

# Teacher Resource Guide

## African American History Month

 LIBRARY OF CONGRESS **TEACHING** *with* PRIMARY SOURCES

### Section 3: Teaching Tools

Library of Congress Guide  
to Primary Sources

Primary Source Analysis Guides

<http://tps.waynesburg.edu>





# LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Millions of Primary Sources  
Tools for Teachers



## Digitized primary sources

More than 13 million primary sources -- maps, photos, films, sound recordings, manuscripts and more

American history and culture • Veterans' stories • Women's suffrage • Civil rights • The Great Depression • Government and civics • The Civil War • International history and culture • Immigration • Presidents • Explorers • Geography • Music and performing arts • Literature • Inventions

## The Teachers Page

More than 300 teacher-created materials to help bring primary sources to life in the classroom

Lesson plans • Primary source sets • Interactive activities • Themed resources • Analysis tools • Teaching ideas and context



Free to everyone, with no login or subscription

[www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)



# LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Millions of Primary Sources  
Tools for Teachers



## Professional development

Learning opportunities for teachers

The Teaching with Primary Sources program • Facilitated workshops • Summer teacher institutes • Videoconferences • Web conferences • Self-guided workshops • Online learning

## Presentations and reference help

Interpretation and guidance from the Library's experts

Exhibitions • Expert presentations • America's Library for kids and families • Webcasts • National Book Festival • Today in History • Web guides and bibliographies • Ask a Librarian



Free to everyone, with no login or subscription

[www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

## How to Use Primary Sources



### A Quick Start Guide

**Primary sources** are the raw materials of history — original documents and objects which were created at the time under study. They are different from **secondary sources**, accounts or interpretations of events created by someone without firsthand experience.

Examining primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills.

Before you begin:

- Choose at least two or three primary sources that support the learning objectives and are accessible to students.
- Consider how students can compare these items to other primary and secondary sources.
- Identify an analysis tool or guiding questions that students will use to analyze the primary sources.



Free to everyone, with no login or subscription

[www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)



# LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

## How to Use Primary Sources



### 1. Engage students with primary sources.

Draw on students' prior knowledge of the topic.

Ask students to closely observe each primary source. • *Who created this primary source?* • *When was it created?* • *Where does your eye go first?*

Help students see key details. • *What do you see that you didn't expect?* • *What powerful words and ideas are expressed?*

Encourage students to think about their personal response to the source. • *What feelings and thoughts does the primary source trigger in you?* • *What questions does it raise?*

### 2. Promote student inquiry.

Encourage students to speculate about each source, its creator, and its context. • *What was happening during this time period?* • *What was the creator's purpose in making this primary source?* • *What does the creator do to get his or her point across?* • *What was this primary source's audience?* • *What biases or stereotypes do you see?*

Ask if this source agrees with other primary sources, or with what the students already know. • Ask students to test their assumptions about the past. • Ask students to find other primary or secondary sources that offer support or contradiction.

### 3. Assess how students apply critical thinking and analysis skills to primary sources.

Have students summarize what they've learned. • Ask for reasons and specific evidence to support their conclusions. • Help students identify questions for further investigation, and develop strategies for how they might answer them.

Analysis tools and thematic primary source sets from the Library offer entry points to many topics.



Free to everyone, with no login or subscription

[www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)





## Why Use Primary Sources?



Primary sources provide a window into the past—unfiltered access to the record of artistic, social, scientific and political thought and achievement during the specific period under study, produced by people who lived during that period.

Bringing young people into close contact with these unique, often profoundly personal, documents and objects can give them a very real sense of what it was like to be alive during a long-past era.

### 1. Engage students

- Primary sources help students relate in a personal way to events of the past and promote a deeper understanding of history as a series of human events.
- Because primary sources are snippets of history, they encourage students to seek additional evidence through research.
- First-person accounts of events helps make them more real, fostering active reading and response.



Free to everyone, with no login or subscription

[www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)



# LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

## Why Use Primary Sources?



### 2. Develop critical thinking skills

- Many state standards support teaching with primary sources, which require students to be both critical and analytical as they read and examine documents and objects.
- Primary sources are often incomplete and have little context. Students must use prior knowledge and work with multiple primary sources to find patterns.
- In analyzing primary sources, students move from concrete observations and facts to questioning and making inferences about the materials.
- Questions of creator bias, purpose, and point of view may challenge students' assumptions.

