

National History Day in Iowa Classroom Curriculum

A Multi-faceted Skills-Based Curriculum that is:

- Made to Fit into a
 - 6-12 Social Studies Curriculum or
 - 6-12 Language Arts Curriculum or
- Function as a Stand Alone Program within
 - A Talented and Gifted Classroom or
 - A Special Needs Classroom (Resource or SCI) and is
- Based directly on the NCSS Social Studies Standards
- Based directly on the NCTE English Language Arts Standards

Scott L. Johnson, M.A.
National History Day in Iowa
Teacher of the Year, 2004

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This is a general overview of the National History Day program. A more detailed summary can be found on both the National History Day website based out of College Park, MD, and the National History Day in Iowa website based out of the State Historical Society of Iowa in Des Moines.

Calendar of NHD Lesson Plans within a year long course Page 4

This calendar serves as a map for placing lesson plans included in this curriculum within a year long course. It is designed to be somewhat general and show where in the year certain lessons should be placed in as close an approximation as school calendars and each particular teacher's classroom curriculum will allow. This structure is designed to get the maximum amount of continuous effort and development on projects that is possible on a project that spans this many months, while breaking the process down into practical steps that makes the project tangible for students and teaches valuable standards-based research skills.

Lesson #1: Introducing National History Day to Student Page 5

In this lesson, students explore the concept of National History Day with special emphasis on the fun and competitive aspects of the program in order to motivate them to participate willingly. Students will view projects done by past competitors to gain a conception of what projects look like and go through an overview of NHD and the rulebook with the instructor as well. Students should leave the room with a positive view of the NHD experience and dreams of the possibilities that are out there for them in terms of possible topics and team members.

Lesson #2: Thesis Statement Development and Focus for Further Research Page 7

In this lesson students will explore the annual NHD theme and select an appropriate topic that they wish to do extensive research on. Students will develop a thesis that will give direction to their research and explain its connection to the theme. Students will learn what a thesis statement is during this process and how it is properly used in an expository paper/project such as National History Day. Students should leave the room with a topic and a working thesis that gives direction to their research.

Lesson #3: Methods of Research – Working With Sources, and Creating a Working Bibliography and Process Paper Page 10

In this lesson students will learn how to gather sources and use libraries and online collections effectively, what primary and secondary sources are and how they are used, and how to recognize the difference between biased and reputable sources. Students will also learn how to take the sources they are using and put them in a proper bibliography format (MLA or Turabian/Chicago Style), and the process by which they need to be annotated. Students should leave the room by the end of this process with a good idea of how to do research and how to properly catalogue their sources in a working bibliography.

Lesson #4: Data Analysis - Drawing Conclusions from the Evidence and Creating an Argument That Supports the Thesis Page 12

In this lesson students will learn how to take the evidence that they have gathered, analyze it, break it down into groups, and form a logical, cohesive argument. At this point students will re-evaluate their working thesis and adjust it to fit the evidence they found in the course of their research and will create the formal thesis statement that will be at the center of their project. Students should leave the room by the end of this process with a good idea of how all of the evidence they gathered supports their formal thesis. At this point all that remains is to put the project together or write the paper.

Lesson #5: Project Completion Workshop Day Page 14

In this lesson students will get started actually writing or building their projects and they will learn how to properly use the revision process and the teacher and peer feedback review processes to put together the first draft of their project and several successive drafts as well. Students should walk away from each workshop with a project or paper that is more complete and ready for competition.

Lesson #6: The History Day Competition at the School Level Page 16

In this culminating project students will undergo an authentic assessment as they present their projects at a school History Day competition which will be open to parents and community members. Students will be evaluated by judges using the same criteria that will be used at the district, state and national levels. Those who qualify for the district National History Day will go on to the next round. Teachers who find the competitive aspects of this lesson impractical may want to transform the ideas into a non-competitive school showcase or open house that still offers community feedback without the elimination process.

The National History Day Program

Think history is boring? Try National History Day and think again!

The National History Day (NHD) program is an exciting education program designed for students in grades 6-12. All types of students participate in History Day—public, private, parochial, and home-school students; urban and rural students.

Throughout the school year, students conduct research of primary and secondary resources to prepare presentations based on an annual theme. The annual theme is broad enough in scope to encourage investigation of topics ranging from local and state history to national and world history.

The program can begin as early as June for some students, but in most cases takes place at some point during the school year. Curriculum and contest materials are distributed to History Day coordinators and teachers throughout the country in the fall.

National History Day has two divisions:

- The Junior Division (grades 6-8)
- The Senior Division (grades 9-12)

Students can enter one of the following seven categories:

- Historical Paper: (1) Individual paper (a traditional research composition 1500-2500 words in length)
- Exhibit: (2) Individual exhibit or (3) Group exhibit (similar to a museum exhibit)
- Performance: (4) Individual performance or (5) Group performance (a dramatic portrayal of the topic)
- Documentary: (5) Individual documentary or (6) Group documentary (a multi-media production using slides, video, or any other non-interactive computer program such as Quicktime, Shockwave, or Adobe).

Groups can consist of two to five students.

In many states and districts, teachers are invited to workshops where they share ideas about how the year's theme can be most effectively addressed. National History Day provides a Summer Institute in July based on a topic relevant to the upcoming theme. Teachers also receive an annual Curriculum Book that provides a bibliography and list of possible topics. Teachers then introduce the program to their students who, in turn, choose a topic and begin their research.

