

Online Teacher's Guide for Primary Sources

Ideas, Strategies, Graphic Organizers, and More to "Dig Deep" into Primary Sources

Primary Sources

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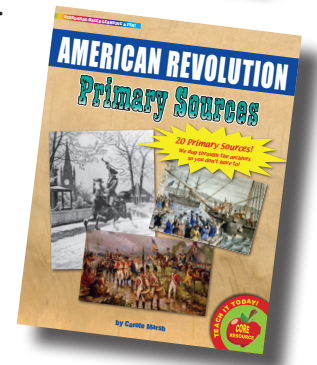
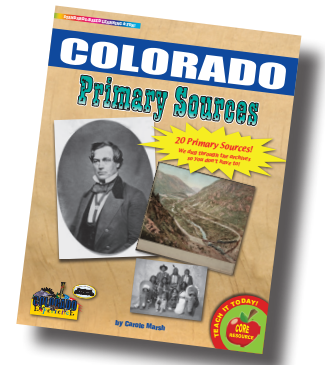
Worksheet to help students put multiple sources in order and/or create a timeline

Page 13: Comparing Points of View**

Worksheet to help students compare points of view of multiple sources

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Worksheet for students to use when participating in a gallery walk when quick observation skills are necessary



**Specific Teacher Instructions for Comparing Points of View:

Teacher: Choose two main perspectives based on the topic you are studying. These could be two sides in a conflict (pro-slavery vs. anti-slavery), two geographic locations (North and South economic differences), two time periods, two cultures, etc. Tell students what two perspectives to write as column headers, and provide a mix of primary sources for them to analyze and classify.

Focusing on details is a key primary source skill for all grade levels.

For young learners, focusing on details is a great way to introduce the basics of primary source analysis. Through observation, students can draw conclusions about the subject, time, place, and purpose of a variety of primary sources. Primary sources can help students understand people, places, and events throughout history.

At higher levels, students should be challenged with documents that require a greater depth of analysis. Primary sources can help students think critically and analytically, interpret events, understand points of view, and question various perspectives of history.

Guide students to focus on details in any source by following three general steps:

1) Make Observations

Analysis begins with careful observation and attention to detail. Encourage students to observe, note, and record details in the source.

2) Reflect & Analyze

Primary source analysis should use information and topics discussed in students' daily lessons. Instruct students to reflect upon what they have observed about the source as well as knowledge of the topic.

3) Draw Conclusions

Prompt students to draw conclusions about the context (time and place) of the primary source, determine the source's message or purpose, and form a hypothesis about who the intended audience might have been. Students should support their conclusions with evidence from the primary source.

More Questions?

Encourage students to ask questions that are not readily answered by the content of the primary source. The questioning process will lead to more observations and reflections as students deepen their historical investigation.

Teaching Tip:

Highlight Key Features & Guide with Questions

You may want to highlight key features in the document for guided discussion and analysis. Guiding questions might include a broad topic question, such as "What led the colonists to seek independence from Great Britain?" when analyzing documents from the American Revolution. This kind of leading question helps students approach the primary source with a sense of context and purpose.



What Are Primary Sources?

Primary sources are images, documents, artifacts, or other sources of information created during a specific time period, usually by someone who has first-hand experience of a specific historical event.

Why Study Primary Sources?

Primary sources are a window to understanding the people, places, and events of the past. Primary sources hold important clues, but you need to look, think, and ask questions!

Investigate! Become a Detective

To learn from primary sources, you need to investigate like a detective. Follow these steps to help you find the clues and draw conclusions about the source:

1) Observe the Primary Source

What kind of source is it? What do you notice first? What other details do you see? What is your first reaction? Look closely. Even the smallest details can be big clues to understanding the past.

2) Reflect & Analyze

- **The Source Itself**

What type of material was used? If written, was it handwritten? Is the source well-preserved? What key details did the creator include? Are there any special features you should note?

- **The Historical Context**

When was it made? Who made it? What does the source tell you about the culture? Is a historical event being shown or described?

- **The Author/Creator**

Who created it? What was the creator's race, sex, age, class, occupation, religion, and political beliefs? Does any of this matter? Why or why not?

- **The Purpose**

Why was this source made? What was the creator's purpose for creating this primary source? Is the author expressing an opinion, stating facts, recording information, or telling a story? Was the artifact useful to people? What was its use?

- **The Audience**

Who was meant to see or read this source? Who might have used it, read it, or valued it? How might people have reacted in the past?

