

The *H. L. Hunley*: A Blast Through a Barrier in Naval Warfare

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Group Website

Junior Division

Word Count: 463

The National History Day project was around the corner and the topic of the project was an issue between us. We listed numerous topic ideas and considered the positives and negatives of each one. Then, Zane suggested the *H.L. Hunley* as a topic because he enjoyed previously learning about it at a museum. Since this topic has not been mentioned in class since grade three, none one of us knew much about the topic. We are all very interested in different gadgets and inventions, so we thought looking into the first successful use of a combat submarine would be intriguing. We also found it to be a convenient topic, considering the submarine itself is preserved underwater in Charleston. Our request was approved and we started our research.

We conducted most of our research on various websites and databases including Google Scholar and the Horry County Schools website. With these resources, we were able to find both primary and secondary sources on the *H.L. Hunley*. A lot of these sites were educational sites dedicated to giving information and historical databases with primary reports of the submarine. We also visited the *Hunley* Museum in Charleston, South Carolina. At this museum, we gathered various images and videos, such as blueprints, audio of the tour, and the submarine itself.

We essentially chose our project's category through process of elimination. We knew that a performance would be too anxiety-inducing. The historical paper option was also out of the picture because it is restricted to individual participants. When we saw how visually appealing a website can look if done correctly, we knew it was the best option out of the remaining three. Websites can express creativity in ways the other options cannot. Websites also have user interaction implemented, a factor that is very limited, if not nonexistent with other categories. We also figured websites would be much more practical because, since they are online, they do not require planning to get together and work on them. Creating the project was much harder

than anticipated. Making websites look good and display quality information at the same time is no easy task. We added a variety of quotes, images, paraphrases, summaries, and a timeline. We also had to create links could take anyone to any part of the website and were easy to understand.

The *H. L. Hunley* relates to the theme breaking barriers in history because it broke barriers in technology and Naval warfare. This is because it was the first submarine to sink an enemy warship. Its improved design over other submarines allowed it accomplish such a feat, further breaking a barrier in technology. Additionally, the submarine is still being investigated many years later, showing that the barrier breaks were important enough to be looked further into.