National History Day contests reinforce classroom teaching by rewarding students of all abilities for their scholarship, individual initiative, creativity, and cooperative learning. Students grow academically and intellectually as they integrate social studies, the arts, sciences, and other disciplines into a historical presentation.

District History Day contests are usually held in February or March. District winners then prepare for and compete at the state contests usually held in late April or early May. The top two finishers in each category at the state contest become eligible to advance to the national contest held in June at the University of Maryland at College Park.

National NHD website: <http://www.nationalhistoryday.org>

Executive Director, National History Day: Dr. Cathy Gorn

Iowa website: http://www.iowahistory.org/education/history_day/nhd_overview.html

State Coordinator, National History Day in Iowa: Naomi Peuse

NHD Curriculum Integration Calendar

For a Year Long Course

September

- July/August - Contact State Historical Society and attend a teacher workshop
- **Lesson Plan 1:** Introduce the concept of History Day to students

September				
M	T	W	R	F
LP1				

October

- **Lesson Plan 2:** Thesis Statement Development and Focus for Further Research
- **Lesson Plan 3:** Methods of Research: Working With Sources and Creating a Working Bibliography

October				
M	T	W	R	F
LP2				
LP3	LP3			

November

- Working Bibliography Due
- **Lesson Plan 4:** Data Analysis: Drawing Conclusions from the Evidence and Creating an Argument That Supports the Thesis

November				
M	T	W	R	F
WB				
LP4				

December

- **Lesson Plan 5:** Project Completion Workshop Days
- Partial Rough Draft Due

December				
M	T	W	R	F
LP5				
PRD				
LP5				

January

- **Lesson Plan 5:** Project Completion Workshop Days
- Schedule a workshop with an expert (NHD state coordinator, librarian, etc.)

January				
M	T	W	R	F
LP5				
LP5				

February

- **Lesson Plan 5:** Project Completion Workshop Day
- Completed Rough Drafts due

February				
M	T	W	R	F
LP 5				
RD				

March

- **Lesson Plan 6:** Final Drafts Due -- School-Wide NHD Competition
- District Contest

March				
M	T	W	R	F
FD			LP6	
			DC	

April

- Students going to state revise for the state competition

April				
M	T	W	R	F
SC				

May

- State Competition – State Historical Society of Iowa Building, Des Moines
- Students going to nationals revise for the national competition

May				
M	T	W	R	F
SC				

June

- National Competition – University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Lesson Plan #1

Introducing National History Day to Students

Exploring National History Day's power to motivate students and transform historical research into fun!

Grades: 6-12

Subjects: Social Studies, Language Arts, TAG, and Special Needs classrooms

Interdisciplinary Connections: Science, Math, Foreign Language, Art, and Theater

Overview of Lesson Plan: In this lesson, students explore the concept of National History Day with special emphasis on the fun and competitive aspects of the program in order to motivate them to participate willingly. Students will view projects done by past competitors to gain a conception of what projects look like and go through an overview of NHD and the rulebook with the instructor as well. Students should leave the room with a positive view of the NHD experience and dreams of the possibilities that are out there for them in terms of possible topics and team members.

Suggested Time Allowance: 50-60 minutes

Objectives: Students will:

1. Relate their prior knowledge about participation in NHD for those who have had the opportunity.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation B
NCTE Standard 11 – Participating in Society
2. Understand the process other students who participated in NHD went through as they made their projects and the resulting products of their work.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 11 – Participating in Society
3. Understand the National History Day competition and the general rules governing the contest along with the rationale behind them
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
4. Compare effective and ineffective NHD projects and their general characteristics.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 3 – Evaluation Strategies
5. Interpret how the theme that particular year might lend itself well to certain types of topics
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation B
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data

Equipment/Materials Needed:

High Tech Equipment	or	Low Tech Equipment
- Computer with Power Point 2000 or higher	or	Overhead pen or chalk
- LCD projector	or	An overhead projector or a chalkboard
- VCR player connected to LCD Projector	or	A VCR connected to a TV
- PowerPoint CD "NHD Curriculum"	or	Transparencies of PowerPoint "NHD Curriculum"

Materials

- VHS of "Cultivating the Wildflower: Indian Boarding Schools" (Available for loan through the NHD in Iowa office or for purchase through the NHD in Minnesota office: www.mnhs.org/school/historyday/index.html)
- Enough copies of the NHD Contest Rule Book for each student
- Enough copies of the Judging Criteria Form for each student
- Enough copies of the current Sample Topic List for each student (available in the annual Curriculum Book)
- Students need to have a notebook that will serve as their NHD journal for the year

Activities / Procedures:

Intro/Hook: (5-10 minutes)

- Ask students to share what they know about National History Day and ask if anyone has previously participated

- Allow students to share what they think NHD is or what they have heard about it
- Talk about the points this project will be worth and any extra credit you are offering for students who make it to state or nationals and for special awards at both levels.

Activity 1: Inspiring the Students With Past Projects (20-25 minutes)

- If there is a student in your class or from a previous year who participated in National History Day, did well, and considered it a positive experience have them share their project or paper
 - Extension Activity: If you have the resources to draw upon, have previous or current students bring in previous projects – preferably one or two in each category – and stage a “mini history day” in which the students and the teacher serve as informal judges discussing the strengths of each project in a positive way
- If there are no students who can come in and share their experiences or if time remains, show the video “Taming the Wildflower,” first place, senior group performance from the national competition in 1995. After the video have students discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the performance. Be sure to emphasize that a polished and impressive performance like this did not start that way. Build confidence in your students that through a process of revisions that they too could create impressive projects that may even make it to nationals, but the effort must go in for this to happen.

