

Texas Source Detectives

Sort sources by how they connect to the past.

7.20 "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 was made during the time being studied. A later interview can also be primary when the speaker describes events they personally experienced.

A diary entry written in 1845 by a traveler describing a trip through Texas.

SECONDARY SOURCE

A secondary source looks back at the past and explains, summarizes, or interprets information from other sources.

A 2008 book chapter explaining how Texas cattle drives changed over time.

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle PRIMARY or SECONDARY for each item, then for Part 2, choose two items and explain what detail proves each choice.

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | A photograph taken in 1900 of Galveston after the hurricane | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 2. | A 1985 recorded interview with a person describing the person's own 1930s experiences in the Texas Panhandle | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 3. | A 2018 biography of Barbara Jordan | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 4. | A 1968 San Antonio newspaper report published during HemisFair | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 5. | A 2023 Texas history textbook section that summarizes the Civil Rights Movement | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 6. | A 2015 historian's article analyzing the growth of Houston's port | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 7. | A 1940s ration book used by a Texas family during World War II | ☐ PRIMARY | ☐ SECONDARY |
| 8. | A letter written in 1836 by a Texian soldier during the Texas Revolution | ☐ 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

Part 3: Write one new PRIMARY source about Texas history and one new SECONDARY source about Texas history.

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

CHALLENGE

Choose one item, name one possible bias or limit in that source, and name one other source you could use to check its accuracy.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A photograph taken in 1900 of Galveston after the hurricane	PRIMARY	The photograph was created at the time of the 1900 Galveston hurricane.
2	A 1985 recorded interview with a person describing the person's own 1930s experiences in the Texas Panhandle	PRIMARY	It is a later firsthand account by someone who experienced the events.
3	A 2018 biography of Barbara Jordan	SECONDARY	The biography was written later to interpret and tell about Jordan's life.
4	A 1968 San Antonio newspaper report published during HemisFair	PRIMARY	The report was published during the event it describes.
5	A 2023 Texas history textbook section that summarizes the Civil Rights Movement	SECONDARY	The textbook looks back and summarizes earlier events.
6	A 2015 historian's article analyzing the growth of Houston's port	SECONDARY	The historian analyzes past events using information from other sources.
7	A 1940s ration book used by a Texas family during World War II	PRIMARY	The ration book is an artifact used during the time being studied.
8	A letter written in 1836 by a Texian soldier during the Texas Revolution	PRIMARY	The letter was written by a participant during the Texas Revolution.

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 1918 letter written by a Texas nurse about treating influenza patients.
- **SECONDARY:** A 2016 historian's article explaining the 1918 influenza pandemic in Texas.

Challenge: Item 4 may emphasize details that appeal to the newspaper's readers or reflect editorial choices. I could compare it with official HemisFair records and another newspaper report from 1968.

Key: 1 PRIMARY, 2 PRIMARY, 3 SECONDARY, 4 PRIMARY, 5 SECONDARY, 6 SECONDARY, 7 PRIMARY, 8 PRIMARY. Treat a later firsthand interview as a primary source for the speaker's own memories, while discussing the need to check it against other evidence.