

DID Year Three:
Summaries of Responses to Open-Ended
Student Survey Questions

Thematic Summary of Results for Student Survey Question 46: In order to learn about your country, what are the 2–3 key historical events people should know about?

Azerbaijan

The most significant theme among Azerbaijani students was **war**, specifically focusing on the conflict between the Azerbaijanis and the Armenians regarding the area of Nagorno-Karabakh. Within this theme, the most prevalent response regarded the current occupation of the area by Armenia. Second to this was the Khojali Massacre (in which Azerbaijanis were killed by ethnic Armenians with the help of the Russian military) on February 26, 1992, followed by the massacre of Azerbaijanis by Armenians on March 31, 1918. The only events mentioned within **war** which did not relate to this conflict were the signings of the Gulistan and Turkmenchay Treaties, which provided for the absorption of Azerbaijan into Russia, and then later divided between Russia and Iran in the early 1800's. The second most significant theme was **independence**, focusing on both the birth of the short-lived Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1920) and the more recent post-Soviet independence (1990-present). A third, much smaller theme was **economics**, in which students noted the importance of Azerbaijan as an oil-producing state.

Colorado

The most common theme emerging from the responses of Colorado students was **war**; with the Civil War (1861-1865, fought between the Northern and Southern states over the issues of states' rights and slavery), the Revolutionary War (1775-1783, also known as the American Revolution or the War for Independence), and World War II being the most frequently mentioned. The next largest category related to the **founding of the United States**. Responses in this category included the signing of the Declaration of Independence (July 4th, 1776, the day on which the United States' independence is celebrated) and the drafting of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights (the first ten amendments to the Constitution, which include many of the most fundamental rights guaranteed to U.S. citizens). The third largest category was **civil rights** (the movement to extend the rights of citizenship to all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or social class), followed by **September 11th**. The only other responses to get more than five students responding were the Great Depression (a period of economic decline, beginning in 1929 and lasting throughout the 1930's) and events related to immigration.

Czech Republic

Students from the Czech Republic most frequently identified events related to the **political formation** of their nation as being important for people to know. Most common responses included the formation of the Czech Republic (this occurred in 1993 when they peacefully split from Slovakia), the independence of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and the peaceful overthrow of communist rule in 1989, known as the Velvet Revolution.

Another theme of note included **World War II and related events**, such as the German occupation, the Soviet occupation and the subsequent rise of communism. Also mentioned frequently, although more difficult to categorize, was the burning at the stake of Reformation leader Jan Hus in 1415.

Estonia

Estonian students differ from many of the other sites, as the most significant theme that emerged from their responses was **independence**. The most cited event within this theme was the Estonian Re-Independence Day (8/20/1991). The only **war** that received significant attention was the War of Independence, and was the second most cited event within this theme. Estonian Independence Day (2/24/1918) and the Tartu Peace Treaty (which re-established Estonia as its own country in the post-Soviet era) were other significant events mentioned within this theme. One other event that can be situated within this theme is The Baltic Chain (August 23, 1989), when a human chain was formed across the three Baltic states (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) as a peaceful protest against the waning USSR. A third theme that emerged from the Estonian students responses was **occupation**, with the Soviet occupation having the most mentions.

Fairfax County, VA

The most significant theme for students in Fairfax County, VA was **war**. The Civil War (1861-1865, fought between the Northern and Southern states over the issues of states' rights and slavery), the Revolutionary War (1775-1783, also known as the American Revolution or the War for Independence), and World Wars I and II were mentioned most frequently. The next largest category related to the **founding of the United States**, with the signing of the Declaration of Independence (July 4th, 1776, the day on which the United States' independence is celebrated) and the drafting of the Constitution (adopted in 1787) being the events most frequently cited. **September 11th** was the next most frequently cited event, followed by events related to the theme of **civil rights** (the movement to extend the rights of citizenship to all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or social class), such as women's suffrage and the Civil Rights Movement.

Illinois

Similar to many other sites, the most significant theme to emerge from Illinois students' responses was **war**. Within this theme, the most commonly mentioned armed conflict was the American Revolutionary War, followed closely by the American Civil War. Also garnering a large number of mentions was World War II, with many students specifically identifying the attack on Pearl Harbor. Students also noted World War I and the Iraq War. Another significant theme was the **September 11th attacks**. A third theme was **the founding of the United States**, in particular the documents associated with this period (Constitution, Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence).