Activity 2: Basic Training in NHD (30-35 minutes)

- Lecture: Run through the *Introduction to National History Day* PowerPoint CD or overhead slides with students, stopping to answer questions after each slide.
- When you get to the slide on the Paper Category, pass out copies of the NHD Contest Rule Book and have students follow along as you discuss each category.
 - Extension Activity: If you have the resources to draw upon, set up projects that are off-theme or are breaking the rules in some very significant ways – have students act as judges and find the flaws in these projects. Have students break down into judging teams and rotate through the projects. As they judge each project, have them make a list of the flaws in the project and rank them as to which are the most significant in their opinion (without having seen the judging sheets) (place all former participants on one team and refer to them last since they have the advantage of knowing more) This can lead into the slide “What Judges Are Looking For”
- When students get to the slide, “What Judges are Looking For” pass out a judging criteria form to each student, go over the categories, and discuss briefly what they are and how important each is. Remember that the idea is to help students understand the program expectations, not to go into great detail on the judging process or the shades of meaning attached to each category. The point is to give students who are now inspired a general direction in which to aim their efforts.
- When you click to the last slide, “Tips for Finding Good Topics” hand out the list of topics provided by the National office. You may want to add your own list of suggestions as well. It is recommended that you require this project of all your students, but sell them on it with how many options they have and how much extra credit they may receive if they advance and the chance they have to do something that they will find really fun and interesting.
- Have students write down in their journals the five items they think are most important to remember about National History Day and 5 topic ideas they may be interested in. This gives them a written record to go back to and you the teacher some evidence of their thinking and participation.

Evaluation / Assessment:

Students will be evaluated based on written journal entries, and participation in class discussions.

Lesson Plan #2

Thesis Statement Development and Focus for Further Research

Narrowing what the students are interested in relating to the theme down into a workable topic and thesis

Grades: 6-12

Subjects: Social Studies, Language Arts, TAG, and Special Needs classrooms

Interdisciplinary Connections: Science, Math, Foreign Language, Art, and Theater

Overview of Lesson Plan: In this lesson students will explore the annual NHD theme and select an appropriate topic that they wish to do extensive research on. Students will develop a thesis that will give direction to their research and explain its connection to the theme. Students will learn what a thesis statement is during this process and how it is properly used in an expository paper/project such as National History Day. Students should leave the room with a topic and a working thesis that gives direction to their research.

Suggested Time Allowance: 50-60 minutes

Objectives: Students will:

1. **Predict** which topics might work well with the annual NHD theme and which have enough sources available to do effective research.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation C
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data
2. **Understand** what a historical thesis is and why history is a series of thesis statements – constructed by a consensus of historians.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
3. **Recognize** the proper structure of an effective thesis statement and understand how to construct one based on a simple step-by-step process.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
4. **Create** an effective working thesis statement for one of three briefly researched topics that will serve as a focus for further research
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 6 – Applying Knowledge
5. **Select** whether to do a group or individual project, who the other group members will be, and whether they will be doing a paper, exhibit, performance, or documentary.

Equipment/Materials Needed:

Equipment

- Access to the school's computer lab with enough internet capable computers for every student or group of students in the class
- Access to the school's library

Materials

- Class set of copies of the Working Thesis Handout
- Class set of copies of the Sails and Anchors Packet (Includes contracts and Do's and Don't List for Parents)
- Students need to have a notebook that will serve as their NHD journal for the year

Activities / Procedures:

Intro/Hook: Topic Sharing (5-10 minutes)

- Have students share one of the five topics they have written down in their journal and tell them they can offer a general topic (in case they are worried about others taking their favorite ideas – i.e. codebreaking as a general topic as opposed to Operation ULTRA during World War II)
- Have students get out their journals and jot down any additional ideas they hear that they might want to look into as alternates to the five they have written down or have them re rank their list after they hear ideas shared by the class.
 - Extension Activity: Have a local NHD official, librarian, or historian come in and give their perspective on topics that students bring up – and what the latest scholarly discussion is on topics such as those suggested or ideas of their own during this time

- Pass out the Anchors and Sails Handout. Have them read the information or go over it with them briefly before they select group or individual participation and the type of project plan to complete. Have students record their choices on the contract once they are certain. Let them know this is not set in stone – they can change it if they want to – this just gives them a goal to work towards.

Activity 1: The General Structure of a Good Thesis Argument (10-15 minutes)

