

# Historical Sources



## Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
primary source	<i>a document or physical object created during the historical period being studied</i>
artifact	
reference work	<i>a book or other publication that contains unbiased facts about events and people</i>
archive	
archivist	
point of view	
objective	
bias	
secondary source	

## Objective

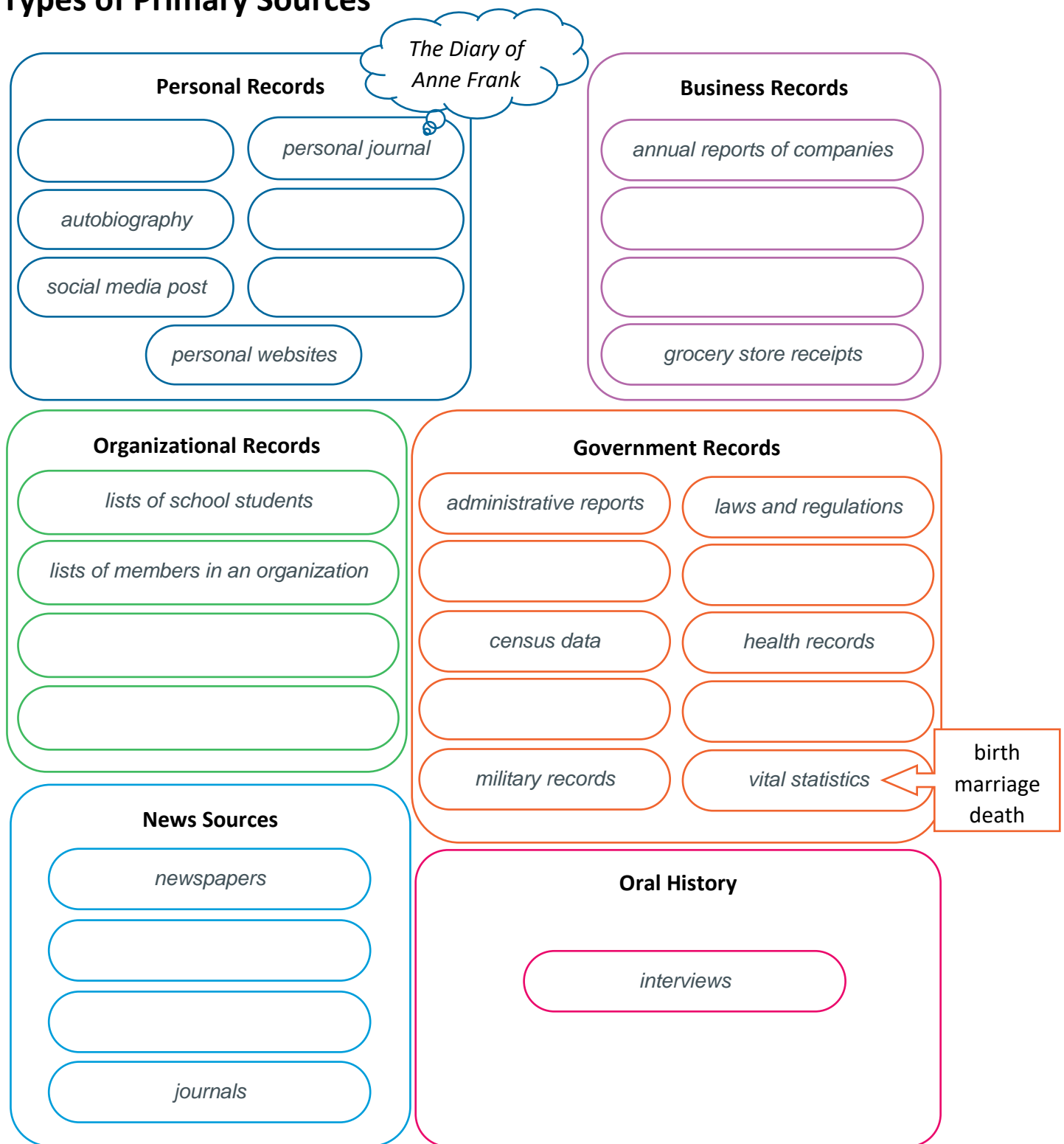
In this lesson, you will

## What Are Primary Sources?

Primary sources

- are \_\_\_\_\_ documents or objects from a particular time period.
- give us a \_\_\_\_\_ account of what happened and help us reconstruct events.
- are the “\_\_\_\_\_ blocks” of history.
- allow you to see history through the eyes of people who \_\_\_\_\_ in a particular period of time.

# Types of Primary Sources



## Arts and Artifacts

Art and artifacts give us insight into culture, tradition, and beliefs of people who lived in a particular era.