Kaluga, Russia

By far the most significant theme for Kaluga students was **war**; with the Great Patriotic War (the term used in Russia and its former satellites to refer to the part of World War II fought between Russia, its allies, and Germany) being the most commonly mentioned. Other wars mentioned included the War of 1812, the Russian Revolution and several specific battles, mainly from World War II. The next most significant theme was **space exploration**. Other commonly mentioned events included **Perestroika**, **freedom from the Tartar yoke** (the defeat of the Mongols in 1380) and **the Baptism of Russia** (the Christianization of Russia, beginning around 867). In general, the events mentioned by Kaluga students were of a more **patriotic or nationalistic nature**, connected with progress made by an evolving state (from a czarist past, through the period of communist rule, to a more democratic state).

Moscow, Russia

Similar to their Kaluga counterparts, **war** was the most significant theme for Moscow students. The Great Patriotic War (the term used in Russia and its former satellites to refer to the part of World War II fought between Russia, its allies, and Germany), the Russian Revolution (1917), the War of 1812 and some specific battles were mentioned in relation to this theme. Unlike Kaluga students, the second most commonly mentioned event, not related to war, was **Perestroika** (economic reforms began by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987), although **space exploration** was a close third. Related to Perestroika were other **reforms** or reform movements, such as those made by Peter the Great (1672-1725) and Pyotr Stolypin (1862-1911), the Prime Minister of Russia's last czar, Nicholas II. The **collapse of the Soviet Union**, which was the fourth most commonly mentioned event, could also be counted within the theme of reform.

Los Angeles

The most significant theme to emerge from Los Angeles students' responses was **war**, with the American Civil War garnering the most mentions. The American Revolutionary War, World War II and the Iraq War also received significant attention from Los Angeles students. Similar to students in Illinois, Los Angeles students specifically named the attack on Pearl Harbor. The second identifiable theme was **the September 11th attacks**. A third significant theme was **the Civil Rights Movement**. A fourth theme was **the founding of the United States**, in particular the documents associated with this period (Constitution, Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence) and Independence Day (July 4th). A final, smaller theme, was **Immigration Issues**, which focused on the recent debates in California surrounding the rights of illegal immigrants.

Lithuania

The more prevalent theme to come out of the Lithuanian responses was **Independence**, with students citing Lithuania's independence from the USSR on March 11, 1990 almost twice as many times as any other one event. Students also mentioned that Lithuania was established in the 13th Century. The second theme to emerge was **war**, with students noting that Lithuania won the Battle of Zalgiris in 1410. Some students also mentioned the January 13, 1991 attacks on the Vilnius TV Tower by the Red Army. Soon after this attack, the Soviet Army left Lithuania. A third and final theme was **belonging**, with students noting in relatively equal numbers the Soviet period and Lithuania's May 5, 2004 admission into the European Union.

South Carolina

For South Carolina students, the most common theme emerging from their responses was **war**, with similar numbers of students mentioning the Civil War (1861-1865, fought between the Northern and Southern states over the issues of states' rights and slavery), World War II and World War I as the United States' most significant events. Although, interestingly, the most commonly mentioned single event was **September 11th**, which seems to almost exist as a theme by itself. The next most common theme related to **civil rights** (the movement to extend the rights of citizenship to all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or social class). Responses related to this theme included slavery, racial segregation, the March on Washington (an important civil rights march of 1963) and Reconstruction (the period following the Civil War in which the Southern states were rebuilt). The third and final theme for South Carolina students were events related to the **founding of our government**, namely the signing of the Declaration of Independence (July 4th, 1776, the day on which our country's independence is celebrated) and the Bill of Rights (the first ten amendments to the Constitution, which include many of the United States' most fundamental rights).

Thematic Summary of Results for Student Survey Question 47: List 2-3 of the people you consider to be your country's heroes (historical or contemporary).

Azerbaijan

The most significant theme emerging from the Azerbaijani students' responses was **military leaders**. Babak, a military leader in the 9th century, was cited most often. Following him, Hazi Aslanov, a military leader during World War II received a significant number of mentions. Some students also named Ramil Safarov, a lieutenant in the Azerbaijani army who was arrested for murdering an Armenian representative to a NATO sponsored peace summit in 2004. **Governmental leaders** were a second theme, with Heydar Aliyev, the 3rd President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, receiving the most mentions. Javanshir, a King in the 7th century, also received a significant number of

citations, as did Mammed Amin Rasulzade, who was a leader of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-1920). **Other leaders** was the third theme emerging from the Azerbaijani students' response. Chingiz Mustafayev, a journalist who covered the Karabakh War and Khojali Massacre, was noted most often, followed by Shah Ismayil Khalai, a religious leader from the 15th century. Korogly, a mythical hero, also received a significant number of mentions.

