

Source Sleuth Sort

Tell firsthand evidence from later explanations.

7.12 "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 gives firsthand evidence. It was created by someone who experienced an event or made a record at the time.

A firefighter's interview describing a fire she fought

SECONDARY SOURCE

A secondary source explains, analyzes, or summarizes information from other sources. It is usually created after the event or topic being studied.

A textbook chapter explaining the causes of the Civil War

1 SORT

8 items

Circle PRIMARY or SECONDARY for each source, then choose two items and explain what makes each source primary or secondary.

1. A diary entry by a child who lived through the Dust Bowl

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

2. An encyclopedia article about ecosystems

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

3. A documentary explaining the rise and fall of the Roman Empire

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

4. A photograph taken at the 1963 March on Washington

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

5. A recording of a city council meeting

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

6. A magazine article summarizing the results of a science study

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

7. An original letter written by a World War I nurse

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

8. A table of raw data collected during a school survey

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. Do not copy an example from this page.

PRIMARY _____

SECONDARY _____

CHALLENGE

Choose a research topic. Name one primary source and one secondary source you could use, then explain one question each source could help answer.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A diary entry by a child who lived through the Dust Bowl	PRIMARY	The writer experienced the event and recorded firsthand details.
2	An encyclopedia article about ecosystems	SECONDARY	The article summarizes information about a topic.
3	A documentary explaining the rise and fall of the Roman Empire	SECONDARY	The film interprets and explains past events.
4	A photograph taken at the 1963 March on Washington	PRIMARY	The photograph was created during the event.
5	A recording of a city council meeting	PRIMARY	The recording captures the meeting as it happened.
6	A magazine article summarizing the results of a science study	SECONDARY	The article reports and summarizes research findings.
7	An original letter written by a World War I nurse	PRIMARY	The nurse wrote from firsthand experience during the war.
8	A table of raw data collected during a school survey	PRIMARY	The table contains original information gathered in the survey.

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 transcript of an astronaut describing a mission she completed.
- **SECONDARY:** A museum website article interpreting ancient artifacts.

Challenge: For a project about local water quality, I could use test results collected from a nearby stream as a primary source and a newspaper article explaining the town's water report as a secondary source. The test results could answer what chemicals were found, and the article could answer how officials responded.

Accept explanations that identify firsthand evidence, records created at the time, or later summaries and interpretations. A source can be primary or secondary depending on the research question, but each item is classified by its most direct use as written.