

Connecticut History Day

Academic Integrity: Avoiding Plagiarism in a Digital World Educator's Guide

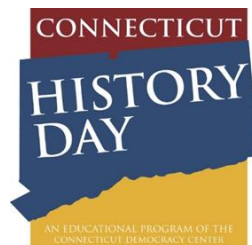


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Purpose of this Guide

NHD Judges and coordinators across the country have commented on the increase of occurrences involving overuse of secondary sources and potential plagiarism in History Day projects.

While most of these are minor examples, the instances of improper citations and obvious “copy and paste” are on the rise.

Our goals for this guide are to:

- Provide teachers with NHD-approved methods for taking notes throughout their research process, paraphrasing and quoting sources, and citing sources.
- Provide students the skills necessary to conduct themselves with honesty and academic integrity.
- Support students in the development of their own voice and set them on a path for positive habits of academic writing.

What is Academic Integrity?

According to NHD, “academic integrity refers to the honesty and originality of your project.” Students’ projects must reflect:

- Their research
- Their analysis
- Their design
- Citation of all their sources

(NHD Rule Book, p. 12)



What is Plagiarism?

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, plagiarism is defined as “the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person.” (Merriam-Webster online dictionary)

NHD & Plagiarism

Rule 5 in the NHD Rule Book provides a definition of plagiarism and examples in context of a History Day project. A student having committed plagiarism in their project can be disqualified, so it important to understand how to avoid it. (p. 15)

- Turning in someone else’s project as your own
- Failing to put quotation marks around direct quotes and include both a source credit and a proper citation of the source
- Failing to provide proper citations for all quoted and paraphrased material
- Failing to provide the sources for audio, video, or images used in your project
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quote

Honesty & Integrity in the NHD Process

The History Day process incorporates how to successfully support a student's original ideas with those of historians. Many skills merge to help students develop integrity as academic writers. This guide provides instructional tips and activities for you to introduce and support your students with:

- Understanding what plagiarism looks like
- Notetaking
- Paraphrasing when gathering information
- Quoting a source
- Citing sources



Notetaking

Proper notetaking is the first line of defense against plagiarism. Whether students are reading a book written by a historian or a letter composed by Thomas Jefferson, their task to gather information is the same. To maintain their own voice throughout their project, students must learn how to do so from the beginning of the research process.

Students require a different skillset when reading nonfiction. Often, they are reading text written at a much higher level than their textbooks or teacher-selected materials. For this reason, students need to read in smaller chunks and give themselves time to understand and reflect on what they've read.

Younger students, or those new to research, may not know how to read a body of information and sift out the relevant information. The annual NHD theme graphic organizer offers research prompts to help students understand the types of questions they should be asking and searching for. Once they understand what to look for, they will need a way to record their findings.



Notetaking is a skill that needs to be taught for students to have worthwhile information to build their NHD project upon. You may have a personal preference but keep in mind that not all students craft understanding the same way. Introduce a few styles of notetaking to your students and let them choose a style that best fits how they learn.

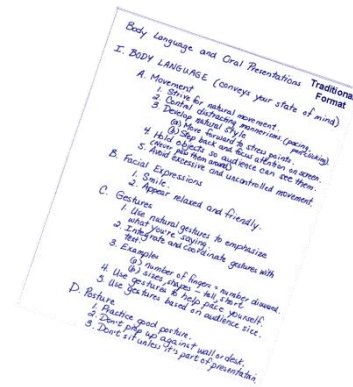
The first step in notetaking is to find a style that works best for students AND the information they're gathering. This guide reviews some of the more popular styles but is not meant to be an exclusive list.

