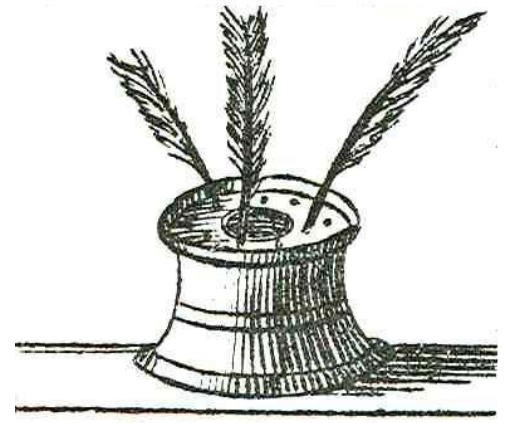


Journal

What people in the past wrote about their daily life helps historians today. What can you save to help future historians learn about our lives now?



What you will need:

- Pencil and paper for writing, or
- Go digital and type your thoughts.
- Consider including newspaper clippings, screen shots from social media sites, etc.

Start writing!

Answer one or more of the following questions every day:

1. What did you do?
2. Who did you interact with?
3. What did you think and feel?
4. What do you observe (see) happening around you?

We are living in historic times, with things changing quickly.

Consider these questions to capture what is happening:

1. How has what you do changed this month compared to last month? Last year?
2. What challenges do you face?
3. What are you most hopeful for?

Why are your words important?

When you write things down you are leaving behind a legacy and become part of a bigger community. It can also help you work through your feelings and thoughts. Think both big and small; you never know what detail might be important or interesting later.

Historians look at a wide variety of records—not just journals. Social media, art, songs, receipts, and government paperwork all help paint a picture of what life was like. What might you create and save to capture your story?

Take it further!

Explore more of Nicholas Cresswell's life, from when he decided to leave home in England for Alexandria, to his return after the start of the Revolutionary War. What was his experience like? What can you learn about early Alexandria and the colonies from Nicholas Cresswell's journal?

1. Read his journal in the Library of Congress' collection [online](#).
2. Answer the journaling writing prompts from Cresswell's perspective.
3. What questions do you still have about life in early Alexandria and the colonies?

Historians need a wide variety of sources to be able to understand what life was like. No one person can see and experience everything, and we each have our own perspective. What other sources can you find that describe life in the colonies before the Revolutionary War?

Telling stories is another important way we remember what has happened in the past. Alexandria's Oral History program saves these stories and shares them [online](#). Consider asking someone you know about their life. Every person has a story!

