

## How Buffalo Middle Graded History Day

**A couple of things to note:** In my gradebook, homework is only worth 10%. It is more of a communication tool/progress check to students and parents. Projects are 20% and assessments are 70%. I put the History Day final project as an assessment, it is a significantly larger assignment than most of our in class projects.

Our history day team also values **Revisions!** So often students turn something in, and then they never look at the assignment again. History Day is not that way. Revisions are constant, whether it be their bibliography, process paper, thesis statement, project, etc. This is shown in the way we graded check-ins as well as the project.

**Progress for check-ins** could look like having made revisions from a previous draft, adding to the part of the project, etc. If a student has not made any progress the assignment is marked as missing until they do show progress (re-submit). Knowing how we value revisions, our check-ins that we do throughout the project are worth 5 points in the homework category. They get points even if they are submitted late, but it is noted. *This is a progress check, we do not expect the projects to be perfect.*

**Competing or Not Competing?** Some students think from the beginning that they do not want to compete. This is a choice we have given kids (although we do encourage competition). If they are competing our check-ins include a bit more than those who are not competing. An example of this is the number of annotations. Our English team wants all kids to learn about annotations, but they do not need to annotate all of their sources if they are not competing. So we have them do only 5 annotations. ***It is good to know that more often than not, students who start off saying no to competing, end up changing their mind!***

**Which class scores what?** We have English and social studies both working on History Day in our school. For check-ins, the score is entered in the course that introduced and assigned the check in. For example, English may be responsible for more of the written check-ins, like drafts of the Process Paper, or Bibliography. Social Studies may be responsible for notes, project steps, etc. It changes each year for us.

To help make the expectations clear for each check in we use a *check-list* for different parts of the project. Those sample checklists are in the Master Teacher Network here. This helps the students do a self check of what is expected. Our goal is that they know they are ready for the check-in prior to turning it in.

**Final Project Grading:** We assess the projects using a rubric. This is not updated because we plan to revise it using the new Judge forms to match the state one more. The score goes into the gradebook in Social Studies and also English. The students see the cross-curricular connection and importance this way. It could be done in just one class too.

**After Grading Project:** We give feedback on all projects. Not just those that are going to be moving onto the regional event. We want all students to be able to revise their projects if they want to. Yes, regionals have the motivation of the competition, but to show the importance of revisions and that we can always learn more or improve, all students have a chance to improve their project and therefore their grade!