Notetaking styles

- Outline
- Cornell notes
- Concept map
- Charts/Tables
- NoodleTools (or note cards)

Outline

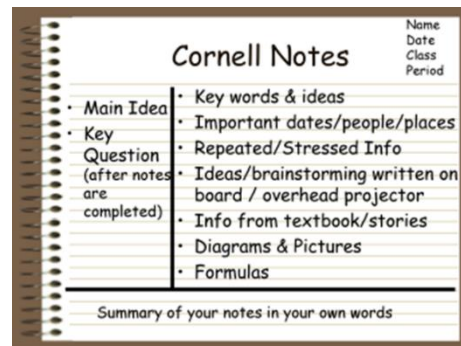
- Advantages
 - Well-organized
 - Easy to review
- Disadvantages
 - Must have knowledge of source's structure
 - Difficult to reorganize



★ Tip: If your students are new to outlining, you may wish to have them practice with a familiar body of text and a shorter new item to help them learn how to identify the structure of a chosen text.

Cornell Notes

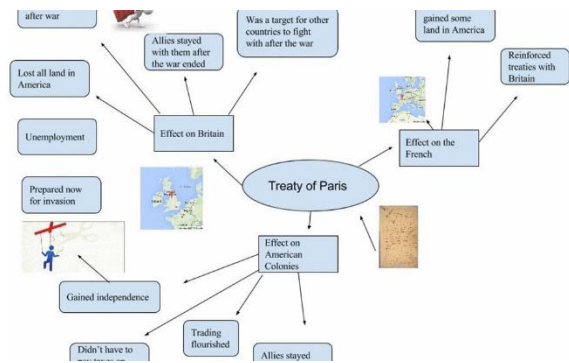
- Advantages
 - Organized
 - Allows space for concepts, notes and questions
 - Encourages synthesizing of new information
- Disadvantages
 - Can be difficult to review notes



★ Tip: Minnesota History Day has created a Cornell Notes [template](#) for History Day students.

Concept Map

- Advantages
 - Visual representation (hand-drawn or digital)
 - Information can be distinguished by color or shape
 - Connection between topics can be quickly indicated
- Disadvantages
 - Longer portions of text don't fit
 - Can get disorganized or messy



★ Tip: Concept maps can easily be created on paper or within a Word or Google Doc.

Charts & Tables

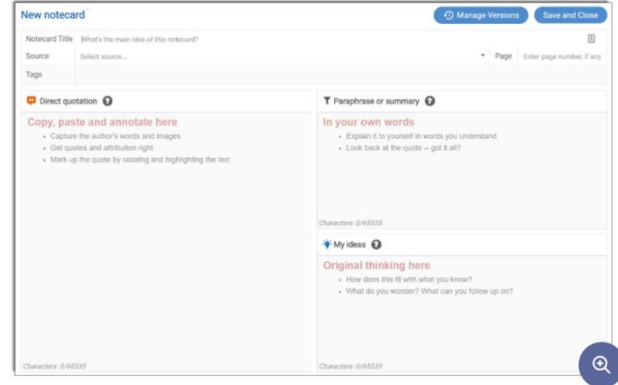
- Advantages
 - Helps extract main ideas
 - Good for comparisons
 - Less writing
 - Easy to review
- Disadvantages
 - Small spaces for writing
 - Must know content in advance to set up chart

DATES	WAR	COUNTRIES	LEADERS	SIGNIFICANCE
1939 - 1945	WORLD WAR II	GERMANY JAPAN GREAT BRITAIN RUSSIA USA FRANCE POLAND and more	ADOLF HITLER JOSEPH STALIN FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT WINSTON CHURCHILL	2nd LARGEST WAR BLAAT
1950 - 1953	KOREAN WAR	KOREA USA CHINA	HARRY TRUMAN KIM IL-SUNG	

★ Tip: Creating a table or chart in a Word, Excel or Google file can make it easy to adjust the writing space for each cell.

NoodleTools

- Advantages
 - Digital format makes for easier recording of online sources
 - Facilitates real time collaboration and feedback
- Disadvantages:
 - Notes are housed entirely online
 - Requires paid subscription (individual plans available if your school doesn't have one)



- ★ Tip: NHD has created a [video tutorial](#) for NoodleTools.
- ★ Tip: A no-tech option is to have students take notes on index cards or one of the History Day note templates. The [CHD Student Handbook](#) offers a Research Worksheet on page 45. The [NHD-Library of Congress Guide to Student Research and Historical Argumentation](#) offers a research notecard template on page 70.

