

Source Sleuths

Decide whether each source is primary or secondary.

4.13 "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 was made by someone who saw or did something, or it was made at the time. It gives firsthand information.

A nurse's notes made while caring for patients during a flu outbreak.

SECONDARY SOURCE

A secondary source was made later by someone who studied information from other sources. It explains, summarizes, or teaches about a topic.

An encyclopedia entry that explains the causes of the Dust Bowl.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For each source, circle PRIMARY or SECONDARY, then choose two items and explain how you knew where they belong.

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. A letter Maya wrote to her cousin during the 1969 moon landing. | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 2. An audio recording of a firefighter describing a fire she fought. | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 3. A book chapter explaining why volcanoes erupt, written by a science author. | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 4. A photograph taken at a town's 1925 parade. | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 5. A website article that summarizes the life of Harriet Tubman. | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 6. A museum label explaining how an ancient tool was used. | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 7. A recipe card written by a family member in 1940. | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 8. A video of a civil rights leader giving a speech in 1963. | ☐ 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 example and one new SECONDARY source example.

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

CHALLENGE

Choose one PRIMARY item and write one question that source could help answer.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A letter Maya wrote to her cousin during the 1969 moon landing.	PRIMARY	The letter was written by a person living at the time of the event.
2	An audio recording of a firefighter describing a fire she fought.	PRIMARY	The firefighter gives firsthand information about an event she experienced.
3	A book chapter explaining why volcanoes erupt, written by a science author.	SECONDARY	The author explains scientific information gathered from other sources.
4	A photograph taken at a town's 1925 parade.	PRIMARY	The photograph was made at the time of the parade.
5	A website article that summarizes the life of Harriet Tubman.	SECONDARY	The article summarizes information about a person from the past.
6	A museum label explaining how an ancient tool was used.	SECONDARY	The label explains information about an object from long ago.
7	A recipe card written by a family member in 1940.	PRIMARY	The card was created at the time and shows original information.
8	A video of a civil rights leader giving a speech in 1963.	PRIMARY	The video records the leader speaking at the time.

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 map drawn by a traveler while crossing the Oregon Trail.
- **SECONDARY:** A textbook page that describes the Oregon Trail.

Challenge: The photograph from the town parade could help answer, "What clothes did people wear at the parade?"

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Accept answers that correctly identify whether a source gives firsthand information or later explanation. In Part 2, students should name a clue such as made at the time, created by someone who was there, or written later to explain information.