- Discuss with students in your own words how history is the search for the real truth of what happened in the past and thus history becomes a long string of theses about what historians think happened based on the evidence they have. Students are simply repeating the process historians use to discover and establish truth through their NHD project. Be sure to touch on the controversy between historians on various subjects and make the point that historians can come up with different theses from the same pieces of evidence. (A good example of this is the many theories on who assassinated President John F. Kennedy)
 - Extension Activity A: Obtain a cheap jigsaw puzzle and place several pieces from different regions of the puzzle on a table or display board (about where they would be in the picture if you want to make it easier and jumbled more if you want to make it harder). Ask students to tell you what the picture is – allow them to build off of each other’s comments – then summarize what they think it is. If there is some controversy as to what it is among the students summarize each alternate picture. Then show them the box top – talk about the things they got right and the things that were missed. Draw an analogy between this exercise and how historians take the available pieces of evidence (puzzle pieces) such as primary sources (to be discussed in greater detail in a later lesson) or archaeological evidence and construct the rest of the picture from the pieces of evidence they have like the students just did with their puzzles. Talk about how another piece of evidence (like another puzzle piece) can change the whole concept of what the picture looks like or what important details were missing before. Talk about how all of the history in their textbooks consists of these kinds of pictures which have been put together by historians – and a summary of what the historical “picture” looks like in one sentence is essentially a historical thesis. Be sure to talk about how more than one thesis can be derived from the same pieces of evidence just like more than one picture can be derived from the same set of puzzle pieces.
 - Extension Activity B: Obtain multiple copies of the same puzzle and take the same pieces from each puzzle. Create groups and have each group create its own picture in as much detail as possible. Then follow Extension Activity A.
- Ask the class (in your own words) how they think historians might end up agreeing on what history actually is – if they have differing ideas or pictures of what happened based on the same evidence. After some discussion, ask the class is there some kind of system where two sides both have the same amount of evidence and they come to different conclusions. If nobody suggests it – bring up the example of a trial in a courtroom. Both sides have to convince the jury of a different thesis – innocent or guilty. They are both using some of the same evidence and testimony.

Activity 2: Creating a Working Thesis (25-35 minutes)

- Give students time to look up a basic description of the top three of their five topics on the computers or in library books. (Make sure the sources are credible as you circulate through the room – they will learn to do this themselves later.) (15 minutes)
- Have students choose a topic and an “angle” they want to take a look at the topic with from their list of three. You may want to move from group to group and suggest various angles they can look at the topic from that would fit into the theme – but also allow the students to talk and have them bounce ideas off of you (and other experienced NHD students) as they hash out which one of the three topics would be most suitable for a potential thesis. Talk to them about how this can be a very controversial angle or a non-controversial angle that is basically “splitting hairs” depending on what they would prefer. Make sure they write down the topic they chose in their journal. (15 minutes)
- Creating a Working Thesis: Hand out the Working Thesis Worksheet, and have them answer the questions and try to come up with a thesis using the formula on the worksheet. Let students know that any thesis that they did not get written down is homework and make it due within 1-2 days. Have them make a note of their final decisions regarding group members (or the decision to do an individual project) and what type of project they are thinking about doing. (5 minutes)
- State to students that now that they have their thesis and an idea of the structure they are going to use to prove it, they can start gathering resources and constructing an argument on their own if they are sure of

which topic it is they would like to pursue. Make sure students realize that they are not required to structure their argument yet – but they can think about it if they choose to do so. Make sure to emphasize that this thesis they stated is a “working thesis” only. If they discover after more digging that the preponderance of evidence points in a different direction they can change the thesis. (10 minutes)

- **Homework:** Have students take the appropriate contract home and get it signed. (Tell them they can change it if they want to later) Also, send a parent letter home containing the Do’s and Don’ts List (sample included). Tell them they need to gather six resources having to do with their topic and 3 need to be print resources and the other 3 need to be internet resources. Tell them to check out, copy off or print out their resources and bring them back in a week’s time. (5 minutes)

Evaluation / Assessment:

- Points will be given for turning in the required handouts
- The teacher evaluates the thesis submitted by each student according to the following rubric and then allows students to revise once before re-submitting the theses for a final grade

Thesis Statement Evaluation Rubric

	High Quality Thesis (5 Points)	Mediocre Quality Thesis (4 Points)	Low Quality Thesis (3 Points)	Poor Quality Thesis (2 points)
TOPIC	Is over a point of view on a historical topic about which there is clear controversy or clear room for differing interpretations	Is over a point of view on a historical topic about which there is some controversy or some room for differing interpretations	Is over a “safe” point of view on a historical topic in which there is very little room for differing interpretation or controversy	Is over a point of view on a historical topic in which there is absolutely no room for controversy OR is over a point of view that is not a historically viable one ((ie. UFO’s forming and destroying Atlantis))
STANCE	<u>Takes a clear and concise stance</u> on a historical topic in which there is clear controversy	<u>Takes a somewhat clear stance</u> on a historical topic in which there is some room for controversy	<u>Takes a very vague stance</u> on a historical topic in which there is little room for controversy	<u>Takes no stance</u> on a historical topic in which there is no room for controversy
SCOPE	<u>Is narrow enough that the project or paper can adequately prove</u> the stance taken on a historical topic in which there is clear controversy	<u>Is not quite narrow enough that the project or paper can adequately prove</u> the stance taken on a historical topic in which there is some controversy	<u>Is not nearly narrow enough that the project or paper can adequately prove</u> the stance taken on a historical topic in which there is little room for controversy	<u>Is so wide in scope that the project or paper could never adequately prove</u> the stance taken on a historical topic in which there is no room for controversy
THEME	<u>Relates the writer’s stance clearly to the theme for that particular year</u> on a historical topic in which there is clear controversy	<u>Relates the writer’s stance in general terms with some specifics to the theme for that particular year</u> on a historical topic in which there is some controversy	<u>Relates the writer’s stance only in the vaguest general terms to the theme for that particular year</u> on a historical topic in which there is little room for controversy	<u>Does not relate the writer’s stance to the theme for that particular year</u> on a historical topic in which there is no controversy
IMPACT	<u>Conveys a clear sense of the wider historical impact</u> of the writer’s stance on a historical topic in which there is clear controversy and which relates clearly to the theme for that particular year	<u>Conveys some sense of the wider historical impact</u> of the writer’s stance on a historical topic in which there is some controversy and which relates somewhat clearly to the theme for that particular year	<u>Conveys only the vaguest sense of the wider historical impact</u> of the writer’s stance on a historical topic in which there is little room for controversy and which only vaguely relates to the theme for that particular year	<u>Conveys no sense of the wider historical impact</u> of the writer’s stance on a historical topic in which there is no controversy and which doesn’t relate to the theme for that particular year

