CREATING A TIMELINE

It is important for students to understand the dates and deadlines associated with a NHD project. It is easy for a student to become overwhelmed if they have not prepared a time management schedule at the onset of their project. This timeline should be reflective of important dates for their project, such as competition dates and registration deadlines, but it should also include self-imposed deadlines to help them stay on track with their research and project creation.

Work backwards. Start with dates of your local or regional NHD competition. Include registration dates, and pre-submission dates for papers and websites. Then divide the timetable into manageable pieces: 2-4 weeks for research; 1-2 weeks for project creation; 1-2 weeks for finishing, editing, and final touches such as writing the process paper and bibliography. This timeline may vary depending on the category of the entry. For instance, papers and websites must be submitted earlier than "day of competition" entries in the documentary, performance and exhibit categories. Obviously, the earlier a project is started, the more time that can be allotted for each timeline task.

Be sure one of the first items on the timeline is a read of the rulebook. It can be found at the NHD website, www.nhd.org. Just search rulebook.

Finally, be cautious of the "last minute" push. This time is better reserved for practice and preparation for the judges' interview.

SAMPLE TIMELINE

Nov. 1st: Choose 3 possible topics for preliminary research; group decision deadline.

(Have students check-in with their 3 top ideas; give feedback. Students also must have decided whether to work alone or in a group.)

Nov. 15th: Choose topic and working title.

(At this check-in, students will decide on a topic and create a working title. Help students begin to work on their thesis statement, understanding it will probably change.)

Nov. 30th: Conference with teacher about primary/ secondary sources. Adjust sources if necessary.

(At this check-in, student and teacher will evaluate students' progress with sources and research. This can be a note check or journal check as well.)

Dec. 1-Jan. 1st: Research window.

(Teacher should continue to check notes, journals, etc. and guide with source ideas)

Jan. 5th: Notecards due

(Students should complete the majority of their research by this deadline. They may find a need to return to research later to find final details or evidence.)

Jan. 15th: Outline or storyboard due/Thesis statement due

(After instruction of thesis statements, students should complete their thesis statement. At this check, students should also have their project organized.)

Jan. 15-Feb. 1st: Project production

(During this timeframe, the teacher should check in with each project to gauge progress. If your students are keeping NHD journals, these should be checked.)

Feb. 15th: Give paper/script to an editor for feedback

(This could be a peer editor or an adult editor.)

Feb. 20th: Presentation day—papers and websites

(Because papers and websites must be pre-submitted, they must be completed earlier than other projects. Take this into consideration when planning.)

Feb. 25th: Annotated Bibliography/process paper check

(The teacher should guide students in presenting footnotes, bibliography and process paper in the correct manner.)

March 1st: Entry deadline

(Teacher should double check to be sure that registration is complete ahead of time. Do not wait until the last minute! Also ensure that students papers and website URLs have been submitted. Double-check website URL's for accuracy prior to submission.)

March 1—9th: Complete exhibits, performance, and documentaries.

(Check-in with students to ensure they are completing on time. Be sure to check for historical accuracy, and spelling/grammar errors.)

March 9th: Presentation day—exhibits, performances and documentaries.

(This could be in-class, or as a school contest)

March 17th: Regional Competition

(Ensure you have ample supervision for all of your students attending the competition. See your regional competition schedule for details.)

March 19th: Evaluations

(This gives the teacher an opportunity to evaluation the students learning, and gives students an opportunity to do a self-evaluation.)