

Tea Party Evidence

Compare records from the past with later historical explanations.

SS.5.A.1.1 "Use primary and secondary sources to understand history."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence beginning "Because this newspaper" and circle the sentence beginning "This explanation is a secondary source." In paragraph 3, number the three source-evaluation questions 1, 2 and 3.

Two Ways to Study a Protest

- ① Source A: The Boston Gazette and Country Journal, December 20, 1773, reported the destruction of tea in Boston. Its account describes the tea as "amounting to 342 chests, into the sea!! without the least damage done to the ships or any other property." Because this newspaper was an original record from the event's time, it is a primary source; its writer was not necessarily an eyewitness. Transcript: Library of Congress.
- ② Source B: The National Park Service's later account, "Old South Meeting House," explains that colonists met to resist taxed tea. After negotiations failed, men destroyed 342 chests. Britain punished Boston by closing its harbor and restricting local government. This explanation is a secondary source because it interprets earlier events and evidence. This paragraph paraphrases that account rather than quoting it; it adds causes and consequences beyond Source A's short extract.
- ③ Historians ask who created each source, when it was made, and why it was made. They may research old letters, newspaper reports, and shipping records. Comparing primary and secondary evidence helps them build supported explanations and notice gaps. Source A reports details of the destruction; Source B explains its setting and consequences. Neither short extract tells us what every colonist thought, so historians should seek more evidence.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why is the Boston newspaper report a primary source, even though its writer may not have seen the protest?

2 What makes the National Park Service's explanation a secondary source?

3 Name two kinds of earlier sources historians may research.

4 What are the three questions historians ask about a source before using it?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Use Sources A and B to explain what happened in Boston and why the event increased conflict. Cite one detail from each and explain what each adds. Then name one other primary source and one secondary source you could use, tell what each might help you learn, and give one question for judging a source. Use separate paper if needed.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence beginning “Because this newspaper” and circle the sentence beginning “This explanation is a secondary source.” In paragraph 3, number the three source-evaluation questions 1, 2 and 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is the Boston newspaper report a primary source, even though its writer may not have seen the protest?	It is an original record created at the time of the event. A primary source does not have to be a firsthand account.
2	What makes the National Park Service’s explanation a secondary source?	It is a later explanation that interprets earlier events and evidence.
3	Name two kinds of earlier sources historians may research.	Any two: old letters, newspaper reports, shipping records.
4	What are the three questions historians ask about a source before using it?	Who created it, when it was made, and why it was made.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Source A reports 342 chests of tea destroyed without damage to ships, showing the action targeted the tea. Source B connects the action to resistance to taxed tea and explains that British punishment closed the harbor, increasing conflict. A ship worker’s letter could add firsthand observations; a researched history book could explain later effects. I would ask who created each and why.

Accept accurate paraphrases of the passage. For Question 1, students must explain that the newspaper is an original record from the time, while recognizing that its writer was not necessarily an eyewitness. Require both supplied sources in a supported historical conclusion, not just source names. The no-other-damage statement is Source A’s claim; do not treat the short extracts as proof of every person’s motives. Sources: Library of Congress Boston Gazette transcript (20 December 1773); National Park Service, Old South Meeting House.