Lesson Plan #3

Methods of Research – Working With Sources, and Creating a Working Bibliography and Process Paper

Exploring the pitfalls of working with sources, what primary and secondary sources are, and the proper format for the annotated bibliography

Grades: 6-12

Subjects: Social Studies, Language Arts, TAG, and Special Needs classrooms

Interdisciplinary Connections: Science, Math, Foreign Language, Art, and Theater

Overview of Lesson Plan: In this lesson students will learn how to gather sources and use libraries and online collections effectively, what primary and secondary sources are and how they are used, and how to recognize the difference between biased and reputable sources. Students will also learn how to take the sources they are using and put them in a proper bibliography format (MLA or Turabian/Chicago Style), and the process by which they need to be annotated. Students should leave the room by the end of this process with a good idea of how to do research and how to properly catalogue their sources in a working bibliography.

Suggested Time Allowance: 2 Days - 50-60 minutes each

Objectives: Students will:

1. **Critique** the value of the sources they brought in and predict the usefulness of each source in creating a solid research base.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
2. **Understand** what bias is and how to find high quality sources that are as objective as possible and useful using both the library and the internet.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
3. **Differentiate** between primary and secondary sources, understanding the value of each in arguing a point and the best places to look for them.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation A
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data
4. **Create** a working bibliography and know how to create a process paper if necessary
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 6 – Applying Knowledge
5. **Understand** the annotation process and how to footnote sources using the working bibliography
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills

Equipment/Materials Needed:

Equipment

- Access to the school's computer lab with enough internet capable computers for every student or group of students in the class
- Access to a computer with a projector hooked up to it (if available)

Materials

- Class set of copies of the "Letter from Alexander to Aristotle Handout"
- Class set of copies of the Evaluating Internet Sources Handout (CARS Method) and the one page handout
- Class set of copies of the Primary and Secondary Sources Handout and the Avoiding Plagiarism Handout
- Class set of copies of the Bibliography and Process Paper Format handout
- Students need to have a notebook that will serve as their NHD journal for the year

Activities / Procedures:

Intro/Hook: Detecting Bias (5-10 minutes)

- Have students get out their six sources. Ask if anyone found contradictions in their sources about the details of the topic they were researching. If nobody found any then move on to the next bullet– if someone did then have them share that with the whole class.

- Pass out the Letter From Alexander to Aristotle Handout and have students read it. Poll the students to determine who thought it was real and who thought it was a forgery. Tell them it is a forgery and ask the students how they came to their conclusion. Explain the concept of bias and how it can cause sources to be distorted or even forged. Ask students to come up with examples of heavily biased sources (ie. propaganda, political ads, etc.) that might not be trustworthy.
 - Extension Activity: Divide the room into two groups. Hand one group an index card titled “Clue Card” that says “Extinct Reptiles” and the other a “Clue Card” that says “Famous People.” Put a bunch of random dots on a page and make enough copies for the whole class. Ask students to connect the dots. Tell them they do not have to use all of the dots. When the two sides are finished show the class how one set of dots can be interpreted differently by two groups who have preconceived notions like the clue cards guiding how they piece things together.

Activity 1: Evaluating Internet Research Sources (20-25 minutes)

- Pass out the article on Evaluating Internet Research Sources by Robert Harris of Virtualsalt.com and break the students into four groups. Have each group summarize one section of the CARS (Credibility, Accuracy, Reasonableness, Support) method for evaluating sources. On a single sheet of poster paper have them outline the important points in their section and make a 3-minute presentation to the class. Add anything important that the students missed. Briefly go over the CAFÉ (Challenge, Adapt, File Evaluate) method for dealing with questionable information. Make sure students then place this article in their NHD journals for future reference.

Activity 2: Taking the Tutorial (20 minutes)

- Have students utilize computers to type <http://library.albany.edu/usered/webeval/> in the internet address bar. Have them take the online tutorial and ask them to keep track their score in their journals. If you have access to a computer and LCD projector you can do this as a class and create discussion around the credibility of each source (It is also possible to print and make overheads of the sources).
- Have students then apply the evaluative techniques they have learned to the six sources they brought in. Have them rate each source’s reliability on a scale of 1 to 10 in their NHD journals.

Day 2

Intro/Hook: Defining Primary and Secondary Sources (5-10 minutes)

- Ask students if they know the difference between primary and secondary sources -- discuss
- Give students the correct definition of primary and secondary sources in your own words

Activity 1: Distinguishing Primary and Secondary Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism (25-35 minutes)

- Pass out the Primary and Secondary Sources Handout. Go over the criteria for each and make sure students understand the differences and how each should be used.
 - Extension Activity: If you used the puzzle analogy from the extension activity for Lesson 2, extend that analogy here. Primary sources are the puzzle pieces we do have, and secondary sources are someone’s attempt to connect the information and “draw the rest of the picture” in their own thesis (hence there is likely to be *some* bias).
- Have the school librarian put together a cart full of various books (help him or her select them based on the handout) and print out additional journal or on-line sources. Students should then classify each as either a primary or secondary source. Have students classify their own six sources as either primary or secondary.
- Hand out the Avoiding Plagiarism Handout and discuss what plagiarism is

Activity 2: Creating a Working Bibliography (25-35 minutes)

- Pass out the Bibliography and Process Paper Format Handout. Discuss how to cite and annotate sources and have them practice in their journals with the six sources they brought. Assign the students ten additional sources (which they must bring to class for Lesson 4) for their working bibliography (four of which must be primary) which need be typed in the proper format and will be graded in a week’s time.

