

NHD Project Instruction: 18 Classes to Accomplish the Process

Developed by National History Day in Mississippi; used with permission.

Please note: This 'guide' may be used however it will best help teachers & students. Once the actual instruction has been completed (Class #14), please allow several weeks for the completion of projects for sharing in public or competition.

LEGEND: Handouts and other Instructional materials (in **bold, blue print**) can be found (unless otherwise indicated) at <http://www.usm.edu/history/national-history-day-mississippi>.

(Hyperlinks to this website have been added to the boldfaced items.)

Student assignments are underlined

Time to share project examples is marked in purple.

Please note that some of the handouts on the Mississippi NHD website may have information that does not apply to NC students.

For additional NHD classroom resources, please see <http://www.nhd.org/TeacherResources.htm>

Class #1: Intro to NHD

- Show **intro video** (under "National History Day Links," upper right-hand corner, on NHD in MS **webpage**), overview process (**8 Steps of Historical Research**) and project categories.
- Introduce **theme** and **topic ideas** (best to choose a 'small' topic with a 'huge' impact).
- Less-experienced students can be overwhelmed by the sample topic list. Some teachers make their own 'sample topic list', choosing topic ideas connected to that year's curriculum or subjects that students have studied in classes, previously.
- Many teachers have found student/parent contracts very helpful to this process. At the very least, it is highly recommended that a parent meeting take place, and NHD requirements/recommendations/dates be discussed. **Students & Parents should be aware that students will need to spend 1-2 hours per week, outside of class time, working independently on their NHD assignments/projects. This includes trips for research.**
- ***CRITICAL* Review New Rule Book** <http://www.nhd.org/images/uploads/RuleBook14.pdf>.
- **ASSIGN:** Direct students to national and state NHD websites, to peruse and report what they find (suggestion = 10 pieces of information from each website) www.nhd.org and www.ncdcr.gov/historyday

Class #2: Paper Management and Begin Topic Selection

- Students share what they found on NHD websites.
- Discuss paper management system. This is a year-long project, so a big binder with dividers will help students immensely.
- Topic selection is very important; students, families (and teacher) will be 'married' to this topic for the entire school year, and perhaps, into the summer! It is helpful for the teacher to choose a great 'example topic', one about which students have prior knowledge, which will be developed and shared throughout the process. Spend class time discussing students' interests, and topic selection guidelines (at least 25 years old; available resources; consider context, alternative perspectives and impact). Use

Choosing a Topic, for ideas on how to present this info to your students. (For topic ideas with a North Carolina connection, see <http://www.ncdcr.gov/historyday/Themes.aspx>.)

- **ASSIGN:** Students choose 3 'practice topics', do 'quick & dirty research', to share next class.

Class #3: *Basic Research Skills, Note-taking, Tracking Sources for Bibliography*

- Students share 'practice topics'.
- Discuss basic research skills, note-taking, keeping track of bibliography information (easybib.com, NoodleTools <http://www.noodletools.com/tools/nhd.php>, **Resource Tracker**), employing [Logical Progression of Historical Research](#) and [Note-Taking for Research Papers](#).
- **Share project example: exhibit** (www.nhd.org/StudentProjectExamples.htm.)
- **ASSIGN:** Students complete "Choosing a History Day Topic" for next class.

Class #4: *Continued: Topic Selection, Research, Bibliography Info*

- Students share their initial topic choice, discuss with class.
- Discuss secondary and primary resources ([Primary & Secondary Research – Nevada](#)), continue note-taking skills and bibliography info-tracking. Remind students **NOT** to cite Wikipedia, and discuss the reasoning. Don't forget 'Chronicling America' sources available at <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
- **Share project example: documentary** (<http://www.nhd.org/StudentProjectExamples.htm>)
- **ASSIGN:** notes (5 facts from each source) and bibliography information from 1 secondary source and 1 primary source.

Class #5: *Narrowing Topic*

- Students share the information they found about their initial topic choice, discuss with class. Continue discussion about research, primary and secondary sources, tracking resources. Make sure students have a viable process for keeping track of their research notes and bibliography information.
- Discuss narrowing topic.
- **ASSIGN:** [Narrowing Topic, Do You Have a Good Topic?](#) and 4 additional sources, 5 facts from each.

Class #6: *Final Topic Choice, Fact Store*

- Although there will be 'wobble room', as students delve deeper into their research, they should have a pretty good handle on their final topic. **Final Topic Selection**.
- As students continue their research, they should begin to sort the information into the categories designated by the **Fact Store**. Although they do not need to use this exact form, they can get the idea of what needs to be supported with evidence, by the graphic organizer.
- **ASSIGN:** [Final Topic Selection](#) and sort 'facts' into categories designated by [Fact Store](#).

