. It's not just the act of diplomacy and embassies and ambassadors, but it's also the tact, it's also negotiation. It's about the idea of coming to a common solution. And while ambassadors do this every day in their jobs, there's lots of other people in history who do the same thing and use the same kinds of diplomatic skills and strategies. So I think the key to choosing a topic is to pick something you have a real interest in, whether it's military history or the history of sports, whether you're interested in arts, whether you're interested in music, and finding a topic in history that really does get to the heart of one of these concepts.

Lynne O'Hara:

And honestly, it takes a little bit of time. We're just introducing this today. You've got to kind of noodle around with it. You've got to do some reading. You've got to watch some videos. You've got to learn a little bit about it. And once you understand the concept, then you can take a look at these historical events and use that to narrow down. But yes, part of the goal or the reason why we do have a theme at History Day, it's really not about the topics. It's actually about helping you to think analytically, one of those key skills that the team at NMAD was talking about.

Lynne O'Hara:

This idea that you don't just want to tell us, well, this is a person and this is what they did and then they died and it was sad. But because of this diplomat taking this action, this was the impact. Because of this trade agreement, this is what happened. Because of this debate in my hometown, this was the impact on my community or various communities in a certain area or state or city. And it can go from the international to the very local level. And that's really the point. We want you to think it through the lens

of debate and the lens of diplomacy. But almost any topic can fit as long as you kind of think through and narrow it down properly.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

All right. I'm going to toss this next one to Lauren and Elizabeth at NMAD. Jackson would like to know, he knows that the president has extensive control over foreign policy and diplomacy, but are there any circumstances in which Congress sets foreign policy within the limits of the State Department?

Lauren Fisher:

No. Look, I mean, I think an administration is aware of what different people in Congress may want. And of course there are many people in Congress, so they may want different things. I will say this. There is a position, I think there's probably several positions of foreign service officers who have a post on the Hill. So their job instead of being abroad is posted on Capitol Hill and their job is to meet all the different congresspeople and to get to know them and to share with them what's happening in the State Department or for them to understand what those Congress people want and to be able to funnel through that information.

Lauren Fisher:

But because the State Department is part of the federal agency, that means the State Department is really under the White House. So it's really about the White House and the foreign policies that the president wants that we carry through. So no one diplomat is doing their own thing abroad. Our diplomats are doing what the president is telling us that we should do. So it's really about ultimately the president, but we know how important Congress is because Congress approves the budget. And so there's different advocacy things that happen and communication, and we want Congress to know what we're up to.

Lauren Fisher:

So I guess you could make a case that, yeah, and you probably could look at a time in history where Congress and how they were communicating with the White House and how that was impacting the decisions of the president. Yes, you could probably look at that. And I think to look at diplomacy and look at the president and the president's foreign policy is absolutely one area that you could research as a president's foreign policy. And how Congress was a part or supported or not supported what foreign policies that president was advocating. I hope that helps.

Lynne O'Hara:

That was a great question, by the way.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

I know. Well, back to you Lynne. We have this question from a couple of people. There's that pesky *and*: debate *and* diplomacy in history. So, can we pick one or do you have to focus on both? How does that work?

Lynne O'Hara:

I think this is one of those cases where you've got to really research the topic. Honestly, there are very few situations where it is all one or all the other. We don't need a diplomatic solution if there's not a

debate. We don't want to divorce them to the point that we ignore what's happening because remember, diplomacy is not just between countries. It's anytime individuals or groups of people are working with each other. Now, that being said, it might not be an exact 50/50 split because not every product or every topic works that way. Sometimes it's a diplomatic success or failure that leads to debates down the road. Sometimes it's debates that lead to diplomatic action. Sometimes it's a cycle. One leads to another and then back.

Lynne O'Hara:

And that's okay. Don't ignore what's there. And what I would say in the beginning, the best thing you can do is ground yourself in the research. We talk a lot about historical context. If you are going to study an event, you've got to learn a little bit about the time period. And if you read books and you read articles and you think about the time period, think about those questions. Where do you see examples of debate? Where do you see examples of diplomacy or diplomatic action? And if you read with that question in the back of your head, I think you'll be surprised and you'll find lots of examples of diplomacy and diplomatic action where you may not have thought it was there right at the beginning.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

All right. Building off of that, and hopefully you can all provide an answer on this one, a lot of people are getting tripped up with that section that comes after that colon. Successes, failures, consequences. So what constitutes a success or a failure and what might be some of the consequences of a diplomatic endeavor going south or one that's really successful. How and why should they be focusing on that kind of second piece of the theme?

Lynne O'Hara:

Lauren or Elizabeth, why don't you start and then I'll build on the end of that.

