Documentation template for physical entries into A&S Competitions

*Picture of the finished item, in color, if possible*

**Project title**

**Your SCA name**

**Your modern name**

**Your contact information (email/phone/website)***(Double check that name/contact information is allowed by competition rules!)*

**Introduction to <Item>**

Give a short background explaining

* what the item is
* where and when the item was used
* who would have used the item
* why you were interested in the item (optional)

**<Items> during <period you are focusing on>**

Give detailed information about period examples of the item you are making. For example:

* Are there extant examples?
* Are there contemporary pictures?
* Are there contemporary descriptions in letters, wills, cookbooks, laws, etc.?
* What materials were used in the items?
* How do you know those materials were used?
* What techniques were used in making the item?
* How do you know those techniques were used?

*Photo op! Provide photos of the extant examples or contemporary pictures!*

Remember to cite the sources that you use, so judges and other people know where you got your information! There are many different styles, but the Chicago style has a free, easy-to-understand guide available online. Citing your sources using the author-date format is super easy – all you do is, after writing something where the information came from a book or journal article, you put in parentheses: the author’s last name, the year it was published, then a comma, and lastly, the pages where the information can be found.

For example:

There are thirty-eight manuscripts which preserve the Pictish origin legend. (Calise 2002, 3)

More on the Chicago style: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html>

If this stresses you out, worry less about having the perfect form and just make sure that you include enough information that whoever is reading your documentation can find your sources!

**Creating my <Item>**

Give detailed information about how YOU made your item. For example:

* What materials did you use?
* Where did you get the materials?
* What tools did you use?
* Did you make any of your tools or materials?
* What techniques did you use?
* How did you learn those techniques?

*Photo op! Provide photos of your materials, tools, and the project in process!*

**My Decision Process**

Provide a clear description of WHY you made specific choices.

**Making Good Justifications**

When you are providing your decision process, remember that you want to focus on REASONS, not EXCUSES.

For example: Silk is expensive, not everyone can afford it, and it may not be available near you, but you still want to make a nice dress. How do you justify not using silk?

Excuse: *“I cannot afford silk to make this dress, so I made it out of tissue paper.”*

While it may be true that tissue paper is less expensive than silk, but the cost alone does not excuse that substitution. Tissue paper is nothing like silk. (Obviously, this is a silly example to make a point. ☺)

Reason: *“I cannot afford silk to make this dress, so I used a rayon fabric that had a similar hand and drape to the type of silk found in the period examples A and B. It was available in a color similar to period example C.”*

This is much better, because it is not simply based on cost or availability, but focuses on WHY the rayon is a good substitute for the silk and provides examples of how it is similar to your period examples.

* Why did you choose specific colors?
* Why did you choose specific materials?
* Why did you use specific tools?

If any of these colors, materials, or tools were different from what they used in the period you are focusing on, provide a solid reason for why the substitution you made was appropriate.

**Conclusion**

This is your opportunity to show the judges what you have learned and highlight your challenges and successes. Consider statements like:

* In doing this project, I learned…
* I should have done X differently because…
* Next time, I would like to…
* I am very happy with…
* The most interesting part of this project was…

*Photo op! Provide additional photos of your project, maybe one of it in use!*

*If you are posting the documentation on a website, you can consider making it multi-media – include videos, links to sources and suppliers, and even post your own handouts if you develop them for teaching classes!*

**Bibliography**

Last but not least is the bibliography! It is important that you be able to show WHERE you got your information. Bibliographies don’t have to be hard! You can use on online tool to put them together (like Son of Citation Machine <http://www.citationmachine.net/>) or you can follow the templates below for the most common source types in the Chicago style:

**Book**

One author:

AuthorLastName, AuthorFirstName. PublicationYear. *Title*. CityWherePublished: Publisher.

Two or more authors:

FirstAuthorLastName, FirstAuthorFirstName, and SecondAuthorFirstName SecondAuthorLastName. PublicationYear. *Title*. CityWherePublished: Publisher.

Four or more authors:

Include ALL their names in the bibliography, but you only need to use the (FirstAuthorLastName, *et al.*) in the text when you put your citation in parentheses.

**Journal Article**

AuthorLastName, AuthorFirstName. PublicationYear. “ArticleTitle.” *JournalTitle* JournalVolume:PagesOfTheWholeArticle.

**Website**

AuthorLastName, AuthorFirstName. PublicationYear. “WebpageName.” Accessed DateYouReadTheSite. WebsiteAddress,

“Accessed” should actually appear in your citation, like so:

Kveberg, Jean. 2015. “Birka Posaments, Grave by Grave” Accessed 4/20/16. www.eithni.com/posaments