Notetaking: What Students Should Record

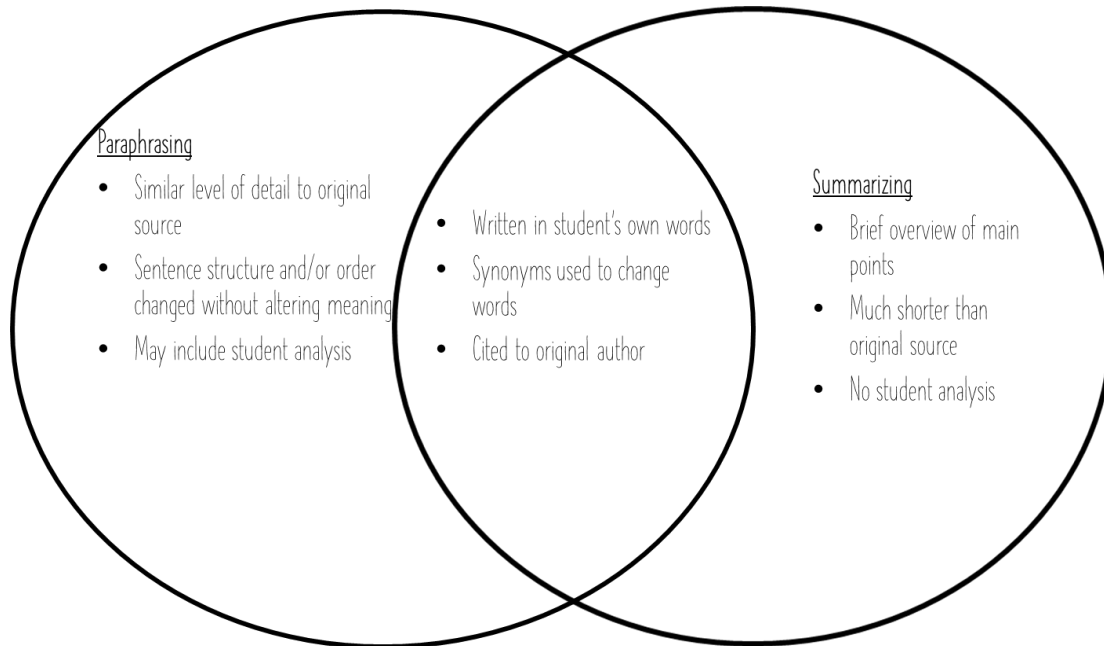
Regardless of the notes format, students should be recording the same information.

- Source information (everything needed to create bibliographic citation) + page number
- Topic
- Summary or Paraphrased passage
- Direct quote only if needed to capture author's exact words
- Record only ONE piece of information per bullet/card/box

It's important for students to have a purpose for their reading BEFORE they begin taking notes. Whether they are gathering general information about their topic or are diving in for more advanced research, make sure they have identified research questions. These research questions will provide focus for their reading and prevent them from recording unnecessary details.

Paraphrasing & Summarizing

Paraphrasing and summarizing are skills necessary for academic writing. As part of the NHD process students have to distinguish their ideas from those of other, beginning with what they write down in their notes. Paraphrasing is a complex process of changing both the structure and word choice of an author's passage, whereas summarizing is restatement of only the main ideas.



Paraphrasing

Students new to academic writing may require some practice with paraphrasing prior to conducting research for their NHD project. These resources offer short activities for students to try their hand at paraphrasing.

- [Paraphrasing Exercises](#)
- [Purdue Writing Lab Paraphrasing Exercises](#)

When students are ready to jump into their research and notetaking, offer these helpful tips.