Colorado

The most significant theme emerging from Colorado students' responses to question 47 was **presidents**. The three most commonly mentioned presidents, in order, were Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865, the president during the American Civil War), George Washington (1789-1797, the first president), and Franklin Roosevelt (1933-1945, the president during the Great Depression and World War II). Eight other presidents and one vice-president/former presidential candidate (Al Gore) also made the list. The next most common theme was **civil rights** (the movement to extend the rights of citizenship to all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or social class). Interestingly, Martin Luther King (African American civil rights leader, 1929-1968) was the most commonly mentioned individual (104 mentions to Lincoln's 60). Other responses related to civil rights included Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, Cesar Chavez (he received the same number of mentions as G.W. Bush), Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman. The remaining categories had roughly equal numbers of responses and they included **entertainers**, **people who serve their country** (soldiers, firefighters, and police officers), and **inventors/entrepreneurs**.

Czech Republic

For students from the Czech Republic the most significant theme was **leaders**, with T.G. Masaryk (first president of Czechoslovakia, 1918-1935), Charles IV (Holy Roman Emperor, 1316-1378) and Vaclav Havel (first president of the Czech Republic, 1993-2003) being the three most mentioned figures, overall. The next most commonly mentioned theme seems to be **religion**, with Reformation leader/martyr Jan Hus and one of his followers, Jan Zizka, represented this theme. The only other identifiable theme I uncovered was perhaps **scholars**; there was a significant number of mentions of people like J.A. Komensky (aka Comenius, a Protestant scholar), Karel Capek (nobel-nominated writer), and Jara Cimrman (a fictional character who is presented as one of the greatest Czech playwrights, poets, composers of the 19th and early 20th centuries). There are a significant number of individuals who only received one or two mentions, who are therefore difficult to categorize, but they appear to be mainly **entertainers**, **sports figures**, and **military leaders**.

Estonia

Estonian students overwhelmingly identified one theme, and in fact one person as a national hero. Lennart Meri, former president (1992-2001) and leader of the Estonian independence movement was the person mentioned most often within the theme of **presidents**. Also mentioned were Konstantin Pats, the first president of the Republic of Estonia (1938-1940) and current president Toomas-Hendrik Ilves. A second, lesser theme was **military leaders**, with Lembitu, a 13th century military leader and Johan Laidoner, the Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian Army during the interwar period as the prime examples. A final, smaller theme was **mythical heroes**, in which Kalevipoeg, the title character of an epic poem that is the national epic of Estonia.

Fairfax County, VA

Similar to students from Colorado, **presidents** was the most common theme among students from Fairfax County. However, George Washington (1789-1797, the first president) was the most frequently mentioned president, followed by Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865, the president during the American Civil War), Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809, drafted the Declaration of Independence), and Franklin Roosevelt (1933-1945, the president during the Great Depression and World War II). Interestingly, too, in terms of comparison, is that George Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr. received the same number of mentions, although, like Colorado, **civil rights** (the movement to extend the rights of citizenship to all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or social class) was the second most common theme. A third theme that emerged from Fairfax County more clearly than in Colorado, was **people who serve their country**, namely soldiers, firefighters, and police officers. A final minor theme could have been **entertainers**, with Oprah Winfrey receiving one less mention than George Bush.

Illinois

The most significant theme emerging from Illinois students' responses was **presidents**. George Washington (1789-1797, the first president) and Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865, the president during the American Civil War) received an almost equal number of mentions, while John F. Kennedy (1961-1963, charismatic young president assassinated during his first term), Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933-1945, the president during the Great Depression and World War II), and Bill Clinton (1993-2001) were also cited numerous times. A second theme was **civil rights**, with Martin Luther King, Jr. (African American civil rights leader, 1929-1968) receiving the largest number of mentions. It is worth noting that Dr. King was mentioned more times than any other figure, including the presidents. A fourth theme was **cultural figures**, which included entertainers such as Elvis Presley and Oprah Winfrey, and athletes, particularly Michael Jordan. Finally a fifth theme was **people who serve their country**, which included references to the military, firefighters and the police.

Kaluga, Russia

Unlike their U.S. counterparts, Kaluga students were most likely to mention military **leaders** along with political leaders. In fact, the most commonly mentioned figure for Kaluga students was Marshal G.K. Jukov, (also spelled Zhukov) who helped liberate the Soviet Union from the Axis Powers during World War II. Other popularly mentioned military leaders included Alexander Suvorov (1729-1800) and Mikhail Kutuzov (1745-1813, he is credited with stopping Napoleon's invasion). The most mentioned **political leaders** included (in order of popularity) Peter I, Lenin, Putin, Stalin, Stolypin, Yeltsin, and Alexander II (others were also mentioned, but not as frequently). The only other significant theme, **space exploration**, was represented by the second most popularly mentioned individual, Yuri Gagarin. The remaining individuals seem to fall into the categories of **artists, scholars, and sports figures**.

