

WHAT TYPES OF SOURCES DO HISTORIANS USE?

**Unit 1: Perspectives of the Past
LT3: Primary and Secondary Sources**



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Types of Sources

- **When historians study an event, they use sources related to the event**
- **Historians classify the sources they use in two categories called:**
 - Primary Sources
 - Secondary Sources

Primary Sources

Characteristics

- **Firsthand information about an event**
- **Includes words, images, or objects created by persons *directly involved* in an event**
- **Do not include historian's analysis or interpretation of the sources**

Examples:

- Go back to the list of accounts that you made with your classmates. Write a P next to any that you think are primary sources.

Checking Your Understanding

Imagine you are a historian who wants to know what American middle school students learned in school from 1950-2000. Which of the following would be considered **primary sources**?

- Interviews with people who went to middle schools or taught middle school in the 1980s
- State laws about education requirements in the 1970s
- A report written by a historian in 2010
- Textbooks used in schools in the 1960s

Secondary Sources

Characteristics

- **Contain secondhand information**
- **Created by people who were not eyewitnesses to the event**
- **Descriptions of events that include analysis or interpretation of primary sources to describe a past event**

Examples:

- Go back to the list of accounts that you made with your classmates. Write an S next to any that you think are secondary sources.

Checking Your Understanding

Imagine you are a historian who wants to know what American middle school students learned in school from 1950-2000. Which of the following would be considered **secondary sources**?

- Interviews with people who went to middle schools or taught middle school in the 1980s
- State laws about education requirements in the 1970s
- A report written by a historian in 2010
- Textbooks used in schools in the 1960s

Which Sources Are Best?

- **Make a chart in your notes:**

	Primary	Secondary
Advantages		
Disadvantages		