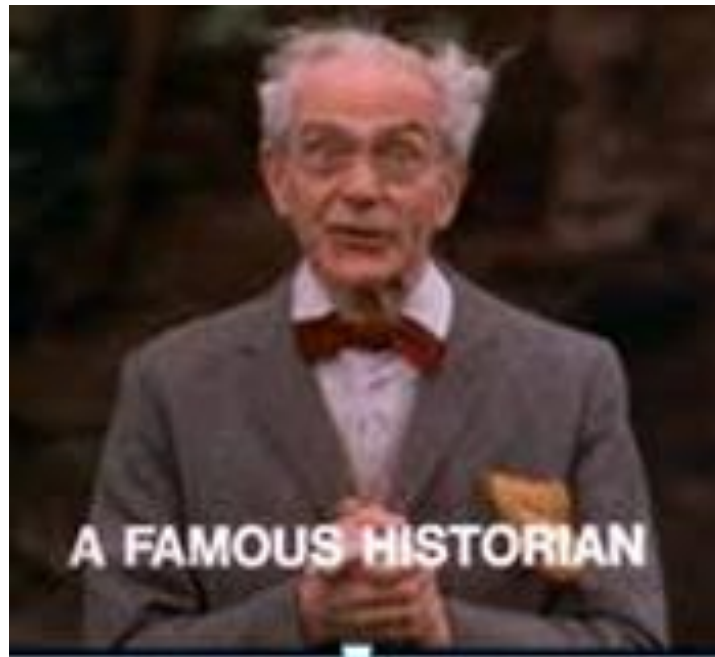


WHAT TYPES OF SOURCES DO HISTORIANS USE?

Grade 7, Unit 1, Lesson 4



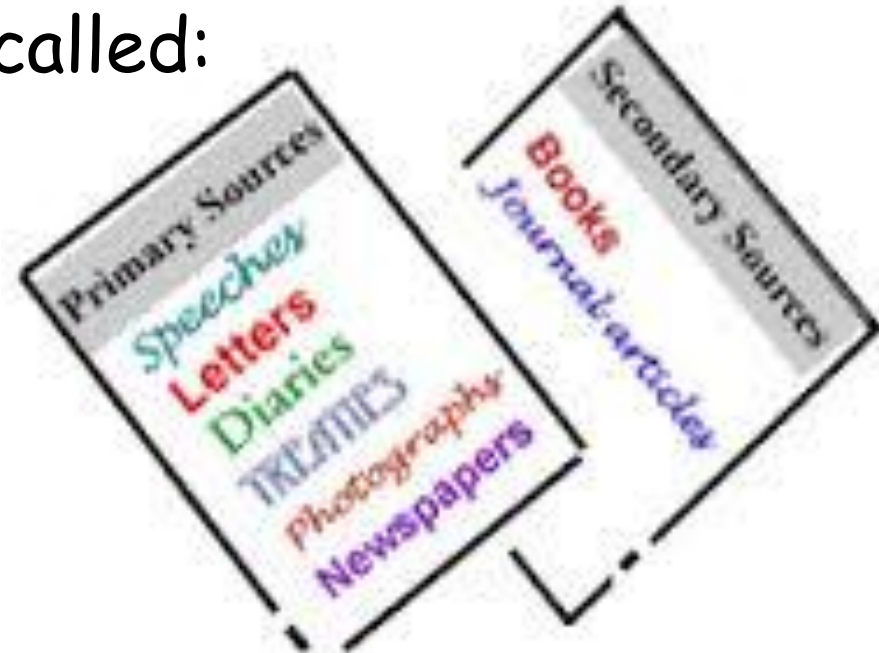
TYPES OF SOURCES

--When Historians study an event, they use sources related to the event

-- Historians classify the sources they use in two categories called:

--Primary Sources

--Secondary Sources



PRIMARY SOURCES

What is a primary source?

