

This year's topic is "Frontiers in History." Alcatraz ties to this year's topic because it was the first prison to be made on an island and has the highest security. Alcatraz was a highly secured prison that is located just off the coast of San Francisco, California ("Alcatraz Escape"). This was a frontier in public safety and the security of prisons. Even the warden of this prison, James A. Johnston, himself said that, "Alcatraz drives people crazy" (Edwards). Those that would stay at this particular prison were the cruelest and most dangerous of those in any other prison (Edwards). From 1933 to 1934, it was handed to the U.S. Department of Justice and made into a federal prison ("BOP:Alcatraz"). Alcatraz had been used by the U.S. government for military purposes for eighty years beforehand ("BOP:Alcatraz"). Alcatraz was functioning from 1934 to 1963; between that time period there were fourteen attempted escapes ("Alcatraz Escape").

I chose Alcatraz as a topic due to another prison that I was familiar with, Ireland's Alcatraz which is a prison suspected to have supernatural activity. I was interested in the prison due to the supernatural activity that is claimed to happen there. I would have also chosen Ireland's Alcatraz as my topic but I didn't because of the fact that there wasn't much history about the prison. As well as that it didn't tie in with this year's topic, "Frontiers in history." When I decided to do Alcatraz as my topic instead of Ireland's Alcatraz was because Alcatraz was said to be inescapable. Another reason why I chose Alcatraz as my topic was because I was interested in how three prisoners were able to escape the so-called inescapable prison, as well as how all the fame of Alcatraz came from.

I mostly based my research on Alcatraz as a prison rather than on other events. Most of my primary sources were newspapers of Alcatraz in its prime. I mostly used the newspapers for the facts rather than for the pictures. My secondary sources I used the most often were

government run websites on Alcatraz and all the attempted escapes. My sources helped me with my research more with information on some of the prisoners that stayed there.

When choosing what category my main options were to either do a website or a documentary. The reason I chose to do a website was because I felt doing a website would be easier on me than doing a documentary. I also had the choice of doing my website either individually or in a group. I decided to do an individual website because I personally prefer to do assignments or projects individually. The way I designed my website was by doing a lot of blacks, whites and different shades of gray. The reason I chose that color scheme was because prisons in most cases aren't very colorful so I didn't put many colors on my website.