Evaluation/Assessment:

- Points will be given for proper journal entries and for turning in the Working Bibliography
- The bibliography will be corrected by the teacher and students will be required to revise it

Lesson Plan #4

Data Analysis: Drawing Conclusions from the Evidence and Creating an Argument That Supports the Thesis

Exploring how to construct an argument founded in evidence that supports a thesis in the clearest and simplest method as a basis for all further argument elaboration

Grades: 6-12

Subjects: Social Studies, Language Arts, TAG, and Special Needs classrooms

Interdisciplinary Connections: Science, Math, Foreign Language, Art, and Theater

Overview of Lesson Plan: In this lesson students will learn how to take the evidence that they have gathered, analyze it, break it down into groups, and form a logical, cohesive argument. At this point students will re-evaluate their working thesis and adjust it to fit the evidence they found in the course of their research and will create the formal thesis statement that will be at the center of their project. Students should leave the room by the end of this process with a good idea of how all of the evidence they gathered supports their formal thesis. At this point all that remains is to put the project together or write the paper.

Suggested Time Allowance: 50-60 minutes

Objectives: Students will:

1. Predict how the content in the sources they found might fit into an overall structure of their paper or project that makes sense in a logical manner.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data
2. Recognize how to structure an argument so that the evidence supports the thesis and has the best logical structure to get a point across clearly.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
3. Classify the content they have in their sources into categories that can then be developed into the main pillars of their argument.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data
4. Create a structure for the argument, which will serve as a guide for the assembly of the paper or project.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 6 – Applying Knowledge
5. Understand how this skill is transferable to the decision making processes needed in adulthood, as well as the research and thinking they will likely do in college or trade school and how it will improve their test taking and essay writing abilities
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills

Equipment/Materials Needed:

Equipment

None

Materials

- Poster sized paper and several sheets of construction paper for each student or group of students in the class
- Class set of copies of the Argument Structure/Structure for a Thesis Essay Handout
- Trial affidavits and evidence (2 packets) for the trial analogy
- Students need to have a notebook that will serve as their NHD journal for the year

Activities / Procedures:

Intro/Hook: Making Sense of the Evidence (15-20 minutes)

- Put a sample flowchart up on the board or on an overhead. As you go over it, make sure students understand the basic concept behind how a very basic flowchart works.
- Have students get with their project groups (or work alone if they are doing an individual project) and pool their ten sources. Pass out the sheets of posterboard and construction paper. Have them create their flowchart pieces with the construction paper and tape them or place them on the posterboard. Have movable lines cut out already (strips of black constructions paper cut with a paper cutter so they do not write on the posterboard itself.) Tell students they can use different colors and make very brief titles to

their boxes (i.e. the word Thesis on a red rectangle would suffice for their thesis statement). Ask students to quickly map out a general flowchart of how their argument supporting their thesis would fit together on the posterboard and have them indicate in their flowchart where they would use pieces of evidence from each source as a part of their project.

- Ask students to explain how the structure they came up with effectively proves their thesis. If there are no volunteers pick on some students to come up and explain their flowcharts. Try not to correct them--allow them to flounder a bit if they are unsure of what to do. Have them construct their best guess (prediction) as to what the correct structure is.

Activity 1: The Sacco and Vanzetti Trial Analogy (25-30 minutes)

- Go back to the analogy of a trial lawyer proving a thesis of innocent or guilty that you mentioned in Lesson 2. Explain that lawyers do similar mental mapping when they put together their arguments and decide which witnesses to interview on the stand. Lawyers group evidence into major points or reasons that support a thesis of innocent or guilty. Divide the class into two groups. Assign one group the prosecution and the other group the defense. Give them the packets of evidence related to the Sacco and Vanzetti Trial. Have each side create a thesis (i.e. Red box with “Sacco and Vanzetti are innocent” or blue circle with Sacco and Vanzetti are guilty” would work fine). Have students construct a flowchart that groups like pieces of evidence together. The reasons should be written out in the boxes, the pieces of evidence can be placed directly on the posterboard with logic boxes that explain how the evidence fits together.
- Encourage students to narrow it down to three main points for each side with as many sub-points as is necessary. Walk back and forth between the groups and give advice. Try to create a competitive but friendly atmosphere where the winning side gets a prize or extra credit.
- Have each side display its flow chart and present its case. Ask the students which side they found more convincing and why. Add in your own observations as well. Tell students that what they just did is essentially the same sort of analysis they will do with their evidence for their NHD project.

