

Source Sleuth

Sort firsthand evidence from later explanations.

8.12 "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 is created by someone who experienced an event or made the original information. It gives firsthand evidence.

A chef's notebook records recipes tested last Tuesday.

SECONDARY SOURCE

A secondary source is created later to explain, analyze, or interpret information from other sources. It is not firsthand evidence of the event.

A scholar's book interprets ancient Roman trade.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle PRIMARY or SECONDARY for each source, then choose two items and explain in writing how you knew.

1. A diary entry written by a Civil War soldier

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

2. An audio recording of a mayor speaking at a city council meeting

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

3. A textbook chapter that explains the causes of the Civil War

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

4. The raw results of a 2024 school survey

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

5. A biography of Maya Angelou written by a historian

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

6. A podcast in which a science journalist explains a new study

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

7. A photograph taken at the opening of a local bridge

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

8. A museum website article that summarizes a city's history

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 repeat a source from this page.

PRIMARY _____

SECONDARY _____

CHALLENGE

A website includes an interview with a wildfire survivor and an editor's summary of the interview. Identify which part is PRIMARY and which part is SECONDARY. Explain why.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A diary entry written by a Civil War soldier	PRIMARY	The soldier wrote about an event he experienced.
2	An audio recording of a mayor speaking at a city council meeting	PRIMARY	The recording captures the original speech.
3	A textbook chapter that explains the causes of the Civil War	SECONDARY	The chapter explains past events using gathered information.
4	The raw results of a 2024 school survey	PRIMARY	The results are original data collected from respondents.
5	A biography of Maya Angelou written by a historian	SECONDARY	The historian interprets information about Angelou's life.
6	A podcast in which a science journalist explains a new study	SECONDARY	The journalist explains research created by others.
7	A photograph taken at the opening of a local bridge	PRIMARY	The photograph records the event as it happened.
8	A museum website article that summarizes a city's history	SECONDARY	The article summarizes information about past events.

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 video recorded during a student walkout.
- **SECONDARY:** A newspaper review that analyzes a documentary.

Challenge: The survivor's interview is PRIMARY because the survivor experienced the wildfire. The editor's summary is SECONDARY because it retells the survivor's information.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify firsthand or original evidence for PRIMARY sources and later explanation or interpretation for SECONDARY sources. A source may include both types, as in the challenge item, so students should identify the specific part they are sorting.