

THEME SPRINGBOARD

Communication in History: The Key to Understanding

As you explore how your topic relates to the theme, remember to look for both **communication and understanding**. The **purpose** of the communication is just as important as the **type** of communication and the **form** it takes. What was the author's message? What was the goal? How did they achieve it? Then, examine the outcomes to identify **understanding**. What was the result of the communication? What did people understand or misunderstand? What were the short-term and long-term effects?

"The act of communicating with other people, communities, or nations is often taken for granted... In order to understand, we need to know what is motivating people to talk, write, and communicate with each other in the first place." (Ashley Dabbraccio, [2021 NHD Theme Narrative](#).)

Type of Communication	Form/Technology	Examples
Artistic Expression	Poetry Music Painting	The Harlem Renaissance Joe Hill, Jazz, Blues, Bluegrass Francisco Goya
Debate	Television Opinion Articles Protests Pamphlets	Richard Nixon/ John F. Kennedy 1960 Debate Horace Greeley's "Go West, Young Man" Vietnam War Protests Thomas Paine's Common Sense
Diplomacy	Negotiation Sport	Camp David Accords Ping Pong Diplomacy
Discussion	Newspapers Letters Conventions	H.G. Wells' "War to End All Wars" Letters to the Homefront Seneca Falls Convention on Women's Rights
Disinformation	Newspapers/Magazines	William Randolph Hearst, Yellow Journalism
Dissent	Pamphlets Speeches	Helmuth Hubener Oliver Wendell Holmes (Abrams vs. United States) Patrick Henry Eugene Debs
Educate/Inform	Newspapers/Magazines Radio, Television Diaries Books Photography	Muckraking Journalism, Nellie Bly Edward R. Murrow Anne Frank, Nelson Mandela Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i> Lewis Hine & child labor
Language	Codes/Codebreaking Assimilation Innovation	Navajo Code Talkers, Enigma Code Native American Boarding Schools American Sign Language
Propaganda	Wartime Posters Political Cartoons Movies Newsreels	WWI /WWII government campaigns Dr. Seuss, Thomas Nast, Pat Bagley Mental Hygiene films of the 1950's Chuck Jones and Private SNAFU
Other		