

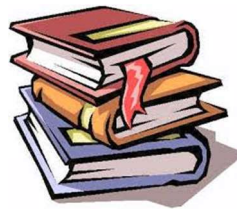
Primary vs. Secondary Sources

What is a primary source?

A primary source is any resource written or created at the time of the event under study. This type of source offers hands-on experience of a particular event. For example, a journal written during the French Revolution would be a primary source for the French Revolution. Some examples of primary sources include: Original documents such as journals, diaries, speeches, news recordings, autobiographies, official documents. Literature, such as poetry, novels written during the time period and on the time period. Artifacts or picture of artifacts from the time period such as clothing, pottery, buildings.

Some examples of primary sources would include:

- *Anne Frank*, diary of a young girl which shows the experience of a Jewish girl and her family during the Holocaust.
- Newspaper interviews and reports at the time of the Halifax explosion
- CBC Archives – *Pierre Elliott Trudeau: Philosopher and Prime Minister*
- Ancient Greek pottery
- The Coliseum



What is a secondary source?

A secondary source is usually written after the event. It tends to interpret or provide an analysis of the event. Secondary sources usually are based on primary sources and may include some primary in them (e.g. an article on life during the reign of Queen Victoria may include passages from her journal).

Some examples of secondary sources include:

- Textbooks, criticisms, commentaries
- An article from a magazine which interprets or offers opinions on a topic such as Maclean's - *How Tomson Highway blazed a trail for Indigenous artists*
- A book written after the event that discusses opinions or views of the event.
- Dictionaries and encyclopedias