

Clues from Camp

Compare sources to learn about life during the Gold Rush.

S.VS.a "analyzing and interpreting information sources including, but not limited to artifacts, primary and secondary sources, charts, graphs, and diagrams;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each source, circle words that tell what it can show, and number the two statements that explain a source's limit.

Finding Evidence

- ① In 1849, news of gold in California led many people to travel west. To study camp life, historians read a letter a miner wrote in 1849. Because the miner described events personally experienced, the letter is a primary source. It gives one person's view of the journey and camp.
- ② Artifacts are objects people used or made. At a gold-rush camp site, a metal pan, a boot buckle, and food cans could be artifacts. The museum catalog below groups objects from one excavation. The catalog is a secondary source because staff counted and organized the finds. The artifacts themselves are primary sources from the past.

GOLD-RUSH CAMP ARTIFACT CATALOG

Artifact	Number Found
Food cans	24
Metal pans	11
Boot buckles	8
Candle holders	5

- ③ Each source has limits. A miner's letter may leave out hardships or describe only one camp. Artifact numbers show what remained in the ground, not every object people used. A later history article is a secondary source that can combine letters, artifacts, and other evidence. Historians compare sources before making a claim about camp life.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why is the miner's letter a primary source?

2 Which artifact was found most often, and which was found least often?

3 What claim about the excavation does the artifact catalog support? Use numbers from the table.

4 Why should historians compare the letter, artifacts, and a later history article?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a local place, such as your school, a park, or a store. Fill in the table with three different sources someone could use to learn about its past, what each source might show, and one limit of that source.

SOURCE	WHAT IT MIGHT SHOW	ONE LIMIT

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each source, circle words that tell what it can show, and number the two statements that explain a source's limit. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is the miner's letter a primary source?	It was written in 1849 by a miner who described events the miner personally experienced.
2	Which artifact was found most often, and which was found least often?	Food cans were found most often, with 24. Candle holders were found least often, with 5.
3	What claim about the excavation does the artifact catalog support? Use numbers from the table.	Food cans were the most common listed find. The catalog shows 24 food cans, more than 11 pans, 8 boot buckles, or 5 candle holders.
4	Why should historians compare the letter, artifacts, and a later history article?	Each source has limits. Comparing them can provide evidence from different sources before historians make a claim about camp life.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

SOURCE	WHAT IT MIGHT SHOW	ONE LIMIT
An old school yearbook	Photos and club pages can show student activities.	It does not show every student's experience.
A trophy in a school display case	It can show that a team or student won an event.	It may not explain how the event happened.
A local newspaper report	It can describe an important school event.	The writer may include only some viewpoints.

Accept answers that correctly identify how a source was created, what evidence it provides, and a reasonable limit. For the open table, accept varied local sources if each row includes a possible use and a realistic limitation.