

# Process Paper

We decided to research Marie Curie because we love science and history and the subject of Marie Curie relates to both of these topics. We encountered a book titled “100 Letters that Changed the World” and our interest was piqued by a letter from Pierre to Marie Curie. The letter inspired us to investigate the impact Marie Curie and her discoveries had on physics and the world as we know it. We also noticed the contrast between how current day films portray her. We saw National History Day as a wonderful opportunity to indulge this curiosity and create a project that could bring to light the true story of the famous, female scientist.

The bias that exists in secondary sources miscommunicates historical facts. Marie Curie didn't want to be seen as a stereotypical woman, as only a wife and mother. She wanted people to see her as a scientist, equal to her male counterparts. We used the life of Marie Curie to prove the bias in secondary sources such as newspapers, biographies, and films. We contrasted this with the facts presented by the primary sources such as letters, photographs, videos, her lab notebook and thesis. We demonstrated that communication is key to understanding the history of Marie Curie's life and her substantial impact on history. The manner in which the secondary sources present the facts to the community, greatly impact the way those facts are interpreted.

To research this topic we examined internet sources, reviewed all available biographies, studied the letters sent, and watched the films created by outside influences. We also read period newspapers, interviewed history and communications professionals, and scrutinized all the details in photographs of the Curies. We then sought to understand the historical context in Europe and America, and the way women were viewed in that era, and the influence that had on the bias in secondary sources. To create our project, we organized our ideas in a table and prioritized the important information. We then transformed these thoughts into paragraphs creating an essay we could use as groundwork for our website. We collated numerous primary and secondary sources to support our claims. We divided the sources into categories according to the source type: newspapers, photographs/videos, films, biographies, letters, and notebooks. We then sorted our ideas from the essay into each category depending on where it fit best. Finally, we expanded these ideas forming strong paragraphs that reinforced the primary and secondary sources on each page.

Interpreting past events within their historical context and being aware of the various biases within secondary sources is crucial to achieving clear insight into the events of the past to prevent the repetition of mistakes and to better inform future decisions as historians. The short and long term impact of Marie Curie's work and life and the communications that made them possible, resulted in significant contributions to the world of Science, History, and Medical Technology that are still evident today.