

Categories of Primary and Secondary Sources

Material Cultural Artifacts			
Tools and Machines, Toys and Games, Clothing, Coins, Decorations, Decorations, Utensils, Money, Furniture, Containers			
Print Documents			
Government		Formal Personal	
Charters and Constitutions Edicts and Laws Minutes and Reports Programs and Publications Records and Statistics Reports and Proceedings Statutes Treaties		Certificates and Licenses Court Records Contracts and Agreements Family Trees Receipts Wills	
Publications		Informal Personal Records	
Autobiographies Histories Literature Newspapers Periodicals Travels Accounts Treaties		Diaries and Memoirs Family and Household Records Financial Statements Letters Memoranda and Notes	
Electronic Media			
Film, Video, Entertainment Information			
Graphic Arts			
Photography, Maps, Cartoons, Illustrations			
Fine Arts			
Painting, Sculpture, Prints, Textiles, Decorative Arts, Ceramics, Metal Works. Furniture			
Folklore and Folkways			
Oral Literature	Material Culture	Customs	Performance Arts
Tales Proverbs, Epic stories	Crafts, Cloths making, Quilting, Home building	Rituals, Ceremonies, Family traditions	Dance, Music, Games
The Built Environment			
Architecture, Place Names, Land use, Settlement patterns, Urban plans			

Source: Kroesch, Gary and Swanson, Mary Catherine. (2002). *The Write Path: History-Social Science Teacher Guide*. (p. 37). San Diego: AVID Press.

Primary Source Analysis

Primary source materials may offer invaluable insight into historical events. These source materials are firsthand historical materials. Letters, wills, newspaper articles, government documents, photographs, advertisements, journals, autobiographies, speeches can all be primary sources. Like a historian, you should carefully examine the source, consider questions such as the following:

Title: _____

Source: _____

Type of source and date(s) of the source

- Was it created during or shortly after the event you are investigating?

Read the primary source and examine who, what, when, where, and why.

Select an interesting quotation or sentence and justify why you selected this as a representative statement from the source.

Are there any unique or unusual qualities of the source?

- Record anything interesting about this primary source.

Who was the author, speaker, or creator of the source?

- Was the creator free to work as he or she pleased?

For what audience was the source addressed?

- Was it for a private or public audience?

For what purpose was the source created?

- Was its creator trying to promote a cause?

List three things about this source that are important.

- How might the values and issues of the time have influenced it?

What can be learned from this source?

- Can the information in the source be verified?

Write a question to the originator that is left unanswered by the primary source.

- What would you like to ask about this primary source?

Write your reaction or opinion about this document.

Source: Kroesch, Gary and Swanson, Mary Catherine. (2002). *The Write Path: History-Social Science Teacher Guide*. (pp. 33-43). San Diego: AVID Press.