

The Berlin Airlift & Blockade

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Process Paper Word Count: 500

Website Word Count: 1,191

When picking this year's History Fair Topic, I chose to focus on the Berlin Airlift and Blockade for multiple reasons. As someone who has always been intrigued by World War II and more specifically the Holocaust, I thought this was a perfect lead off from that time in history that could also connect to the theme of breaking barriers. Not to mention, I had only vaguely heard about the Airlift and the impact the United States had on the situation so was really intrigued to find out in what ways they were an aid to Germany and the Cold War as a whole.

When researching my topic, I found a good amount of my information from various museum's and the National Archives which is an independent agency of the U.S. that focuses on the preservation and documentation of both government and historical records. These were very helpful when finding primary sources such as photographs and videos and secondary sources such as articles.

My most useful sources in the project were Khan Academy, The Guardian News & Media and American Heritage because they all included very detailed explanations and statistics that really overall enhanced the topic. Not only did the statistics they provided aid my project, but they also allowed me to dig deeper on my own and find some really interesting and unique facts.

Throughout the project I was able to find research quite sufficiently, however navigating and building the website was a large challenge. When first given the website, it was clear that learning to use it would become very critical due to the fact that this was a software that had been unused before. Although, after about two weeks of diligently working to figure out and solve this puzzle of a website I became very frustrated because I felt as if I was spending more time with the layout and format of the website than the actual research. I felt very limited in my

abilities on the website because I had a lot of ideas in mind in terms of layout and presentation but could not quite execute that even after watching videos and reading up on it on various NHD 'help' sites. In the end, I was able to figure out more than I thought I was capable of in the beginning but was still hoping to better layout some of the pages such as 'Breaking Barriers.'

This particular topic of the Berlin Airlift and Blockade fits into this year's Contest theme because it stresses the physical and ideological barrier that was initiated and overcome by the people in Berlin and the United States. The physical barrier put into place was the cut-off of all surface-level transportation to Western Berlin and was overcome by the airlift, while the ideological barrier that was overcome was the allies the United States made with various countries to help Germany out in a time of need. Because these barriers were overcome, allies such as NATO are still in the works today.