

# Judge Interview Best Practices

Since 2020, Manatee History Day has not included in-person judging for their projects at the county level. However, students selected for Florida History Day (the state contest) will need to participate in in-person judging in Tallahassee. Remember, the judges' ruling (whether you agree or disagree with it) is final according to National History Day's Rulebook (pg. 38).

## Start preparing early

- What questions will the judges ask?
  - Your coordinators already have a list of possible questions! Click [here](#) or go to our website ([manateevillage.org/manateehistoryday](http://manateevillage.org/manateehistoryday)) and select the "Judge Interview Questions" PDF.
- Practice your answers with someone who can give you honest feedback or arrange with your coordinators to do a one-on-one interview practice (virtual or in person)
- If participating as a group: plan on who will answer questions but keep in mind that it may look better if you all get a turn to answer
- Stumped by a question? Instead of "I don't know", you could say "my research did not address that subject, but it did show that..."

## Interview Best Practices

- Don'ts
  - Give one-word answers
  - Talk excessively, tell irrelevant information or get off track
  - Play with your clothes or your hair
  - Be timid or worry too much
  - Get upset or argue with the judges - remember, this contest is meant to be fun!
- Do
  - Introduce yourself and shake their hands
  - Look judges in the eye, be poised and polite
  - Explain your answers with as much information as you can while staying on topic
  - Accept constructive criticism with grace – not everyone will like your topic
  - Be confident- Remember, you probably know more about your subject than your judges do (don't be superior, but be confident!)
  - Thank judges for their time when you are done
  - Relax and have fun!