Class #7: *Thesis Statements – the FOUNDATION of NHD Projects*

- Thesis statements can be especially difficult for young/inexperienced NHD students. Please take the time and do the brainstorming + revisions necessary. Thesis statements may be adjusted, as students continue to research. This weebly webpage from another NHD affiliate's site is helpful (Please note that this resource is for 2014 theme, "Rights & Responsibilities in History", some information may be outdated), and may be a good place to begin: <http://icsnhd.weebly.com/thesis-statement.html>
- Discuss these **Thesis Statement Examples from 2014** (Rights & Responsibilities in History)
- **ASSIGN:** [Thesis Development Tool](#)

Class #8: *Thesis Statements, Continued*

- Students can share their thesis drafts, and class can discuss/offer suggestions.
- Review: note-taking, adding resources (should have 10 by this time, 7 secondary and 3 primary), tracking bibliography information, using **Fact Store**.
- Refine thesis statement, from original sentence frame. Review examples from Class #7.
- **Thesis rubric**
- **Share project example: historical paper** (<http://www.nhd.org/StudentProjectExamples.htm>).
- **ASSIGN:** 2nd draft of thesis statement

Class #9: *We are halfway there!!*

- Review students' thesis statements. **Thesis statements can still be developed**, as research supports or changes arguments, but students should have a working thesis at this time. Share and discuss "**Git 'er Done**" **check-list**: how's everybody doing?
- **Share project example: performance** (<http://www.nhd.org/StudentProjectExamples.htm>)
- **ASSIGN:** 15 sources total, 10 secondary and 5 primary (minimum of 5 facts from each).

Class #10: *Historical Context and Alternate Perspectives – challenging, but necessary facets of NHD projects*

- Instruct historical analysis, **Instruction for Historical Analysis**.
- Please present additional examples of historical context and alternate perspective evidence.
- **ASSIGN:** research secondary sources (minimum of 3), specifically, for historical context and alternate perspectives.
- **ASSIGN:** Historical Context/ Alternate Perspectives activity, **Historical Context Graphic Organizer** is just one possibility.

Class #11: *Charting 50 Facts and Investigating Website Projects*

- Review '**Fact Store**' (class #6). Impress upon students how important it is to have evidence that supports their thesis: including theme words, historical context & alternate perspective, short and long-term significance.
- Spend class time, using **Investigating Website Projects**, to explore this project category. It is very popular, as students can work on their project from any computer and it is free (thanks to NHD connection with weebly.com). Please stress to students **that all NHD website projects must be created by using the NHD Site Editor**, accessible at <http://www.nhd.org/websitereg.htm>. Students should *not* create a website by going straight to weebly.com; instead they will ultimately be using <http://nhd.weebly.com>.
- Students should have approximately 20 sources by this time, balanced: primary and secondary, various categories (print, archival, interviews, etc.) and perspectives.
- **ASSIGN:** Investigating **Website Projects** and **Fact Store**. More website projects from 2014 can be found here: http://www.nhd.org/2014_studentsites.html

Class #12: *Process Paper and Annotated Bibliography (no process paper for Historical Paper project category, process paper & bibliography for website are integrated into website project pages)*

- Instruct Process Paper and share examples (more can be found at nhd.org, student project examples) **Process Paper Notes**
- Instruct Annotated Bibliography (some instructors prefer easybib.com or Noodle Tools <http://www.noodletools.com/tools/nhd.php>) **Annotated Bib Creation Tool, Alternate Annotation-Starters, Project Example 2013 (exhibit photo and title/process/bib)**
- **ASSIGN:** Process Paper Notes and some bibliography work, to assure that students understand the concept.

Class #13: *How are we doing? Check-up time!*

- Please again use the [Git 'er Done Checklist](#) to ascertain the project progress of individuals or groups.
- Final Thesis Statement, full Fact Store (50 facts, minimum of 10 in each column), primary and secondary sources (balanced, minimum of 25 total for Local Event), evidence supporting historical context, alternative perspectives, short-term impact and long-term significance
- **ASSIGN:** All of the above need to be completed.

Class #14: *Turning Information into Outlines and Storyboards*

- Instruct process of creating an outline (for historical paper, documentary and performance scripts) and storyboard (website and exhibit projects). See [Basic Script Outline](#), [Exhibit Storyboard](#), [Storyboard for Website Projects](#), [Powerpoint: Facts, Outlines, Storyboards Project Example 2011 \(Debate & Diplomacy\)](#).
- **ASSIGN:** Script or storyboard for project.

Classes #15 & #16: *Work Time to Complete Projects*

- Students have independent work time and instructor should schedule conferences with each project individual/group.

Classes #17 & #18: *Share Completed Projects with Class for Practice and Helpful Suggestions (1 week prior to local or district event)*

- Common Core Standards for Speaking and Listening include presentation, using visual aids and speech adaptation. Other CCS include use of technology and critical thinking. The exercises of students practicing their presentations, as well as offering and receiving constructive criticism are vital parts of the NHD Program Learning Process.
- Students/instructors may offer verbal observations, or use rubrics/official evals created for this purpose. See <http://www.nhd.org/NHDintheCurriculum.htm> or [National History Day Project Rubric](#).

For NHD in North Carolina Teachers:

Be sure to visit the **NHD in NC website** (<http://www.ncdcr.gov/historyday/Home.aspx>) to find more resources, including information about district contests, contact information for district coordinators and the state coordinator, and the Teacher Toolkit.