

## Project Checklist

1. What is my thesis? Is it clearly stated? Does it unify my project?
2. Have I clearly shown how my project relates to the theme?
3. Do I have evidence for my argument? Do I quote, summarize, and paraphrase both primary and secondary sources that support my thesis?
4. Have I placed my topic in historical context?
5. Have I demonstrated the significance of my topic in history?
6. Have I analyzed and interpreted the evidence instead of being content merely to report it?
7. Do I take contrary evidence into account? Have I been fair in my presentation of different points of view? Does my project show that my research and analysis are balanced?
8. Is my project organized effectively? Are the sections put together clearly enough to allow readers to move easily from one to the next without losing track of my argument? Or is there a digression, a jump from one idea to another without adequate preparation?
9. Is my presentation muddled? Is my presentation clear enough to be understood at the first impression?
10. What is the tone of my project? Do I sound emotional or preachy? Do I sound belligerent? Do I sound more certain than I really am?
11. Can my project stand alone for the generally educated audience?
12. Is my presentation economical? Can I eliminate words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs? Is every word necessary if I am to express the meaning I want? Can I make it more direct? Can I cut out irrelevant information?
13. Can I make my presentation more vivid by using the active rather than the passive voice?
14. Do I repeat some words or phrases too often? Can I find other words and phrases to give variety?
15. Have I used clichés, those tired expressions used so often that they have lost all power to be vivid? Have I talked about “the cold, hard facts” or a “bolt from the blue” or the “bottom line” or the “stark reality”? If so—rewrite!
16. Does my project comply with all rules for my category?
  - a. Word, time and size limits
  - b. Process paper with title page obviously displayed, correctly formatted?
  - c. Annotated bibliography divided into primary and secondary sources?
  - d. Turabian or MLA citation style used correctly and consistently?

Adapted from: *A Short Guide to Writing About History*  
Richard Marius (New York: Longman, 1999).