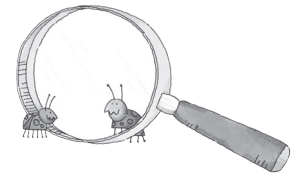
3) Draw Conclusions

What can I learn from this source? What does it tell me about people, places, and events in the past? What is the purpose or message of this source? What do I still wonder about?

Primary Sources Include:		
Original Documents	Creative Works	Artifacts
Photographs Diaries Official documents Speeches Letters Interviews Film footage	Poems Novels Music Plays Short stories Artwork Cartoons Any other primary creative work	Maps Pottery Furniture Clothing Buildings Bones Any other primary object

Let's Observe!

Photographs, Prints, or other Visual Primary Sources



Study the image for 2–3 minutes. Take note of key details, including the people, objects, environment, and any activity (event or action) that is occurring.

Describe what you observe in each category. Then look for details that tell you more about the source and write them down.

People

Objects

Environment/ Surroundings

Activity

When was the primary source created? _____

Why was the primary source created? _____

What does this primary source tell me about people, places, and events in the past? _____

Let's Discuss! Discuss your observations about this primary source with your classmates.



Photographs and Prints



Study the primary source for 2-3 minutes. What do you notice first? Look closely at the people, objects, and environment shown. If there are people in the picture, what are they doing?

1) **Observe:** Describe what you see.

People

**Objects/
Environment**

Activities

2) **Reflect & Analyze:** Use what you observed to answer the questions.

What's happening in this image? _____

When do you think this image was made? _____

Does this image have a message or purpose? If so, describe it, and explain what details from the source support your conclusion. _____

Who might have been the intended audience of this image? _____

3) **Make Conclusions:**

What can I learn from this primary source? What does it tell me about people, places, and events in the past?

Political Cartoons

Political cartoons combine people, symbols, and words to send a message or state an opinion about an issue or event. Study the political cartoon for 2-3 minutes, and describe any significant people, objects, and words shown. Interpret and analyze the symbols and words to determine the cartoon's message.

1) **Observe:** Describe what you see.

<i>What objects or people are shown?</i>	<i>What words (title, caption, dialogue) are included?</i>
<i>Which people or objects might be symbols? What do they represent?</i>	<i>What words are the most significant? Why do you think so?</i>

2) **Interpret:** Use what you observed to answer the questions.

<p><i>Is this cartoon related to a specific historical event? Explain.</i></p> <p><i>What do you think is happening in this cartoon?</i></p> <p><i>Can you determine when and where this cartoon was made?</i></p>
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3) **Analyze:** Analyze the cartoon to determine the overall message.

<p><i>What is the message of this cartoon?</i></p> <p><i>How did the symbols and words in the cartoon make this message clear?</i></p>
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Posters and Advertisements

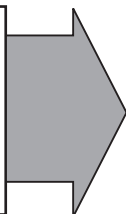
Posters and advertisements are made to convey a message or encourage people to do something, buy something, or behave in a certain way. Look at the poster or advertisement and complete the graphic organizer below.

1) **Observe:** Describe the symbols, images, and words that are shown.

<i>Symbols or images:</i>	Time and Place Based on your observation, can you determine the time and place? Time: _____ Place: _____ _____ _____
<i>Words or phrases:</i>	

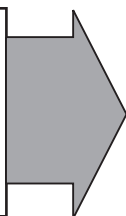
2) **Interpret:**

What is the message?



Cite evidence to support your answer.

Who do you think is the intended audience?



Cite evidence to support your answer.

What does it encourage people to do or think?

3) **Assess:** Is it effective (clear, direct, and persuasive)?

Maps



Carefully examine the map to identify key details. Complete as many of the answers as you can.

1) Map Information

What Type of Map? Put a check mark beside categories that describe the map.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Aerial photograph | <input type="radio"/> Climate Map |
| <input type="radio"/> Topographic map | <input type="radio"/> Satellite photograph |
| <input type="radio"/> Political map | <input type="radio"/> Military Map |
| <input type="radio"/> Natural resource map | <input type="radio"/> Weather map |
| <input type="radio"/> Physical map | <input type="radio"/> Bird's eye view |
| <input type="radio"/> Pictograph | <input type="radio"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> Contour-line map | |

Unique Physical Characteristics of the Map

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Includes a compass | <input type="radio"/> Name of the mapmaker |
| <input type="radio"/> Handwritten | <input type="radio"/> Title |
| <input type="radio"/> Date | <input type="radio"/> Legend (Key) |
| <input type="radio"/> Notations | <input type="radio"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> Scale | |

2) Analyze the Map

List the three things on this map you think are the most important.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do you know who created this map? How do you know?

When do you think this map was created?