Activity 2: Understanding the Proper Structure for Proving a Thesis (10 minutes)

- Pass out the Argument Structure Handout and discuss with students how they need to keep this structure in mind as they research so they can group the evidence they find into categories that supports their thesis. If the evidence does not adequately support their argument, they should alter their working thesis.
- Assign students the task of finalizing their formal thesis statement filling out their own Argument Structure chart in their journals and indicating where their evidence will be placed in this structure.
- Make sure students are cognizant of how the argument structure (which can be expanded upon) in the flowchart will translate into the structure of the type of project they are doing
 - Papers: The major points will become the topic sentences for the major body paragraphs or sections and the evidence will fit into the body paragraphs after each major point
 - Exhibits: The major points will become the large headings under which evidence is displayed in a visual format
 - Performances: The major points will become the themes throughout the script as offered by a narrator or dialogue through various scenes or subject segments
 - Documentaries: The major points will become the themes of the major sections in the script
- Flip the handout over and show students how this is essentially the same as the five-paragraph method used to write college expository essays. This format also works for the AP tests (especially on the free response essays and the DBQ’s or Document Based Questions seen on the AP US History and AP World History exams). Emphasize how being able to argue clearly from the evidence is a skill they will use repeatedly in college as they write papers and essays or in life as they defend personal beliefs and choices.

Evaluation/Assessment:

- Points will be given for proper journal entries and for turning in the Working Bibliography
- The Argument Structure Flowchart will be turned in for points, corrections will be made by the teacher by the teacher and students will be required to revise it once after receiving feedback

Lesson Plan #5

Project Completion Workshop Day

Exploring how to construct an argument founded in evidence that supports a thesis in the clearest and simplest possible method as a basis for all further argument elaboration

Grades: 6-12

Subjects: Social Studies, Language Arts, TAG, and Special Needs classrooms

Interdisciplinary Connections: Science, Math, Foreign Language, Art, and Theater

Overview of Lesson Plan: In this lesson students will get started actually writing or building their projects and will learn how to properly use the revision process and the teacher and peer feedback review processes to put together the first draft of their project and several successive drafts. Students should walk away from each workshop with a project or paper that is more complete and ready for competition.

Suggested Time Allowance: 50-60 minutes

Objectives: Students will:

1. **Predict** how the judges will perceive their own and other students' projects or papers and what strengths and/or flaws they might find.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data
2. **Learn** how to ask revision questions and make good use of peer evaluation teams.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
3. **Clarify** the argument and the content and its arrangement in their project or paper.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data
4. **Create** a project or paper that will complete in all of the areas in which it is to be judged through planning, hard work and careful revision.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 6 – Applying Knowledge
5. **Communicate** significance of their thesis in the larger picture of history clearly through the thesis and the conclusion
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation E
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills

Equipment/Materials Needed:

Equipment

Documentaries

- Camcorder and microphone and
- Video editing equipment or
- Macintosh computer with I-Movie

Performances

Camcorder for recording rough drafts

Papers

Computers with Word Processing programs like Microsoft Word on them that can print and have disk drives of some sort or internet access so students can save their work and take it home with them

Materials

- **Exhibit Boards:** You may want to have your own revolving supply of exhibit boards that can be re-used every year
 - wood ones work well but are heavy. Canvas stretched over wood frames works well also.
- Glue: Rubber cement or spray glue (use on the board itself only on the final draft before the competition)
- Paper: White paper and construction paper
- Scissors or a paper cutter
- Triplicate (Triple the number in the class) copies of the Judging Criteria Sheet
- Students need to have a notebook that will serve as their NHD journal for the year.

Activities / Procedures:

Day 1: Project Completion Day

- Have students work towards the goal of getting the project put together on this day. Have them take their plans based off of their argument structure and put the “skeleton” of their argument down first and then have them flesh it out with details and supporting logic. Make Partial Rough Drafts due in one week and make completed rough drafts due in two weeks on Day 2 of the Lesson.

Day 2: First Revision Cycle – Peer Revision Groups

- Group the students according to the type of project they are doing and put three projects together whether they be group or individual.
- Tell the students they are receiving participation points and you will be watching them in order to see that they are earning their points as they work in their peer review groups.

Activity 1: Peer Revision Cycle 1 (20 Minutes)

- Pass out the Judging Criteria Sheet to two of the three groups
- Have one group or individual present their project or read their paper while the other two groups or individuals fill out their judging sheets and write down any comments for strengths and areas for improvement. When you explain the judging process make it sound as serious as possible so the students take it seriously.
- Have the two groups share their comments in each category (both groups talk briefly about each category then move to the next). Have the group or individual being judged take notes.

Activity 2: Peer Revision Cycle 2 (20 Minutes)

- Pass out the Judging Criteria Sheet to two of the three groups
- Have the next group or individual present their project or read their paper while the other two groups or individuals fill out their judging sheets and write down any comments for strengths and areas for improvement.
- Have the two groups share their comments in each category (both groups talk briefly about each category then move to the next). Have the group or individual being judged take notes.

Activity 3: Peer Revision Cycle 3 (20 Minutes)

- Pass out the Judging Criteria Sheet to two of the three groups
- Have the next group or individual present their project or read their paper while the other two groups or individuals fill out their judging sheets and write down any comments for strengths and areas for improvement.
- Have the two groups share their comments in each category (both groups talk briefly about each category then move to the next). Have the group or individual being judged take notes.
 - Note: this revolving structure may not be necessary with smaller classes

Day 3: Revision Cycle 2 - Teacher Revision

- This works best if you can have another teacher or community member or veteran NHD student join you to get twice as many students done as you would alone. It may take more than one day if you are doing this by yourself and have a large class.
- Have papers handed into you at least a day or two beforehand and set aside ten minutes per paper or exhibit and fifteen per performance or documentary to offer your insights and what you would give the project as an impartial judge. Try to have as many of your comments ready beforehand as you can. Keep the tone very positive and emphasize the strengths first. Have the other students who are not having their project revised work on their projects while you talk to those who are.

