

# LESSON: RESEARCH – NOTE TAKING

**Essential Questions:** 1. How do you take notes? 2. How do you keep track of sources for a bibliography?

**Objective:** At the end of this lesson students will be able to understand the purpose of note-taking and keeping track of bibliographic information.

**Grade Level:** 6 – 12

**Time Needed:** 50 minutes

**Materials:** Worksheet: Notes (or other handouts for note taking methods), pen, pencil, books for research or computers for research

## Procedure

**Before Class:** Work with the ELA teacher or other social studies teachers to be on the same page of note-taking practices. If Cornell or another note-taking device is used, use this lesson to review note-taking with the resources they may already have. Visit <https://lsc.cornell.edu/how-to-study/taking-notes/cornell-note-taking-system/>

1. To begin the discussion, ask students: *Why do we need to take notes?*
  - **Absorb Information:** Studies have shown that hearing information, writing it down, and then rereading helps the brain to process the information.
  - **Review:** A good way to check and recall facts.
  - **Memory:** When compiling large amounts of information, sometimes we need a little help remembering where things came from. Checking facts and keeping track of quotes for bibliographies is easier when notes are taken and are uniform. When trying to remember where you read that one point, now you can find it because of your notes.
2. Continue discussion by asking: *How do we take notes?*
  - What clues are you looking for? What do you want to remember?
  - Write down the information that is important to answer your research questions.
  - Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
  - What do you know about the author?
  - What does this tell you about your main topic?
3. Walk through the note sheet you plan to use and what the expectations are. Instruct students to include all of the bibliographic information on the sheet too, so it is easier to write the bibliography later on.
4. Pick a paragraph from the introduction lesson or from a source used for the same lesson.
5. Walk through the **Worksheet: Note Sheet** using the paragraph as a model to take notes. Make sure to emphasize the bibliographic information. *Where do you find the information? How does knowing the author and the date something was published help us to understand the source? What is a bibliography? What is the purpose of a bibliography? To make students do more work? Like note-taking, bibliographies are a learning tool.*
  - Help the reader check the information you present. It helps the reader trust that you know what you are talking about.
  - Help the reader go to the source you found to use in their own work. Giving the date of publication, journal location, and page information are great clues to other researchers.

6. Using the website from the “Introduction to History Day” lesson <https://00-47447034.nhdwebcentral.org/home>, demonstrates the importance of looking at the bibliography. Ask students to:
  - Skim the bibliography.
  - As a group, pick a website from the bibliography and check the information.
  - Go to the website and find where the information was taken. Showing the process of the bibliography helps verify the information presented is accurate.
  
7. Explain to students how this exercise will relate to their own History Day process. *Throughout this process you are also keeping track of where you found the information to present your own argument. In the end, you will create a bibliography and these notes are intended to help you keep track of the information needed for that such as author, title, and publication date. Continue to fill out sheets, have three to five completed.*

### Lesson Extension/Alternative

**Modified Notes Sheet:** For different learners and students at different learning stages, you can modify the note sheet to reflect exactly what they need. Change the questions and add or subtract questions when appropriate.

**Additional Guidance for Citations:** For more on bibliography, create another lesson. Walk through the different parts needed for a proper citation, how to read a citation and where to find the information. Using a book, journal article, newspaper, letter, diary entry, and other sources, practice writing citations and keeping track of the information.

**Practice Note Taking:** Use History Day theme sheet for the note taking exercise. Students have already read this and it reinforces the theme again.

**Online Citation Generators:** History Day students are permitted to use online citation generators to help with their annotated bibliographies, such as EasyBib or other online tools like BibMe or NoodleTools. Have each student have a source (website, book, newspaper, journal or database) and complete a class exercise in the computer lab where each student completes an entry for their bibliography. Walk them through the web steps as a class.