### 3. Construct knowledge

- Inquiry into primary sources encourages students to wrestle with contradictions and compare multiple sources that represent differing points of view, confronting the complexity of the past.
- Students construct knowledge as they form reasoned conclusions, base their conclusions on evidence, and connect primary sources to the context in which they were created, synthesizing information from multiple sources.
- Integrating what they glean from comparing primary sources with what they already know, and what they learn from research, allows students to construct content knowledge and deepen understanding.

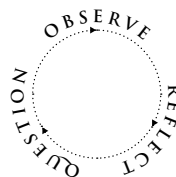


Free to everyone, with no login or subscription

[www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)



# TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING BOOKS & OTHER PRINTED TEXTS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

## OBSERVE

### Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

Describe what you see. · What do you notice first?  
· Is there any text you can read? What does it say?  
· Describe anything you see on the page besides words, such as images or decorations. · How is the text and other information arranged on the page? · Describe anything about this text that looks strange or unfamiliar. · What other details can you see?

## REFLECT

### Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

What was the purpose of this text? · Who created it? · Who do you think was its audience? · Can you tell anything about what was important at the time it was made? · What tools and materials were used to create it? · What is the larger story or context within which this was printed? · What can you learn from examining this? · If someone created this today, what would be different?

## QUESTION

### Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...  
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

### Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

#### A few follow-up activity ideas:

##### *Beginning*

*Have students choose a section of the text and put it in their own words.*

##### *Intermediate*

*Look for clues to the point of view of the person, or people, who created this text. Discuss what someone with an opposing or differing point of view might say about the issues or events described in it. How would the information be presented differently?*

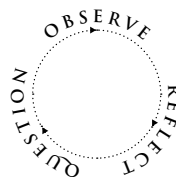
##### *Advanced*

*Examine a section of the text. Think about what you already know about this period in history. How does the text support or contradict your current understanding of this period? Can you see any clues to the point of view of the person who created this text?*

*For more tips on using primary sources, go to*

**<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>**

# TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING MANUSCRIPTS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

## OBSERVE

### Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

Describe what you see. · What do you notice first?  
· How much of the text can you read? What does it say? · What do you see that looks strange or unfamiliar? · How are the words arranged? · What do you notice about the page the writing appears on? · What size is the page? · What do you see on the page besides writing? · What other details can you see?

## REFLECT

### Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the manuscript.

Why do you think this manuscript was made? · Who do you think created it? · Who do you think was intended to read it, if anyone? · What do you think was happening when it was created? · What tools and materials were used to create it? · What can you learn from examining this? · If someone created something like this today, what would be different? · What would be the same?

## QUESTION

### Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...  
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

### Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

#### A few follow-up activity ideas:

##### *Beginning*

*Have students choose a section of the manuscript and put it in their own words.*

##### *Intermediate*

*Select a section of a manuscript. Speculate about the purpose of the manuscript, and what the person, or people, who created it expected it to accomplish. Do you think it achieved their goals? Explain why you think so.*

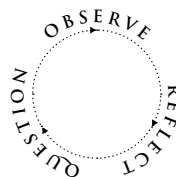
##### *Advanced*

*Examine a section of the manuscript. Think about what you already know about this period in history. How does the manuscript support or contradict your current understanding of this period? Can you see any clues to the point of view of the person who created this manuscript?*

*For more tips on using primary sources, go to*

**<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>**

# TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING MAPS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

## OBSERVE

### Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

Describe what you see. · What do you notice first? · What size and shape is the map? · What graphical elements do you see? · What on the map looks strange or unfamiliar? · Describe anything that looks like it does not belong on a map. · What place or places does the map show? · What, if any, words do you see?

## REFLECT

### Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

Why do you think this map was made? · Who do you think the audience was for this map? · How do you think this map was made? · How does it compare to current maps of this place? · What does this map tell you about what the people who made it knew and what they didn't? · If this map was made today, what would be different? · What would be the same?

