



“The Amistad Commission’s 3rd Grade African American History Month Contest”

The New Jersey Amistad Commission is introducing an event for elementary students to display their academic knowledge in Social Studies and History. This contest will highlight the contributions of prominent African Americans to the United States of American. This contest is designed specifically for students in **3rd Grade**. The contest will be held in February 2027.

The purpose of this contest is to provide lower elementary students with an opportunity to be introduced to contributions of prominent African Americans in U.S. History. The goal of this contest is to prepare New Jersey’s lower elementary students for analyzing historical data and competing in the Amistad Commission’s New Jersey African American History Day Fourth & Fifth Grade Contest, while engaging in the implementation of the New Jersey Amistad Legislation.

The goal of this contest is to align the learning journey and student comprehension with the New Jersey Standards, while empowering students to successfully develop confidence, pride, research, writing, public speaking and critical thinking skills. Additionally, the program will encourage educators to explore a new avenue to meet the mandate of the Amistad Legislation.

To keep it highly engaging but completely manageable for **3rd grade students**, we are offering a simplified **Choice Board**. The projects are smaller options that focus on just **one** African American historical figure, invention, or event:

Option 1: The "Trading Card" (Mini poster)

Instead of a giant poster board, students create a large "Trading Card" (using a standard piece of construction paper).

- **Front:** A drawing or printed picture of their chosen history maker or invention.
- **Back:** 3 quick bulleted facts: *Who they are, what they did, and why it matters today.*

Option 2: The "Postcard from History"

Students pretend they traveled back in time to witness a significant moment or meet a historical figure.

- **Front:** A hand-drawn picture of the moment or person.

- **Back:** A short, 3-sentence letter written to a friend explaining what they "saw" and why it was important.

Option 3: The 3D "Bio-Box"

A simplified version of a diorama using an open shoebox.

- **Inside:** Students place 2 or 3 small items (drawings or real objects) that represent their person or event.
- **Outside:** A simple 2-sentence label explaining what the objects are and their importance in African American history.

These ideas are highly favorable because:

- **Easy Submissions:** Teachers can simply snap a picture of the front and back of the project (or the inside of the box) and email them in for judging. No travel or heavy shipping required.
- The finished product should include the following information: the student's name, the teacher and principal's names, school name, school district/county, teacher's email and school's telephone number. The entry will be sent to AmistadSpecialProjects@doe.nj.gov before Friday, February 26, 2027. The winners will be announced in March 2027.

All video contest submissions will be uploaded to The Amistad Commission's website as an educational project/resource. The winning school will receive \$1,000 to support further teaching of the Amistad Mandate.

The Amistad Commission

Respectfully



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Associate Director

The New Jersey Amistad Commission

State of New Jersey, Department of Education