Lauren Fisher:

I think when we do our simulation program with students, one of the things that they realize in diplomacy is that it takes a long time. That you need patience, that no solution or agreement you arrive at that quickly. Even if you're allies, it takes a long time to work together to find consensus. And within that consensus or within that process, there's debate. Within that process, there might be failures of talks that you need to keep coming back to. There might be small successes. Diplomacy is incremental. There is an impact to a final decision. But what you could view as sort of a failure, if you will, is maybe how long something takes, how long an agreement takes, because if there's countries working together to solve a problem that's happening, that the longer it takes for you to figure out what the solution is, the problem doesn't stop.

Lauren Fisher:

So maybe you could see that as a failure within that process of diplomacy because diplomacy takes time, words matter, talks and negotiations are important, but also writing those things down because that's another layer of finding that agreement. Deciding what word usage is agreeable to everyone. So there's a lot of layers to it. It's a process, as I said, and within that process, you hit upon those successes, those failures, the challenges of it. But I think success all in all is finding the solution. And I think that's the aim of diplomacy is finding a solution, which takes a lot of time. Elizabeth, would you add to that?

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Yeah, no, you hit on it. I mean, like I said earlier, a global issue doesn't just stop. We continuously see consequence after consequence and it's like a domino effect. History never really has like a true start and beginning. So that's why talking about those consequences is so important. And in my head, when I think about those successes and failures, it kind of depends whose side you're on. That's where your voice as a student is so important. Like, yes, we can all read a book, but why is it a success or a failure in your eyes? Tell me. Make that argument and tell the judges like, no, this is really how it went and this is why it was this success or failure. And that's really such a key part of those projects.

Lynne O'Hara:

I think you are really nailing this concept of perspective. What can be a success for one group of people can be a failure for another. It all depends. Part of doing history well is not just looking at one side, it's looking at multiple perspectives. And I think that's important because sometimes I feel like students get worried about showing another perspective that they don't agree with. And it's okay to show perspectives that you don't agree with. It's okay to understand those perspectives because that gives the nuance that we try to create in history. And I would also remind students, consequences aren't always negative. We tend to think of it that way because teachers tend to use that word as a negative way, but it's not always a negative consequence. It can also be a positive consequence. Think of it as a result or an impact and what changes. Because this happened, so what? What happens next? Why do I care? What's the impact on a community, on a country, on the planet? And if you can start kind of asking those questions, that can really set you up for a really solid historical argument.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

All right. Well, I'm going to toss this one to Elizabeth and Lauren next. We have some interest in coming to see the museum. Do you know when you will be open? Has that been decided yet?

Lauren Fisher:

Unfortunately not. Yes, we're all sort of waiting and we're all sort of easing sort of back into things, but follow us on our social media, on our website and you'll be sure to learn when we do. Since the pandemic, we have really enriched the content on our website. Please visit our website and be inspired and read the stories and hear how these are framed in that history of diplomacy. And I think that will also help you see how our historians and curators frame these stories. And I think that will be very inspiring for you.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

All right. Well, Lynne, I'm going to toss this one to you first because there's a great lead in on it. But from Gail, how will diplomacy relate to the American revolution?

Lynne O'Hara:

Oh, wow. We are really getting excited around here. I'm from the Philadelphia area, so we're extra excited for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, which happens in 2026 in case you were wondering. And one of the things that we're thinking about is this idea of how do we look at different time periods through diplomatic lenses. And actually tomorrow on our coffee break for teachers, one of our guests is going to be Adrienne Whaley. Adrienne is a museum educator at the Museum of the American Revolution and she's going to be talking about ways to relook at stories that

we feel like we know pretty well as teachers through a diplomatic lens. And she has also created a video for teachers and students that takes you into the museum if you can't get to Philadelphia and looks at some of their objects and artifacts through this lens. So I would definitely encourage you to check out the resources and also to come tomorrow to speak a little bit with Adrienne and learn a little bit more about those ideas.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

Wonderful. All right. Next question, this one is more for Elizabeth and Lauren this time. One of our viewers says that he knows there's a lot of regulations and rules around foreign diplomatic relations. So, how does that affect the way that diplomats deal or react in situations and what they choose to do from there?

Elizabeth Gearhart:

I'll start off and say, I mean, we work for the government, we're self-aware. We know things can be slow and bureaucratic. But the point is that that all serves a very important purpose. I mean, it has functioned for like over 200 years. So something is working as flawed as it might be, but we're all striving to work towards a more perfect union. As diplomats, it really makes you kind of, I guess, think a little bit more carefully about what you say, what you do, how you say it, how you go about a process, really embodying... I'll go back to the skills and tools of the diplomat again. Really embodying those skills helps you kind of take action in what you can do and speak for the United States as an individual.

Lauren Fisher:

Yeah, I'll just add that they know their job is to represent the United States and when a civil servant and a foreign service officer take their jobs, they take an oath, they swear an oath to the constitution. So they know and they take this very seriously and they know it's not about their own policies but the policies of the administration that the country has elected through our democracy. That said, there is an opportunity in the way in which the system of the State Department is. There is an opportunity for diplomats and those who work for the department to voice their opinion about a particular policy. There's a process by which they can articulate their support or their dissent for it. So there is a healthy process by which they can communicate.

