Key Evaluation Findings

NATIONAL History DAY

TEACHES.

Prepares.

Inspires.

NHD NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

National History Day Works

National History Day is a year-long academic program focused on historical research, interpretation and creative expression for 6th- to 12th-grade students. By participating in NHD, students become writers, filmmakers, Web designers, playwrights and artists as they create unique contemporary expressions of history. The experience culminates in a series of contests at the local and state levels and an annual national competition in the nation's capital in June.

National History Day provides everything teachers need to bring students on an unforgettable learning adventure that integrates with—and enhances—standards-based curriculum. With sample topics, a guide to conducting historical research in the classroom, lesson plans and more, the flexible NHD program teaches, prepares and inspires.

National History Day not only transports classrooms back in time during the school year, it transforms young minds forever.

About the Research

These key findings come from the study conducted by research firm Rockman, et al, which looked at performance assessments, surveys and standardized test scores to evaluate students' research and writing skills, ability to interpret historical information, academic performance and interest in past and current events. They then compared their evaluations of students who participated in National History Day (NHD) to their peers who did not participate in the program. The study, conducted at four sites around the country, found that on nearly every measure, **NHD students' scores or ratings were higher than their peers who did not participate in the program.**

The full report can be viewed online at www.nhd.org/NHDWorks.

NATIONAL
History
DAY

"Since incorporating National History Day into my curriculum, I cannot imagine teaching history without it! I want all my students to have the rich experience provided by the

close examination of primary sources,

the depth of knowledge gained by

meticulous research

and the satisfaction of the

pride that ensues when a complex and demanding project is completed."

Patricia Behner
North Pole High School, Alaska

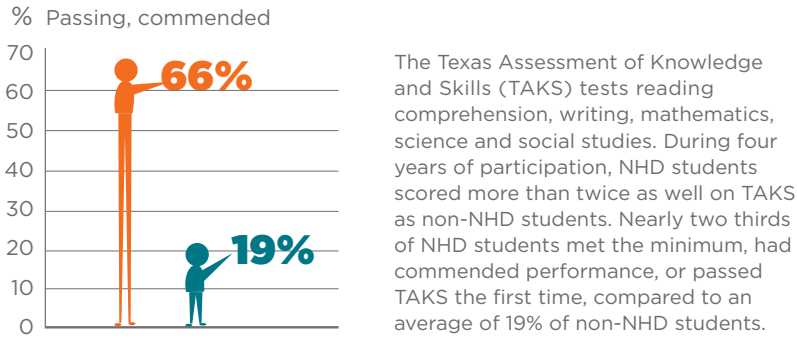
...teaches

critical thinking, writing, and research skills and boosts performance across all subjects.

- **NHD students outperform their non-NHD peers on state standardized tests in multiple subjects, including reading, science and math, as well as social studies.**
- **NHD students are better writers, who write with a purpose and real voice, and marshal solid evidence to support their point of view.**
- **NHD has a positive impact among students whose interest in academic subjects may wane in high school.**

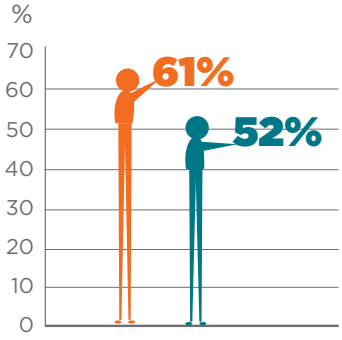
  Among Black and Hispanic students, NHD students outperform non-NHD students, posting higher performance assessment scores and levels of interest and skills. Compared to non-NHD boys and to all girls, boys participating in NHD reported significantly higher levels of interest in history, civic engagement, and confidence in research skills, on both pre- and post-surveys.

TAKS Test Performance—Texas



The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests reading comprehension, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. During four years of participation, NHD students scored more than twice as well on TAKS as non-NHD students. Nearly two thirds of NHD students met the minimum, had commended performance, or passed TAKS the first time, compared to an average of 19% of non-NHD students.

Passing Rates for English I—South Carolina



In the South Carolina school where students continued NHD participation from 8th grade to 9th grade and beyond, NHD high school students led their school district with a 61% passing rate in English 1—9% above a comparison site.

"I was drawn to National History Day because it is a program based on active learning.

Students engage, question and create.

Students DO what historians do when researching. How can we ask for more?"

