**Historical Habits of Mind**

* **Understand** the significance of the past to their own lives, both private and public, and to their society.
* **Distinguish** between the important and the inconsequential, to develop the “discriminating memory” needed for a discerning judgment in public and personal life.
* **Perceive** past events and issues as people experienced them at the time, to develop historical empathy as opposed to present-mindedness.
* **Acquire** at the same time a comprehension of diverse cultures and shared humanity.
* **Understand** how things happen and how things change, how human intentions matter, but also how their consequences are shaped by the means of carrying them out, in a tangle of purpose and process.
* **Comprehend** the interplay of change and continuity, and avoid assuming that either is somehow more natural, or more to be expected, than the other.
* **Prepare** to live with uncertainties and exasperating, even perilous, unfinished business, realizing that not all problems have solutions.
* **Grasp** the complexity of historical causation, respect particularity, and avoid excessively abstract generalizations.
* **Appreciate** the often tentative nature of judgments about the past, and thereby avoid the temptation to seize upon particular “lessons” of history as a cure for present ills.
* **Recognize** the importance of individuals who have made a difference in history, and the significance of personal character for both good and ill.
* **Appreciate** the force of the non-rational, the irrational, and the accidental, in history and human affairs.
* **Understand** the relationship between geography and history as a matrix of time and place, and as a context for events.
* **Read** widely and critically in order to recognize the difference between fact and conjecture, between evidence and assertion, and thereby frame useful questions

*National Council for History Education (1995)*