## QUESTION

### Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...  
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

### Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

#### A few follow-up activity ideas:

##### *Beginning*

*Have students write a brief description of the map in their own words.*

##### *Intermediate*

*Study three or more maps of a city or state at different time periods. Arrange them in chronological order. Discuss clues to the correct sequence.*

##### *Advanced*

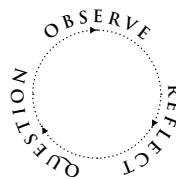
*Search for maps of a city or state from different periods, then compile a list of changes over time and other differences and similarities between the maps.*

*For more tips on using primary sources, go to*

**<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>**



# TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING PHOTOGRAPHS & PRINTS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

## OBSERVE

### Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

Describe what you see. · What do you notice first?  
· What people and objects are shown? · How are they arranged? · What is the physical setting?  
· What, if any, words do you see? · What other details can you see?

## REFLECT

### Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the image.

Why do you think this image was made? · What's happening in the image? · When do you think it was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this image? · What tools were used to create this?  
· What can you learn from examining this image? · What's missing from this image? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What would be the same?

## QUESTION

### Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...  
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

### Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

#### A few follow-up activity ideas:

*Beginning*  
Write a caption for the image.

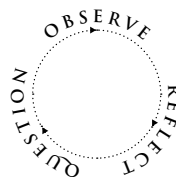
*Intermediate*  
Select an image. Predict what will happen one minute after the scene shown in the image. One hour after? Explain the reasoning behind your predictions.

*Advanced*  
Have students expand or alter textbook or other printed explanations of history based on images they study.

For more tips on using primary sources, go to  
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

### OBSERVE

#### Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

What do you notice first? · Find something small but interesting. · What do you notice that you didn't expect? · What do you notice that you can't explain? · What do you notice now that you didn't earlier?

### REFLECT

#### Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

Where do you think this came from? · Why do you think somebody made this? · What do you think was happening when this was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this item? · What tool was used to create this? · Why do you think this item is important? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What can you learn from examining this?

### QUESTION

#### Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...  
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

### FURTHER INVESTIGATION

#### Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

#### A few follow-up activity ideas:

##### Beginning

*Have students compare two related primary source items.*

##### Intermediate

*Have students expand or alter textbook explanations of history based on primary sources they study.*

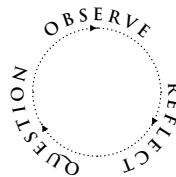
##### Advanced

*Ask students to consider how a series of primary sources support or challenge information and understanding on a particular topic. Have students refine or revise conclusions based on their study of each subsequent primary source.*

*For more tips on using primary sources, go to*

**<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>**

# TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING SHEET MUSIC & SONG SHEETS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. **Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.**

## OBSERVE

### Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

Describe what you see on the cover. · What kind of design or image is printed on the document? · Does anything on the page look strange or unfamiliar? · What names or places appear in the lyrics? · Do you see anything on the page besides writing? · What other details do you notice? · If you know the melody, sing or hum it. What do you notice about how it sounds?

## REFLECT

### Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

What was the purpose of this piece of music? · Who do you think composed it? · Who do you think was intended to sing or play it? · What does the cover tell you about the music? · If it doesn't have lyrics, what instruments were intended to play it? · If you know the melody, how does it add to your understanding? · If someone created this today, what would be different?

## QUESTION

### Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...  
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

### Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

#### A few follow-up activity ideas:

##### *Beginning*

*Have students write a brief description of the song or piece of sheet music in their own words.*

##### *Intermediate*

*Select a song sheet or piece of sheet music. Speculate about the composer's purpose in creating it, and what he or she expected it to accomplish. Do you think it achieved its writer's goals? Explain why you think so.*

##### *Advanced*

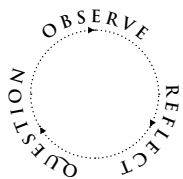
*Think about what you already know about this period in history. How do the lyrics support or contradict your current understanding of this period? How does the song highlight the values or opinions held during this period? How do you think the public reacted to this song?*

*For more tips on using primary sources, go to*

**<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>**



# PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL



## OBSERVE

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## REFLECT

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## QUESTION

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION