

Narrative Crossroads: Historical Framework Template

A character analysis framework for exploring historical figures at pivotal moments

Overview

This template adapts the *Narrative Crossroads* framework for analyzing historical events and figures. Teachers can customize this template for specific historical periods, events, or movements to help students explore key decisions and motivations that shaped history.

Setting Context

- **Time Period:** [Specify the historical period]
- **Location:** [Specify the geographic location(s)]
- **Social Context:** [Describe relevant social/political/economic conditions]
- **Atmosphere:** [Describe the emotional tone of the period]

Character Options

Roll	Character	Confrontation	Comprehension	Connection
1-2	[Historical Figure 1]			
3-4	[Historical Figure 2]			
5-6	[Historical Figure 3]			

Liminal Spaces

Roll	Threshold Moment	Decision Points (with Required Skills)
1-2	[Historical Moment 1]	1. [Decision] (Skill) 2. [Decision] (Skill)
3-4	[Historical Moment 2]	1. [Decision] (Skill) 2. [Decision] (Skill)
5-6	[Historical Moment 3]	1. [Decision] (Skill) 2. [Decision] (Skill)

Confrontation Questions (Roll 2D6)

Roll	Question
2	How do you respond to direct opposition?
3	What risks are you willing to take for your cause?
4	What personal sacrifices have you made for your beliefs?
5	How do you handle physical danger or threats?
6	What gives you courage in moments of conflict?
7	How do you assert your authority or position?
8	What tactics do you use when facing powerful opposition?
9	How do you maintain resolve during difficult situations?
10	What would you physically fight to protect?
11	How do you respond to setbacks?
12	What lines would you never cross, even for your cause?

Comprehension Questions (Roll 2D6)

Roll	Question
2	How do you understand the current situation?
3	What historical lessons guide your decisions?
4	How do you gather and evaluate information?
5	What do you believe is at stake in this moment?
6	How do you anticipate your actions will be viewed by history?
7	What assumptions or beliefs shape your worldview?
8	How do you assess risks versus potential benefits?
9	What strategy guides your approach to this situation?
10	How do you interpret the motivations of your opponents?
11	What do you understand that others might not?
12	How do you envision the future if you succeed?

Connection Questions (Roll 2D6)

Roll	Question
2	Who are your most trusted allies and why?
3	How do you build support for your cause?
4	What do you look for in those you trust?
5	How do you respond to those who disagree with you?
6	What do you believe unites people?
7	How do you communicate your vision to others?
8	Who or what inspires you to continue your

	work?
9	What do you hope your legacy will be?
10	How do you balance personal relationships with your cause?
11	What would you like others to understand about you?
12	How do you maintain connections during conflict?

Example Adaptation: Civil Rights Movement (1960s)

Character Options

Roll	Character	Confrontation	Comprehension	Connection
1-2	Civil Rights Activist	60%	65%	70%
3-4	Student Protester	65%	60%	65%
5-6	Local Community Leader	55%	70%	75%

Liminal Spaces

Roll	Threshold Moment	Decision Points (with Required Skills)
1-2	Before a sit-in protest	1. Deciding to participate despite risks (Confrontation) 2. Preparing supporters (Connection)
3-4	During police confrontation	1. Choosing non-violent resistance (Confrontation) 2. Maintaining group cohesion (Connection)
5-6	Meeting with local officials	1. Articulating demands (Comprehension) 2. Building unlikely alliances (Connection)

Implementation Guide

Classroom Setup (45-60 minutes)

1. **Introduction (5 min):** Explain the *Narrative Crossroads* system and distribute materials
2. **Character Selection (5 min):** Students roll or choose their historical figure
3. **Liminal Space (5 min):** Students roll or select their threshold moment
4. **Character Interview (15-20 min):** Students roll for and answer their three questions
5. **Decision Resolution (10 min):** Students roll for and describe key decision outcomes
6. **Reflection (10-15 min):** Students document insights and connections to historical impact

Materials Needed

- D6, D10, and D100 dice (or dice rolling app)
- Character sheets
- Journal sheets for responses
- Historical reference materials

Assessment Options

- **First-Person Narrative:** Students write from the historical figure's perspective
- **Decision Analysis:** Students examine how the figure's decision shaped subsequent events
- **Comparative Analysis:** Students compare different approaches to similar historical challenges
- **Creative Historical Fiction:** Students develop plausible alternative historical outcomes

History Standards Alignment

- Analyzing multiple causes and effects (NCSS.D2.His.14.9-12)
 - Analyzing perspectives of historical actors (NCSS.D2.His.4.9-12)
 - Evaluating how choice and chance influenced historical outcomes (NCSS.D2.His.16.9-12)
 - Constructing explanations using sound reasoning (NCSS.D2.His.16.9-12)
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Adaptation Tips

1. Research Historical Figures:

2. Identify 3-5 key figures involved in the historical event
3. Research their backgrounds, motivations, and key decisions
4. Assign skill percentages based on their known strengths and weaknesses

5. Identify Threshold Moments:

6. Look for decisions that could have gone multiple ways
7. Focus on moments where individuals had agency
8. Consider both well-known and lesser-known historical turning points

9. Customize Questions:

10. Adapt questions to reflect period-specific concerns
11. Include questions that address the historical context
12. Ensure questions explore counterfactual possibilities

13. Connect to Historical Evidence:

14. Ground the activity in primary sources where possible
15. Provide historical context materials to students
16. Encourage citation of historical evidence in reflections

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