What evidence on the map suggests this time period?

Why do you think this map was created?

What evidence on the map suggests the reason it was created?



Written Documents

1) Document Information

What type of document is this?	What are its unique characteristics?
<input type="radio"/> Newspaper	<input type="radio"/> Scientific document
<input type="radio"/> Magazine	<input type="radio"/> Handwritten
<input type="radio"/> Poster	<input type="radio"/> Typed
<input type="radio"/> Letter	<input type="radio"/> Seals
<input type="radio"/> Patent	<input type="radio"/> Notations
<input type="radio"/> Diary (journal) entry	<input type="radio"/> "Received" stamp
<input type="radio"/> Map	<input type="radio"/> Illustrations
<input type="radio"/> Telegram	<input type="radio"/> Diagrams
<input type="radio"/> Report	<input type="radio"/> Postage
<input type="radio"/> Advertisement	<input type="radio"/> Damaged/torn
<input type="radio"/> Congressional record	<input type="radio"/> Faded/worn/stained
<input type="radio"/> Census report	<input type="radio"/> Incomplete
<input type="radio"/> Official treaty or declaration	<input type="radio"/> Other _____

2) In Context

Who created it?	When was it created?	Where was it created?

What do you know about the people involved in creating this document?

What do you know about events occurring when the document was created?

3) Analyze

Identify three things the author said that you think are important.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Who was this document intended for? (Who was supposed to read it?)

What do you think was the author's purpose for writing it? Why?

Does the author express an opinion or point of view? If so, how?

Explore the Source

To better understand a primary source, you need to do a little exploring. Use the questions on this worksheet as an in-depth guide to understanding the source.

Facts

Is any **factual information** presented? If so, what are the facts?

What do these facts tell you about the **context** (time, place, culture, etc.) of this source?

Opinions

Is any **opinion** presented by this source? If so, what is the opinion?

Does this source **inspire you** to have an **opinion**? If so, why?

Between the Lines...

What is **not said** in this source, but might be **implied** or **suggested**? _____

What is **surprising** or **interesting** about this source? _____

What do you **not understand** in this source? _____

Determining the Author's Point of View

It is important to understand what people thought or felt in the past to make sense of many historical events. *Historical perspective* is how historians and archaeologists describe historical events and issues from the perspective of people living at that time to avoid evaluating the past in terms of today's norms and values.

When reading a diary, letter, or other written primary source document, you can often tell the author's perspective, opinion, or point of view. Primary sources can help us understand why people did, thought, and said the things they did.

Author Info

Who is the author? What do you already know about the author?

What can you tell about the author from the primary source?
(age, sex, race, religion, class, geographic origin, occupation, political beliefs, etc.)

Time and Place

Where was this source created?

When was this source created?

What do you already know about this time period?

Is this source about, or related to, a historical issue or event? If so, describe it.

Point of View

What is the author's perspective, opinion, or point of view on the issue or event?

What words, metaphors, symbols, or images did the author use to express his or her point of view?

How does this author's point of view help you understand the past?

Comparing Primary Sources

Observe and describe the details of each source.

Are these sources related to the same topic, issue, event, or period in history? If so, explain the relationship.

Do the sources represent **similar** or **differing** perspectives? If so, describe each perspective.

How might someone from that time period have reacted to these sources?

Which of these sources is more effective at conveying its message or point of view? Why?

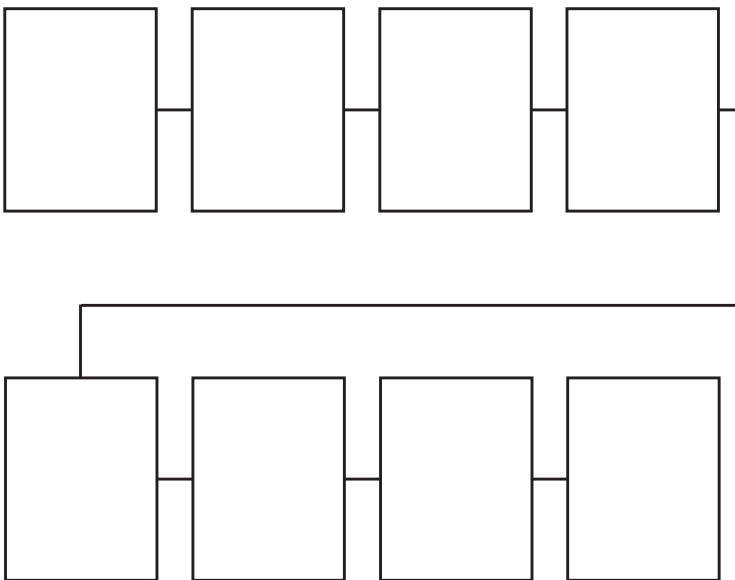
Chronological Order/Timeline

Look at a group of related primary sources. Use what you know about historical events as well as observations you make from the primary sources to date each source as closely as you can to when it was created.