- A Primary Source is information that was created at the **same time** as an event or by a person directly involved in the event.
- Actual accounts of an event
- The ORIGINAL source!
- The MAIN source!
- NOT a copy!
- The REAL thing!



Characteristics

--Firsthand information about an event

--Includes words, images, or objects created by persons directly involved in an event

--Do not include historian's analysis or interpretation of the sources

Examples:

--Physical/Material remains: buildings, roads, tools, weapons, coins, tapestries, pottery, battle sites, clothing

--Geographic records: maps, charts, place names

--Visual records: drawings/paintings, photographs

-- Written records: letters, diaries, memos, laws, books, reports, trials, public meetings, inscriptions on buildings, receipts, email

POP QUIZ

Imagine you are a historian who wants to know what American Middle School students learned in school from 1950-2000. Which of the following would be considered Primary Sources? (more than one)

- A) Interviews with people who went to middle schools or taught middle school in the 1980s
- B) State laws about education requirements in the 1970s
- C) A report written by a historian in 2010
- D) Textbooks used in schools in the 1960s



SECONDARY SOURCES

Characteristics

- Contain second hand information
- Created by people who were not eyewitnesses to the event
- Descriptions of events that include analysis or interpretation of primary sources to describe a past event

Examples:

- A written analysis of old firsthand interviews about an event
- A book that describes an event written many years after the event

Secondary Source

- History Textbooks
- Encyclopedias (Print/Online)
- Biographies
- Reference Books
- Non-Fiction History Books
- Editorials
- Journal Articles

POP QUIZ

Imagine you are a historian who wants to know what American Middle School students learned in school from 1950-2000. Which of the following would be considered **Secondary Sources**? (more than one)

A) An interview with the neighbor of a person who was a middle school teacher in the 1950s

B) An article written in 2010 about middle school in 1960s

C) A final exam from a social studies class in 1980

D) A textbook about the history of middle school education



HOW IS THE SOURCE BEING USED?

--The difference between a Primary Source and a Secondary Source is how the historian uses the source

--For example, when studying what students learned in middle school from 1950 to 2000 textbook used in that time period is a Primary Source—it's firsthand material.

--A textbook is also a Secondary Source about the events written about in the textbook—it explains events long after they happened.



WHAT'S BETTER?

--A primary source is not necessarily better than a secondary source because not all primary sources are of equal value in helping a historian study an event.

--How does a historian decide which sources are the most accurate when studying an event?

--A Historian does three things when examining a source:

1. Distinguishes between Facts and Opinions
2. Checks for Internal Consistency or Contradictions
3. Checks for External Consistency or Contradictions
 - Corroboration



FACT or OPINION?

- A fact is something that is true about a subject and can be tested or proven
- Look for clues such as: " 56% of....", or "The President attended..."
- An opinion is what someone thinks about that subject.
- Look for clues such as: "I believe...", "It's obvious...", or "They should..."

--Which part of the following statement is fact?
Which part is opinion? How do you know?

--Records show that most middle schools require students to take social studies; however, they should also require foreign languages.

Fact -

For real, it's a Fact!



INTERNAL INCONSISTANCIES AND CONTRADICTIONS

--**Internal**- Within a single document

--**Contradiction**- the facts presented cannot all be true; they clash with each other

--**Inconsistency**- the facts are presented differently, which may raise questions about the source's accuracy

--Which might be less accurate? Why?

1.) A diary entry states that John went to school on Monday, and then later says that John and Mary went to school on Monday.

2.) A diary says that John went to school on Monday, and then later states that John never went to school.



EXTERNAL INCONSISTANCIES AND CONTRADICTIONS

--**External**- When comparing multiple documents

--**Contradiction**- the facts in the two sources are at odds with each other and both cannot be true

--**Inconsistency**- factual details are presented differently, which may raise questions about each sources' accuracy

--Which is less accurate?



1.) A diary entry states that John went to school on Monday. An interview with another students indicates that John and Mary went to school Monday.

2.) A diary says that John went to school on Monday, but school attendance records show that John never went to school.