Lauren Fisher:

It's actually called, there's something called the dissent channel, that is if they really feel strongly that there's a policy that they don't agree with, there is an opportunity for them to voice it and to offer their... Because they've studied so hard a particular crisis or a particular, they're studied so hard in a particular region of the world, which our diplomats are, there's an opportunity for them to give their opinion and it can be heard. Now, it's up to the administration to make a decision if they would accept that but there is an opportunity for that. Our diplomats are incredibly trained and they give their careers, like I said, to a particular region of the world or a particular topic.

Lauren Fisher:

I am so grateful to our diplomats because they are so incredibly knowledgeable about not only the history of foreign affairs and foreign policy. And when you were talking about the consequences and the impact, they're aware of all of that as they're going into these relationships. So they're drawing on that context of all of that. That's all really important. Yeah, I think though I have met diplomats who have not agreed with certain policies they represented anyway because that's their job. That's what they do. They

work for the government and the country elects the president, which is the executive branch, and all policies come forth from that. So that is the decision that they make when they work for their country.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

Great. Another question for the two of you. We have some interest, is there a possibility that in the future you might be hosting some professional development for teachers on these topics. We're getting some nodding. That sounds good.

Lauren Fisher:

Yes, absolutely. Especially with our simulations. The simulations is our way in which teachers can bring this experience into the classroom and to really think about what diplomacy is and all its nuances. So we're looking forward to that, and I know National History Day and the Museum will be partnering on some things as well. But yes, our job is to help you better understand this topic and think about ways to bring it into the classroom. So yes, be looking forward to that.

Elizabeth Gearhart:

Follow us on social media to get updates on those events. We'll keep you guys updated.

Lynne O'Hara:

Absolutely. To give you guys some context, these went live last week and the team at NMAD worked so hard to get them live in time for the NHD national contest. And we're going to be working really over the next academic year to roll them out, provide training, provide resources, attend conferences. Lots of different things will be coming with our back to school season and in the fall. We can't give you exact dates now, but it's coming and go check them out. Actually you'll enjoy just reading them and I think it'll give you lots of classroom ideas just to start there.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

All right. We have a ton of questions still in the queue. Please know that we will wrap up soon, but we promise to answer all of these questions. We won't leave your questions hanging. We really do our best to make sure that we answer as many as we can. And there are a ton in here. All right. Lynne, I'm going to wrap this one up for you. Students are thinking about how to organize their projects and I think I know from your teacher mind what you're going to say and tell them, but they're thinking about how to split their projects and how to organize their projects. Do you have any tips for them as they start doing their research into debate and diplomacy and history?

Lynne O'Hara:

I would say they shouldn't stop focusing on the end just yet. You've got to dive into the research first because you can have a beautifully constructed, let's say, exhibit board, but if there's not a depth of information behind it, it doesn't really work. That being said, if you're interested in this idea of how do you build and form a historical argument, once you have your research done, on Friday at 1:00 PM Eastern, we'll be live with Dr. Christopher Hamner. I know that some of you in the crowd have taken the teaching historical argument class that we've done, and we're going to do historical argumentation for students. We're going to do a real quick version to get you started, but we've got some strategies to help you think about and organize a historical argument. Whether you choose to do a paper or a

documentary or a website or an exhibit, it doesn't matter, we're going to give you some great strategies on Friday.

Ashley Dabbraccio:

All right. I think that's it. Again, I promise we will get to the rest of your questions in the queue that are really great, but we want to make sure that we are conscious of time and how long we are running on this program. So if you have any last minute questions that you want us to answer, get them in now, but if you have any more questions for us, you can of course email us at programs@nhd.org. We are always checking our email to make sure that we are working with as many students and teachers as possible. So, I am going to make sure that I have all of these questions collected and we will get answers to you as quickly as we can.

Lynne O'Hara:

Absolutely. And we want to say a huge thank you to Lauren Fisher and Elizabeth Gearhart at the National Museum of American Diplomacy for all of the effort they've put in not just to the simulations, but to today's program. Like Ashley said, we're going to download these questions, sort them out. If they're NHD specific, we'll get an answer to you. Please give us a day or two. It is contest week. And if it's diplomacy specific, we'll send them over to our friends at NMAD and they'll respond or send you more resources or links to new materials.

Lynne O'Hara:

On that note, we do need to say Happy History Day. We are so excited to have you here and that so many of you stayed with us for this hour. We hope that you can consider joining us at 1:00 PM Eastern every day this week. And if you can't join, don't stress. We're going to record them. We're going to post everything to our YouTube channel. And if you register, you'll get an email the next day with specific links and resources. So thank you for your time and attention and have a wonderful day