

Ryan White  
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We chose Ryan White to be our NHD topic. We were both interested in the scientific aspects of HIV/AIDS, and later found White's captivating story. His impact on the world was so important for breaking the stigma that AIDS had during the 1980's. This is an important topic because prior to Ryan's activism, people who contracted HIV/AIDS were looked down on by the general public, prohibited from using public resources, and ridiculed by others.

Researching this topic was very interesting and eye-opening. We found many sources that aided our research process. Multiple interviews from both Ryan and his family were very useful in this process, and provided great information of how Ryan lived with AIDS. The interviews included real audio that could be embedded into our website. We found strong primary sources including pictures and quotes. These sources helped embellish our website by adding visuals and historical context. The pictures of Ryan put a face to his story. They help people visualize how young he was when he contracted HIV/AIDS. While researching, our history teacher was very helpful. He aided us in finding sources and picking out the important information.

While creating the website, we did run into some problems. The new website layout is quite confusing and because it is brand new, not many people knew how to use it efficiently. Creating the overall layout took some time to complete, especially while making the navigation bar. Once we got that figured out, it was a lot easier to finish creating the website. It was very beneficial that both of us could edit the website from different locations. We both became experts in the program by the end of our project.

Our topic of Ryan White fits the theme of breaking barriers because Ryan was a very important person in breaking the social barrier of HIV/AIDS. His school prohibited him from

attending class because they thought other kids could contract HIV/AIDS. This assumption was incorrect, however, and Ryan fought and fought with the school board until eventually they let him come back to school. This was a big milestone because as others saw him back, they started to realize he was no different than any other person. Just because was infected with a disease does not mean that he was any less than any other human being. Ryan's perseverance also inspired many famous people and there was even a movie created about him called *The Ryan White Story*. This movie reenacts how Ryan was looked at different and wasn't able to attend school, but without giving up he fought for his own human rights, and for the rights of others that were also infected with HIV/AIDS. Ryan's story is very important and changed American culture for the better.