Day 4: Revision Cycle 3 - Expert Workshop

- Invite the state coordinator and/or district coordinators down for a workshop day in which students can quickly present their projects and have questions ready. Again try not to allow any one student to monopolize the expert's time and it really helps if you can have more than one
- Try to mail papers to this person in advance so they can read them ahead of time.

Day 5: Revision Cycle 4 - Self-Evaluation

- Have students fill out a judging sheet on themselves and ask them to be very critical of their work in order to find any additional room for improvement. Require at least 5 written comments. Have them turn these sheets in to you and then go through them and respond to their criticisms and either agree or ease their anxieties but above all be positive and affirm them for all of the hard work they have done up to this point.

Evaluation/Assessment:

- Rough drafts and final copies will be graded by the teacher using a judge's scoring sheet. (Points rubric included)

Lesson Plan #6

The History Day Competition at the School Level

Putting together everything the students have done in an event in which parents and community members can participate and in which students compete to see who goes to the district competition

Grades: 6-12

Subjects: Social Studies, Language Arts, TAG, and Special Needs classrooms

Interdisciplinary Connections: Science, Math, Foreign Language, Art, and Theater

Overview of Lesson Plan: In this culminating project students will undergo an authentic assessment as they present their projects at a school History Day competition which will be open to parents and community members. Students will be evaluated by judges using the same criteria that will be used at the district, state and national levels. Those who qualify for the district National History Day will go on to the next round. Teachers who find the competitive aspects of this lesson impractical may want to transform the ideas into a non-competitive school showcase or open house that still offers community feedback without the elimination process.

Suggested Time Allowance: 50-60 minutes

Objectives: Students will:

1. **Share** the process through which they conducted their research, gathered sources, and put together their project with the judges.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
2. **Learn** by seeing other projects or papers, which ones have the largest impact and what characteristics give a project a large impact with community members and judges.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation A
NCTE Standard 8 – Developing Research Skills
3. **Clarify** the meaning of various items in their projects or papers as they speak with the judges.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data
4. **Understand** why solid research and clear logic make the final product of a student’s efforts in any project or paper superior in quality.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation D
NCTE Standard 6 – Applying Knowledge
5. **Communicate** significance of their thesis in the larger picture of history and thoroughly understand their topic and its importance to the development of history.
NCSS Standard 2 / Performance Expectation B
NCTE Standard 7 – Evaluating Data

Equipment/Materials Needed:

Equipment

Documentaries

TV/VCR or DVD combinations or
Computers with projectors

Performances

Sizeable Presentation Space

Camcorder for recording performances

Possibly TV/VCR stations where they could be replayed for the public after the students are done

Exhibits

Table space in a large room where all of them can be viewed by the public, and outlets available for those projects needing electricity

Materials

Enough judging criteria forms for the judges

Enough Judging Instructions for the judges

Program explaining the event to those who come to see it (optional)

Activities / Procedures:

Activity 1: Judging Orientation

- Paper judges need to be given their projects and at minimum one judging sheet per paper one to two weeks in advance. Judges need to read each paper and evaluate them ahead of time
- Have community members and teachers who are going to serve as judges (have at least two per category and give them no more than 9 projects to judge) meet at 4:30 PM to go over the rules for judging, as they are explained in the Judges Instructions.
- Make sure all judges are going to stay positive and build up students' self esteem as they ask questions and make comments on their judging forms.

Activity 2: Registration and Setup

- Have separate rooms for performances, documentaries and papers where students or groups of students can go in and be interviewed one at a time. Create and post a schedule for when students are to be judged (remember to give the judges a copy).
- Have a separate room for the exhibits with rows of tables arranged with predetermined spaces (at minimum each space needs to be 40' wide and 30' deep) that are numbered. Each number should correspond with a student project and a judging time.
- Have students show up at 4:30 PM to set up. Students should be encouraged to bring something to do as they may have some "down time" but would benefit from viewing other projects.

Activity 3: Judging and Community Viewing

- Students should be in attendance for judging at their assigned time and location. Encourage judges to stick to the schedule (10 minutes per paper, 15 minutes per exhibit, 20 minutes per documentary and performance)
- Make sure you allow audience space in the rooms for Documentaries and Performances and you may want to have live cameras set up so those outside the room can see as well. Don't allow people to come in or out during the performance or documentary or while judges are questioning the students.
- Have extra copies of the papers outside the paper room for viewing.
- Allow the public to view the exhibits as they are being judged as long as they don't interfere with the judging process.

Activity 4: Awards Ceremony

- Have a classroom set aside as a Judges Tallying room where evaluators can go as soon as they finish judging and have someone in charge collecting the results (you should send anywhere from the top 2 to the top 4 in each category to the district contest).
- Be sure to allow plenty of time for judge collaboration and comment writing.
- Have the Awards Ceremony as early as the schedule will allow (set up part of the gymnasium with chairs or use the auditorium) and hand out certificates for the district qualifiers in each category.
 - Special Awards: You may want to have local businesses or community groups sponsor special prizes that can be handed out as well. (i.e. The Rotary Club sponsors a prize for the Best Project Relating to the History of Business)