Utah Topic Ideas for National History Day

When you're thinking of ideas for your History Day project, be sure to consider Utah history. Why? When you choose a local topic, you're likely to find a wealth of primary resources right on your doorstep. Here are some great ideas for topics with a Utah angle.

Explorers, Travel, and Trade in Early Utah
- Rivera Expedition
- Dominguez-Escalante Expedition
- Shoshone, Paute, Ute, Gosiute, Navajo Trade Networks – The Old Spanish Trail
- Trappers and the Fur Trade
- James Beckwourth, African-American Fur Trader
- Jim Bridger
- Peter Skene Ogden
- Etienne Provost
- Jedediah Smith
- John Weber
- The Donner-Reed Party
- John C. Fremont
- Miles Goodyear
- Stansbury Expedition (UHQ)
- Gunnison Expedition
- Simpson Expedition
- Pony Express
- John Wesley Powell
- Hole-in-the-Rock Trek
- John Macomb

Science and Technology in Utah History
- Women inventors in Utah Territory (UHQ)
- John Wesley Powell’s Geographic Surveys
- Paleontology and Utah’s Dinosaur Rush (UHQ)
- Dr. John Widtsoe – Father of Dry Farming
- Invention of the Television, Philo T. Farnsworth
- Thiokol and the Exploration of Space
- The Artificial Heart
- The Dirty Harry Nuclear Test, Nevada Test Site
- The Downwinders
- Utah’s Missile Launch Sites (UHQ)
- Exploring Speed on the Salt Flats
- Digital Pathbreakers: WordPerfect and Novell
Utah’s Diverse Cultures

- Native American Histories
  - Washakie
  - Ouray
  - Tabby-To-Kwana
  - Utes and Settlers in Utah Valley
  - Walkara and the Walker War
  - Black Hawk War and Circleville Massacre
  - Reservation Life
  - Indian Boarding Schools in Utah
  - Urban Indian Communities

- Mormon Histories
  - Immigrant communities
  - Mormon colonization of Deseret
  - Native American-Mormon Relations in Early Utah
  - Mormon United Orders/communitarianism
  - Zions Cooperative Mercantile Institution
  - Mormon-Gentile Relations in 19th Century Utah
  - Mormon-Federal Encounters & Exchange - The Utah War, Polygamy, Statehood
  - The Reed-Smoot Hearings – an encounter over Mormon polygamy
  - Colonel Thomas Kane

- Railroad Communities and Cultures
  - Chinese workers and communities
  - Corinne – A Railroad Town in Mormon Utah
  - Legacy of the Golden Spike
  - Robert Brewster Stanton’s Railroad

- Mining in Utah – Work, Trade, and Workers’ Rights
  - Carbon County – Cultural Crossroads
  - Bingham Canyon Mining Communities
  - Thomas Kearns
  - Labor unions in Utah - United Mine Workers, Western Federation of Miners, National Miner’s Union, United Steelworkers of America,
    - Joe Hill and the IWW
    - Utah Copper/Bingham Canyon Strike of 1912
    - Winter Quarters Mine Disaster

- African-American communities

- Jewish communities
  - Samuel & Frederick Auerbach, Utah retailers
  - Simon Bamberger, Utah Governor
  - Benjamin Brown
  - Clarion, a Jewish colony

- Greek communities
  - Leonidas Skliris, padrone
  - Georgia Magerou, midwife

- Italian communities

- Scandinavian communities
• Japanese communities
• Pacific Islanders and the Iosepa Settlement
• Latino people & culture
• War brides in Utah
• 20th Century Refugee Communities
• Intellectuals & the Arts
  o The Salt Lake Theater
  o Bernard DeVoto
  o Wallace Stegner

**Depression and Wartime in Utah**
• Wartime industry & mobilization
• German internees at Fort Douglas
• Topaz Japanese Internment Camp
• Marriner S. Eccles, architect of the New Deal
• Col. Gail Halvorsen, the Candy Bomber
• The Civilian Conservation Corps
• Postwar reintegration

**Civil Rights in Utah**
• Woman Suffrage and the Mormons
• Kanab’s All-Woman Town Council of 1912 (UHQ)
• ERA: The Equal Rights Amendment and Women’s Rights in Utah
• Stephen Holbrook and Utah’s NAACP (UHRC)
• Mormonism and African-Americans
• Race Riots and BYU Athletics (UHQ)
• Adoption of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday in Utah
• SOCIO: Spanish Speaking Organization for Community, Integrity, and Opportunity & Armando Solorzano

**Tourism**
• Berg Halstrom and River Rafting in Utah
• Ski Utah!
• International Peace Garden
• Goblin Valley
• The Lincoln Highway
• Utah’s Highway 89
• Utah’s National Parks
• Dr. Arthur Leroy Inglesby (UHRC)
• Everett Ruess – Canyon Country Explorer
• David D. Rust (1874–1963) – Canyon Country Guide
Environmental History

- Echo Park Dam Controversy
- Glen Canyon Dam/Colorado River Storage Act (1956)
- CUP: The Central Utah Project
- Ranchers, Rangelands, and Grazing
- Grand Staircase and the Federal Antiquities Act
- Environmentalists and engineers in Cache Valley, 1965-1990s (UHQ)
- Sagebrush Rebellion/Wise Use Movement
- The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in Utah
- Wilderness in Utah: SUWA, roadless debates
- Edward Abbey: activist/author, Desert Solitaire
- Mormons and the MX Missile

KEY
UHQ Utah Historical Quarterly
UHRC Utah State History Research Center – Search the combined resources of the Utah State Historical Society and Utah State Archives: http://heritage.utah.gov/history/research-center

Tip: Introductory information on many of these topics can be found in our online encyclopedia of Utah history – History To Go ( http://historytogo.utah.gov )