1. Start by reading a brief passage to get a feel for the author's style and language. Then re-read the passage to check for understanding.
2. **Reword:** use synonyms for words or phrases whenever you can
3. **Rearrange:** It's OK to rearrange words and ideas in a sentence or paragraph if the meaning remains the same.
4. **Realize:** some words or phrases can't be changed (names, dates, etc.), but you can still use your voice to paraphrase differently.
5. **Recheck:** always check the original source to verify you have maintained the meaning.
(Lynette and Noack, *Minds in Bloom*)

When they are ready to write their final copy:

- Use notes to develop complete sentences
- Include the source credit
- Verify with the original text that they paraphrased correctly and used their own voice.

Paraphrase Practice Activity

We have included a brief practice activity for you to present to your students. Example #1 is one complex sentence. Example #2 is a full paragraph. Provide students with the handout so they can write their responses. The examples' original text and paraphrase are also included in the PowerPoint slides which you can project for class viewing and discussion.

Student Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Paraphrase Like a Pro

Paraphrasing is an important skill when using information you've gathered from research. Keep these tips in mind as you read and paraphrase the passages below:

- **Reword:** use synonyms for words or phrases whenever you can.
- **Rearrange:** It's OK to rearrange words and ideas in a sentence or paragraph if the meaning remains the same.
- **Realize:** some words or phrases can't be changed (names, dates, etc.), but you can still use your voice to paraphrase differently.
- **Recheck:** always check the original source to verify you have maintained the meaning.
- **Changing only one or two words is not an acceptable form of paraphrasing.**



Example #1 "November 23: Connecticut's First African-American Civil War Regiment," [Today in CT History](#)

ORIGINAL TEXT:

In late May of 1863, nearly six months after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declared that all black men and women in slave-holding Confederate states were free, the Federal government created the Bureau of Colored Troops, effectively authorizing the use of black troops throughout the Union Army.

MY PARAPHRASE: (Write your paraphrasing of this passage here.)

After viewing the Example's Paraphrase, explain how your example is similar or different. How can you change your response to be a stronger paraphrasing of the original text?

(Image credit: ConnecticutHistory.org)



Example #2: “December 1: PEZ Candy Opens Wide in Orange,” [Today in CT History](#)

ORIGINAL TEXT:

The history of PEZ began in 1927, when an enterprising Austrian named Edward Haas created a new line of small peppermint candies. (The name “PEZ” comes from a playful abbreviation of “pfefferminz,” the German word for “peppermints.”) In the 1940s, Haas started marketing PEZ as an aid to help adults stop smoking and invented a small, slim dispenser for his mints that resembled a cigarette lighter. By the time PEZ debuted in the United States in the 1950s, Haas’ company had expanded even further, offering candies in a variety of flavors and adding likenesses

of popular TV characters and film stars to dispensers to appeal to children.

MY PARAPHRASE: (Write your paraphrasing of this passage here.)

After viewing the Example’s Paraphrase, explain how your example is similar or different. How can you change your response to be a stronger paraphrasing of the original text?

(Image credit [SmithsonianMag.com](#))

Benefits of Using Quotes in Academic Writing

NHD acknowledges that students are not yet experts on their topic and must conduct secondary source research to understand the context and significance of the events surrounding their chosen topic. Students must carefully select the passages they choose to quote from primary and secondary sources to highlight and maintain their own voice throughout their project.

Quoting Secondary Sources

To prevent the overuse of secondary quotes, students should only use these sparingly and must incorporate their own analysis and interpretation. Students must cite information from the secondary sources, paraphrased and quoted, both within the project and in the Annotated Bibliography.

Direct quotes are useful when:

- Showing that an authority supports a student's argument.
- Presenting a position to comment on.
- Including especially powerful or historically significant language.
- Paraphrasing or summarizing a particular passage would alter the author's original meaning.
- Connecting with the reader's audience through emotion.

Quoting Primary Sources

When students are determining which primary sources to include in their project, they must analyze these as evidence of their historical argument. Any primary sources used must be properly credited within the project and cited in the Annotated Bibliography.

Formatting Quotations

Whether students are using MLA or Chicago/Turabian style for their writing, there are some useful tips for incorporating quotes into their project. If you/your school has a style preference, be sure to inform the students early so they can correctly document their source citations.