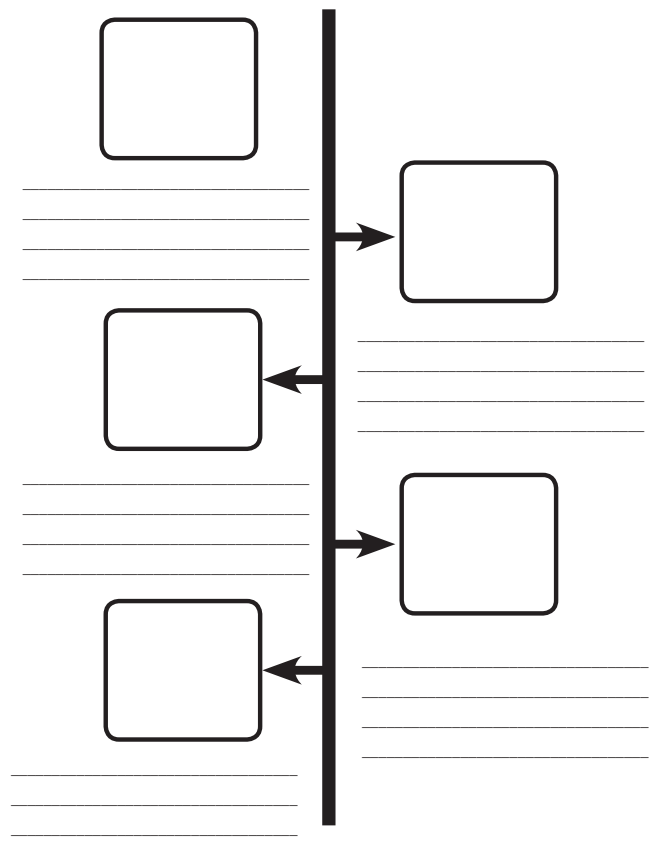
Support your date estimates with evidence found in the sources.

Put the sources in chronological order by creating a timeline. Examine them again once they are in order. Describe 3-5 changes that can be seen by the progression of the sources.

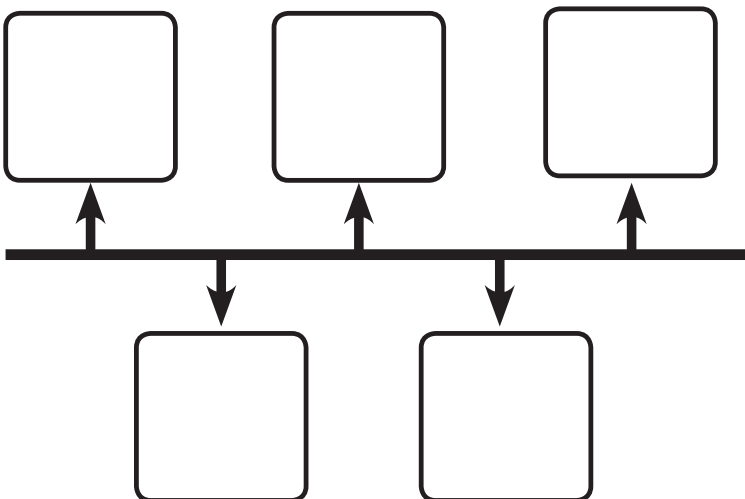
Timeline example 1



Timeline example 2



Timeline example 3



Comparing Points of View

Topic _____

Label the first and third column headings with two differing perspectives or points of view.

Observe and analyze multiple primary sources and determine what point of view or perspective is expressed in each. Cite evidence to support your conclusions.

PERSPECTIVE 1	PERSPECTIVE 2
<p>Name or Description of Source:</p> <p>Evidence/Reasoning to Support Classification:</p>	<p>Name or Description of Source:</p> <p>Evidence/Reasoning to Support Classification:</p>
<p>Name or Description of Source:</p> <p>Evidence/Reasoning to Support Classification:</p>	<p>Name or Description of Source:</p> <p>Evidence/Reasoning to Support Classification:</p>

Gallery Walk

As you view each primary source, write your observations in the blocks provided.

What is this source (painting, map, etc.)?	General observations
Message or purpose	Any emotions I feel?
What do I wonder about?	

TITLE