

Source Sleuth Sort

Sort sources, prove your choices, and create your own examples.

6.19 "Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including technology..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

PRIMARY SOURCE

A primary source is an original record, object, image, or firsthand account from a time or event. It gives evidence from that time or from a witness.

A photograph taken during a 1911 festival is a primary source.

SECONDARY SOURCE

A secondary source is created later by someone who studies, explains, or retells information about a time or event. It often uses primary sources as evidence.

An encyclopedia entry written later about that festival is a secondary source.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

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

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | A video interview with an elder who remembers the 1960 earthquake | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 2. | A museum website article explaining why the 1960 earthquake happened | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 3. | A newspaper printed on the day a city opened its first subway line | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 4. | A historian's 2020 book about ancient Mali | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 5. | A clay pot made by Ancestral Pueblo people | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 6. | A documentary using experts to explain the Silk Road | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 7. | A speech given by a leader during the Indian independence movement | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 8. | A recipe handwritten by a person living in colonial Mexico | ☐ 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 example and one new SECONDARY example. Do not copy a source from Part 1.

PRIMARY _____

SECONDARY _____

CHALLENGE

For the question, "What did a person who lived through the 1960 earthquake remember?" choose item 1 or item 2 and write a two-sentence claim with evidence.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A video interview with an elder who remembers the 1960 earthquake	PRIMARY	It is an oral history from a person who experienced the event.
2	A museum website article explaining why the 1960 earthquake happened	SECONDARY	It explains an event using researched information.
3	A newspaper printed on the day a city opened its first subway line	PRIMARY	It was created at the time of the event.
4	A historian's 2020 book about ancient Mali	SECONDARY	It is a later interpretation of the past.
5	A clay pot made by Ancestral Pueblo people	PRIMARY	It is an artifact made by people from the culture being studied.
6	A documentary using experts to explain the Silk Road	SECONDARY	It gives later explanations from experts.
7	A speech given by a leader during the Indian independence movement	PRIMARY	It is an original speech from the time being studied.
8	A recipe handwritten by a person living in colonial Mexico	PRIMARY	It is an original document created by a person from that 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 ship captain's log written during a Pacific voyage.
- **SECONDARY:** A podcast episode in which a scholar explains the voyage using several records.

Challenge: Item 1 is the better source for learning what a witness remembers about the earthquake. It is a recorded interview with someone who experienced the event, so it provides firsthand testimony.

Primary sources provide direct evidence from a time, event, or witness. Secondary sources interpret, explain, or retell information after studying other evidence.