

Examining Primary Sources

1. IDENTITY
2. CONTEXTUALIZE and EXPLORE
3. ANALYZE
4. EVALUATE

Reading Primary Sources

1. IDENTIFY THE SOURCE

- What is the nature of the source?**
- Who created this source, and what do I know about him/her/them?**
- When/where was the source produced?**

2. CONTEXTUALIZE THE SOURCE

- What do you know about the historical context for this source?**
- What do I know about how the creator of this source fits into that historical context?**
- Why did the person who created the source do so?**

2. EXPLORE THE SOURCE

- What factual information is conveyed in this source?**
- What opinions are related in this source?**
- What is implied or conveyed unintentionally in the source?**
- What is not said in this source?**
- What is surprising or interesting about the source?**
- What is left out?**

3. ANALYZE THE SOURCE

- How does the creator of the source convey information and make his/her point?**
- How is the world described in the source different from my world?**
- How might others at the time have reacted to this source?**

4. EVALUATE THE SOURCE

- How does this source compare to other primary sources?**
- How does this source compare to secondary source accounts?**
- What do you believe and disbelieve from this source?**
- What do you still not know — and where can you find that information?**

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