

Deepen Learning Through Timeline Assignments

Using a [free timeline software](#), such as [Timeline JS](#), instructors can create timeline-based assignments designed to meet a variety of learning objectives including the analysis or comparison of different time periods, developing historical contexts, illustrating complex processes, etc. (Picard & Bruff, 2016). As an individual or group assignment, students can search for, upload, or link to appropriate multimedia resources including videos, images, graphics, research articles, blogs, etc. to demonstrate understanding.

Interactive timeline assignments can be used for a variety of assignments and assessments in any discipline. For example:

Type of Activity	Example
Individual or group research project	<i>In a physics course, have students create an interactive timeline of a fundamental physics discovery of the early 20th century (1900-1950) that leads to modern day breakthroughs, discoveries, or inventions.</i>
Summarizing course content as a study tool for final exam	<i>In a public policy course, to help students prepare for a final exam, have students create an interactive timeline of US immigration policy in the 20th century with links to data sources that provide an analysis of public sentiment and cultural context at each relevant point in the timeline.</i>
Interactive class activity to deepen understanding of course concepts	<i>In a literature course, have students create an interactive timeline about the book <i>Cutting for Stone</i> by Abraham Vergheses, plotting the socio-political events that take place in the book.</i>

Grading Interactive Timeline Assignments

The grading schema you choose will depend on the type of assignment and the weight that it carries.

For low-weight assignments, such as summarizing course content to use as a study guide, specify the minimum number of timeline entries each student is expected to contribute. Also, provide a list of the components they should include (e.g., title, description, link, citation, etc.).

For assignments with a heavier weight, such as projects, provide a detailed rubric that outlines your expectations.

Example Interactive Timeline Assignment Rubric

Dimension	Exceeds	Meets	Approaches
Number of entries on timeline	Includes at least 15 entries on timeline	Includes 10-14 entries on timeline	Includes fewer than 10 entries on timeline
Research-based description and/or analysis of timeline entry	All entries include 50-word minimum description and/or analysis with properly cited (APA) resources.	Eight or more entries include 50-word minimum description and/or analysis with properly cited (APA) resources.	Fewer than eight entries include 50-word minimum description and/or analysis with properly cited (APA) resources.
Variety of multimedia resources	Timeline entries include all of the following: video clips, digital images, and descriptive graphics.	Timeline entries include two of the following: video clips, digital images, and descriptive graphics.	Timeline entries include one of the following: video clips, digital images, and descriptive graphics.