

Source Detectives

Sort sources by where the information comes from.

2.13 "Inquiry and research: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts. The student engages in both short-term and sustained recursive inquiry processes for a variety of purposes..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

PRIMARY SOURCE

A primary source comes from someone who was there or made it at the time. It gives firsthand information.

A postcard written by a child during a visit to a zoo.

SECONDARY SOURCE

A secondary source teaches about something that happened. It uses information from other sources.

A magazine story that teaches about coral reefs.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Read each source, circle PRIMARY or SECONDARY, then choose two items, one from each group, and write how you knew.

1. An original photograph taken at a town festival

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

2. A recording of a firefighter describing a fire he put out

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

3. An encyclopedia page about frogs

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

4. A diary page written during a family trip

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

5. A book chapter about the life of Ruby Bridges

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

6. A textbook page explaining a past hurricane

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

7. A ticket from a baseball game

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

8. A poster that gives facts about the moon

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

2

PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3

MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new PRIMARY source and one new SECONDARY source.

PRIMARY _____

SECONDARY _____

CHALLENGE

Write one question about your school. Name one PRIMARY source and one SECONDARY source you could use to answer it.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	An original photograph taken at a town festival	PRIMARY	It was made at the event.
2	A recording of a firefighter describing a fire he put out	PRIMARY	The firefighter gives a firsthand account.
3	An encyclopedia page about frogs	SECONDARY	It teaches facts gathered from other sources.
4	A diary page written during a family trip	PRIMARY	It was written by someone during the trip.
5	A book chapter about the life of Ruby Bridges	SECONDARY	It tells about a person's life using researched information.
6	A textbook page explaining a past hurricane	SECONDARY	It explains an event after it happened.
7	A ticket from a baseball game	PRIMARY	It is an object from the game.
8	A poster that gives facts about the moon	SECONDARY	It shares facts collected from other sources.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **PRIMARY:** A drawing made by someone who watched a parade.
- **SECONDARY:** A library book that tells about dinosaurs.

Challenge: Question: How has our school playground changed? **PRIMARY** source: An interview with a teacher who has worked at the school for many years. **SECONDARY** source: A book about the history of our school.

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Accept equivalent descriptions that clearly show firsthand evidence for primary sources or information gathered and explained later for secondary sources. For Part 2, students should name a detail that shows why each chosen source fits its category.