

WRITING MEANGINGFUL COMMENTS

YOUR COMMENTS MATTER

The key to History Day judging is providing students with positive, meaningful, evaluations of their work. Because our contests are virtual this year, your written comments are the **ONLY** feedback students will receive at the contest after working on their projects for months. They will not have an opportunity to engage directly with you, their peers, or the public at a physical contest.

EQUITY

You may judge students from different demographics or learning backgrounds than you are accustomed to. Do not assume that a problem indicates a lack of effort. NHD is a wonderful learning tool for learning at every level. Every student grows and build from where they started. Your comments should show respect for each students' individual learning.

COMMENT STARTERS

Positives

- You show good understanding of X.
- I like the way you handled Y.
- Strong analysis of Z.
- Perceptive use of theme.
- Well-written.
- Excellent creativity/technology.
- Your passion/hard work really stand out!

Criticisms

- I wanted to hear more about...
- Did you consider...
- You may want to...

STUCK?

TRY WRITING ABOUT...

- Connection to the theme
- Thesis
- Analysis
- Research: variety of sources, use of primary sources, suggest scholarly sources, etc.
- Historical context: what came before, during, and after that is related to this topic?
- Historical significance: what were the impacts or outcomes in history because of this topic?
- Clarity: organization, logic, use of multimedia, etc.



WHY CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS ARE HELPFUL FOR STUDENTS

Students who are advancing to the next level of competition need to know how to improve their project.

Students who are **NOT** advancing want to understand why their project was not selected.

THINGS TO AVOID

- Being nitpicky about bibliography formatting, grammar, etc.
- Criticizing without offering ideas for improvement.
- Lack of respect for the students' choices.
- Failing to acknowledge individual learning.
- Intolerance of political, cultural, or religious differences.

Comment Sandwich



- ← Positive
- ← Criticism
- ← Positive