## Art

Primary art sources can include \_\_\_\_\_, architecture, photos, films, \_\_\_\_\_, and online images. \_\_\_\_\_ in the form of sheet music or audio and video performances are also primary sources.

## Artifacts

Artifacts are objects made by \_\_\_\_\_. Examples of artifacts are clothing, \_\_\_\_\_, weapons, dishes, kitchen utensils, and \_\_\_\_\_.

## Finding Primary Sources

### Libraries

Libraries have collections of books, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and other printed materials.

### Museums

Visit museums to find \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and other works of art.

### Archives

Primary sources stored in archives include personal records, \_\_\_\_\_, and organizational or government \_\_\_\_\_.

Schools, \_\_\_\_\_, organizations, and even home are other places you can find primary sources.

## Evaluating and Analyzing Primary Sources

Historians ask a series of questions to establish the historical \_\_\_\_\_ of primary sources.

### Who Wrote or Created It?

Useful information about an item's creator includes the following:

- Did \_\_\_\_\_ person or a group make it?
- Was the \_\_\_\_\_ old or young?  
Male or female?
- What \_\_\_\_\_ standing did the creator have? Was he or she famous or ordinary? Rich or poor?

Some items may be created or published anonymously or under a fake name.

### Who Was the Intended Audience?

The audience plays a key role in shaping a \_\_\_\_\_ or work of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Examples:** a piece of pottery intended for a king; government records designed to help identify needs

### Why Was This Source Created?

Audience and \_\_\_\_\_ are intertwined.

**Example:** If a potter's audience is a king, the pottery will serve a different purpose than if it's designed for a common person.

## When and Where Was the Source Created?

Some artifacts list their \_\_\_\_\_ of creation as well as their creator's name.

**Example:** the Declaration of Independence includes a date and a list of signers

Ways to check authenticity:

- **Relative Dating** - experts \_\_\_\_\_ the record to other sources from the same period
- **Radiocarbon Dating** - checking the age of an artifact by measuring its \_\_\_\_\_ content

## Is the Source Truthful?

Often historians \_\_\_\_\_ about events and some primary sources may contradict each other.

- Historians need to carefully \_\_\_\_\_ sources to see how they differ or support each other.

## How Objective Is the Source?

To maintain \_\_\_\_\_, historians avoid being swayed by their personal opinions and avoid bias.

Historians often use the information they gather from primary sources to find the following:

- 
- 
- *comparing and contrasting points of view of events*

## Identifying and Evaluating Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are \_\_\_\_\_ accounts of an event or a person's life.

- a document or artifact that explains an event at a \_\_\_\_\_ date

### Scholarly Works

- published by historians who have \_\_\_\_\_ a topic in great depth
- usually include a \_\_\_\_\_, or list of sources
- sometimes use \_\_\_\_\_ to provide additional information

### Scholarly Journals

- written by \_\_\_\_\_ in their fields
- aimed at \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- include bibliographies and \_\_\_\_\_

### Magazines

- may cover \_\_\_\_\_ related to history
- may not have a bibliography or footnotes
- may include a brief statement about the \_\_\_\_\_

### History Textbooks

- help find ideas for topics to \_\_\_\_\_
- give a general \_\_\_\_\_ of the topic

### Biographies

- detailed descriptions or accounts of another person's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- can be books, films, multimedia, etc.

### Reference Books

- such as \_\_\_\_\_ provide summaries of various events of the past
- reference books are available \_\_\_\_\_



## Lesson Activity Using Primary and Secondary Resources

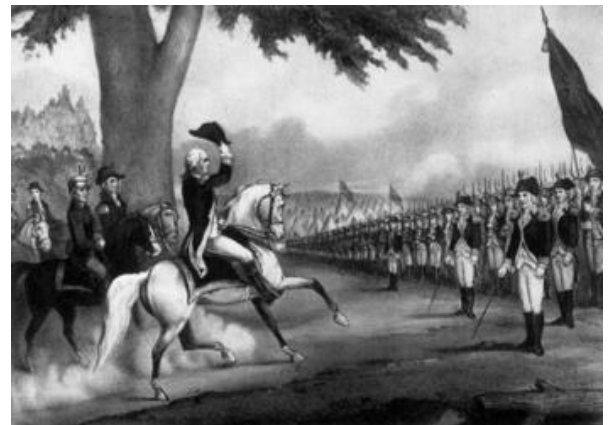
### Question 2

You learned that images can also be primary sources. By analyzing an image, you can learn about the creator's point of view.

#### Part A

Fill in the clue that the creator of the engraving supports Washington's actions?

Washington is the \_\_\_\_\_ primary \_\_\_\_\_ secondary figure in the image. The \_\_\_\_\_ of George Washington indicates the creator respected and supports his actions.



## Summary

Why is it important to distinguish between primary and secondary sources?