James M. DeBroux
Random Lake High School, Wisconsin

...prepares

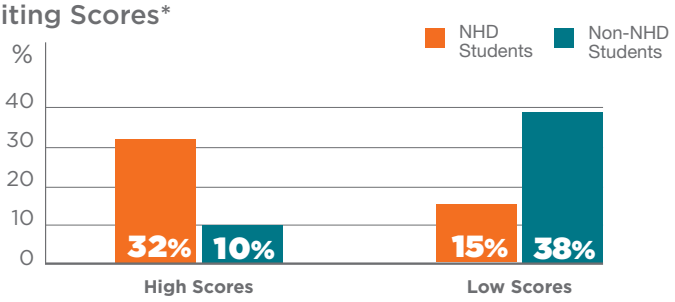
students for college, career and citizenship.

> **NHD students learn 21st century college- and career-ready skills. They learn to collaborate with team members, talk to experts, manage their time and persevere.**

> **NHD students are critical thinkers who can digest, analyze and synthesize information.**

Performance assessments show that NHD students were 18% better overall than their peers at interpreting historical information — an average of 79% correct vs. 61% correct.

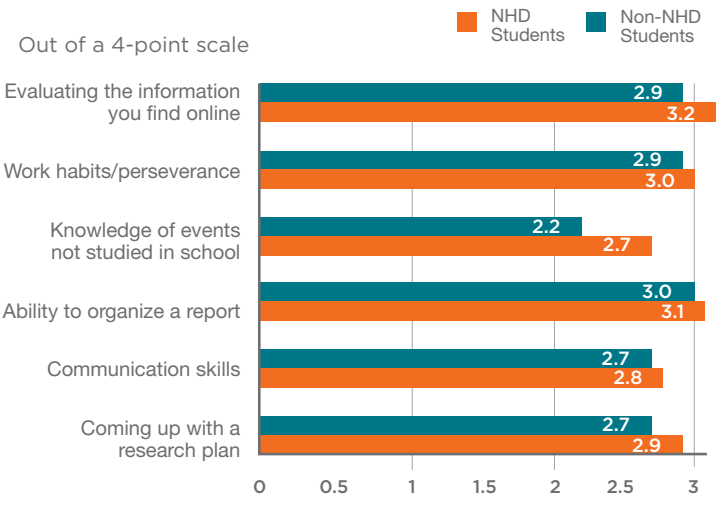
Writing Scores*



Overall, NHD students outscored comparison-group students on both pre- and post-writing assessments, receiving more exemplary scores (5s or 6s) on a 6-point scale, and fewer low scores (1s or 2s).

*Post-writing scores only are shown in this graph.

Confidence Ratings on College- and Career-Ready Skills



NHD students consistently express more confidence in their college- and career-ready skills than students who do not participate in NHD.

"I have discovered that National History Day has a life of its own. Research projects encourage young scholars to

go outside the walls of their classroom and beyond the covers of their textbooks

and discover their community."

Huy Nguyen
Sunrise Park Middle School, Minnesota

...inspires

students to do more than they ever thought they could.

> NHD opens new vistas, even for special education students like one in Florida who'd been put into a program for kids "who could not learn." Once placed in NHD—the only "regular" class he attended—he produced a documentary that made it to the state finals. The next year, he took two "regular" classes and produced another documentary for NHD that made it to nationals. By the end of high school, he was enrolled in all honors classes.

> During her first year with NHD, a Washington state teacher had 11 students whom she says had "fallen through a lot of cracks and some discovered they liked it there." None of them had ever participated in any kind of competition—not even sports. Once in NHD, they all competed. Four placed locally and went on to compete at the state level. Thanks to the NHD experience, seven graduated from high school, three earned a GED, one graduated as a sixth-year senior, and a couple even went on to college. "Competing in National History Day pushed those 11 students beyond the mental and academic limits they had set for themselves," the teacher recounted. "They developed confidence, pride and skills that are helping them be successful in their lives."

> Participating in a mandatory NHD program sparked a competitive drive in one student who, until then, had spent most of his school life only dimly motivated—unless it involved entertaining his classmates. The competitive aspect of the work in NHD and the high standards his teacher conveyed inspired him to spend long hours in the library and to ask about learning photography. In preparation for History Day, he produced a slide presentation, something he was proud of, win or lose, for he'd learned that hard work and an academic goal were stimulating, and that serious intellectual challenges were opening his mind to the realization that there are rewards for academic as well as social success. From that point on, his school work took on new meaning.

"History Day is the ultimate in integrated studies for content and skill development. The students in my class develop their reading skills through their research...It helps

broaden their horizons.

It gives them an opportunity to question, explore and to think critically."

Vicki Chase
Mountian View Middle School, Idaho

"History Day has been the vehicle that creates an understanding and appreciation of history while

developing the necessary 21st-century tools, skills and aptitudes

for my diverse student population. Because of History Day, my students understand how history and knowledge are created, **excel in college,** and are confident students who know how to learn."

Martin Marrin
DeLaSalle High School, Minnesota

National History Day is endorsed by

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