

# 5-12 Standards of Historical Thinking

Adapted from:  
The National Center for History in the Schools National Standards

Check the following that apply	Standards
	<p><b>(I) Chronological Thinking</b> Chronological thinking is at the heart of historical reasoning. Without a strong sense of chronology--of when events occurred and in what temporal order--it is impossible for students to examine relationships among those events or to explain historical causality. Chronology provides the mental scaffolding for organizing historical thought.</p>
	<p><b>(II) Historical Comprehension</b> One of the defining features of historical narratives is their believable recounting of human events. Beyond that, historical narratives also have the power to disclose the intentions of the people involved, the difficulties they encountered, and the complex world in which such historical figures actually lived.</p>
	<p><b>(III) Historical Analysis and Interpretation</b> Students need to realize that historians may differ on the facts they incorporate in the development of their narratives and disagree as well on how those facts are to be interpreted. To engage in historical analysis and interpretation students must draw upon their skills of historical comprehension. Analysis builds upon the skills of comprehension; it obliges the student to assess the evidence on which the historian has drawn and determine the soundness of interpretations created</p>
	<p><b>(IV) Historical Research Capabilities</b> Perhaps no aspect of historical thinking is as exciting to students or as productive of their growth in historical thinking as “doing history.”</p> <p>Historical inquiry proceeds with the formulation of a problem or set of questions worth pursuing. In the most direct approach, students might be encouraged to analyze a document, record, or site itself. Who produced it, when, how, and why? What is the evidence of its authenticity, authority, and credibility? What does it tell them of the point of view, background, and interests of its author or creator? What else must they discover in order to construct a useful story, explanation, or narrative of the event of which this document or artifact is a part? What interpretation can they derive from their data, and what argument can they support in the historical narrative they create from the data?</p>
	<p><b>(V) Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making</b> Issue-centered analysis and decision-making activities place students squarely at the center of historical dilemmas and problems faced at critical moments in the past and the near present. Entering into such moments, confronting the issues or problems of the time, analyzing the alternatives available to those on the scene, evaluating the consequences that might have followed those options for action that were not chosen, and comparing with the consequences of those that were adopted, are activities that foster students’ deep, personal involvement in these events.</p>