Los Angeles

The most significant theme emerging from Los Angeles students' responses was **presidents**. George Washington (1789-1797, the first president) and Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865, the president during the American Civil War) received an almost equal number of mentions. John F. Kennedy (1961-1963, charismatic young president assassinated during his first term), Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933-1945, the president during the Great Depression and World War II), Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809, drafted the Declaration of Independence) and Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909, Spanish-American War hero) were also mentioned numerous times. A second theme was **civil rights**. Like several other sites, Martin Luther King, Jr. (African American civil rights leader, 1929-1968) was named most often within this theme. He also received the most mentions out of any single figure. Cesar Chavez (1927-1993, founded United Farm Workers, Latino civil rights worker) and Malcolm X (1925-1965, activist) were also mentioned numerous times. **Cultural figures** was the third theme, which featured entertainment and sports figures. A fourth and final theme was **people who serve their country**, which included references to the military, firefighters and the police.

Lithuania

Lithuanian students' responses were remarkably equal, with three figures receiving the exact same number of mentions. The first, Arvydas Sabonis (b. 1964, retired pro basketball player), is an example of the theme **athletes**, which also includes Alekna (b. 1972, track and field star). Valdas Adamkus (b. 1926, current president of Lithuania) received the same number of mentions as Sabonis, and leads the theme of **presidents**, which also includes Antanas Smetona (the first, 1919-1920, and last, 1926-1940, president of pre-Soviet Lithuania). The third theme, **other leaders**, was led by Mindaugas (1203-1263, 1st Grand Duke of Lithuania), who tied with Sabonis and Adamkus with 57

mentions each. The two other figures mentioned within this theme were Vytautas Magnus (1350-1430, medieval king) and Gediminas (14th century ruler of Lithuania).

Moscow, Russia

Something that stands out immediately about the responses for Moscow students is the diversity of responses. There were 91 different individuals mentioned and, of those, 56 were mentioned only once. This apparent lack of consensus made categorizing these students' responses more challenging, but interesting nonetheless. Also, there were several individuals (seven) who received similar numbers of mentions, rather than a few that received significantly more mentions, again this speaks to a potentially interesting lack of consensus. Similar to their Russian counterparts in Kaluga, Moscow students most frequently mentioned both **military** and **political leaders**, with Vladimir Putin and G.K. Zhukov receiving the most and same number of mentions. The rest of the responses, very similar to Kaluga, can be categorized into the themes **space exploration, artists, scholars, and sports figures**. The only difference between Kaluga and Moscow, besides the number of individuals mentioned was the popularity of Andrei Sahkarov, the physicist and human rights activist by Moscow students.

South Carolina

Two competing themes characterized the responses of the student from South Carolina; they were **presidents** and **civil rights** (the movement to extend the rights of citizenship to all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or social class). Although there were more mentions, overall, for figures associated with civil rights (Rosa Parks, Frederick Douglass, etc.), the majority of those responses were of Martin Luther King, Jr. (African American civil rights leader, 1929-1968). In the category of presidents, George Washington (1789-1797, the first president) and Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865, the president during the American Civil War) were mentioned the most frequently. The only other themes were **people who serve their country** (firefighters, police officers, soldiers, etc.) and **influential women**, with Oprah Winfrey being the most frequently mentioned (five mentions, compared to one for George Bush).

Thematic Summary of Results for Student Survey Question #48: People have different ideas about what it means for a society to be a democracy. In your own words, what does democracy mean to you?

Students' responses to this question were sorted into three categories: freedoms and rights, representative government, and civic equality. Typical responses in the freedoms and rights category included "freedom of speech and choice," "democracy means freedom of opinion and speech, with free rights to vote for whoever you want," and simply "freedom." Examples of responses in the representative government category included "power of the people," "democracy is government of the people," and "the people rule the country." Some typical responses from the civic equality

category included "everyone is treated equally," "guaranteed rights for minorities," and simply "equality."

	Freedoms and Rights (% of responses)	Representative Government (% of responses)	Civic Equality (% of responses)
Azerbaijan	50%	33%	17%
Colorado	45%	48%	7%
Czech Republic	69%	20%	11%
Estonia	50%	37%	13%
Fairfax County, VA	49%	46%	5%
Illinois	56%	36%	8%
Kaluga, Russia	62%	29%	9%
Los Angeles	61%	31%	8%
Lithuania	64%	19%	17%
Moscow, Russia	55%	31%	14%
South Carolina	52%	44%	5%