- Use a signal or transition phrase to alert the reader someone else's ideas are being shared.
- The length of the quote will determine if it's an imbedded quote or a block quote.
- Changes in a quote:
 - Ellipsis (...): use when you are omitting words within the quoted text.
 - Brackets ([]): use to add your own comments or correction.
- Punctuation is specific to the writing style (MLA or Chicago/Turabian).

Writing with Quotations Practice and Resources

Depending on your own comfort level with writing mechanics, you may find these resources helpful. We also encourage you to consult your English/Language Arts colleagues for current instructional tools your students may already be familiar with.

- [Integrating a Quotation into an Essay Guidelines Handout](#)
- [Integrating Quotes into a Sentence Presentation](#)
- [Quotation Worksheet](#)
- [The Quote Sandwich](#)

Citing Sources

Providing someone credit for the work they completed is considered a large part of academic integrity. We do this in sports when players are credited with scoring and assisting on the play that led to a score. But somehow in the digital world we now find ourselves in, people have strayed from always honoring this same courtesy to intellectual work.

Students rarely find it acceptable if someone were to copy from them for an assignment or exam, but that is essentially what happens when they fail to cite information they have gathered from their research.

Often this is an unintentional mistake, but sometimes students make a choice to use others' words without proper citation. The best defense is a good offense!

- The most important thing to remember is that if it wasn't the student's idea, **THEY MUST CITE IT!**
 - Two or more of the author's words verbatim
 - Introduction of facts
 - Summaries or paraphrases of information
- Check style formatting for in-text citations, footnotes, end notes, and bibliography
- History Day Rules require use of MLA or Chicago styles
 - Be consistent!

Source Credit vs. Citation

NHD requires that students completing EXHIBITS and WEBSITES must credit all quotes and visual sources (e.g., photographs, paintings, charts, graphs) within the project and cite in the annotated bibliography. DOCUMENTARY students are required to provide brief source credits for visuals at the end of their documentary and cite in the annotated bibliography. PAPER entries must follow the appropriate style format for in-text citations and the annotated bibliography.

Image Example

Source Credit (used within an exhibit or website):

Woodcut, from Historical Scenes in the United States by John Warner Barber. CT Imprints 1812 B234h — Connecticut Historical Society

Caption (optional use with image):

The legend of Captain Joseph Wadsworth's bravery to hide the Connecticut Charter in 1687 communicated the colonists' growing frustration with the British crown and was an early cry for independence.

Bibliographic Citation:

MLA FORMAT: Barber, John Warner. "Woodcut, from Historical Scenes in the United States."

ConnecticutHistory.org, 31 Oct. 2020, <https://connecticuthistory.org/hiding-the-charter-images-of-joseph-wadsworths-legendary-action/>. Accessed 21 Dec. 2021.



Use these tools to assist your students with source credits and citations:

[MN History Day Credit vs. Citation Handout](#)

[MN History Day: Credits, Captions and Citations Video](#)

MLA/Chicago Format Resources and Practice

- [Easy Bib](#)
- [OWL: The Purdue Writing Lab](#)
- [MLA Book Citation: MLA Mixed-Up Citation Exercise](#)
- [Chicago Style Practice](#)

NHD Resources for Citing and Annotated Bibliography

The NHD [Annotated Bibliography](#) page has lots of resources and examples for citations, annotations, quoting, and paraphrasing.

Student Voice

NHD is embracing the notion of Student Voice to signify the importance it has in a student's development as an independent thinker and writer. This development is a progression that will grow stronger as a student matures. The NHD evaluation form criteria for Student Voice distinguish students on the clarity and balance of their own words/ideas and their supporting evidence.

You can support your students by encouraging them to:

- Consult multiple sources and perspectives to prevent relying on one source
- When taking notes, distinguish their reflections or conclusions from the source's information
- Balance their word choice and academic level within their argument
- Limit use of secondary quotes



Tip: You can have your students watch this quick video for a better description of Student Voice.

[NHD Quick Tip Video: What Is Student Voice?](#)

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