

Name: _____

Primary vs. Secondary Sources

A **source** is something that provides information about an event or topic. Sources are used in all subject areas, from history to language arts to science. There are two main kinds of sources.

Primary Sources

Primary sources are **firsthand** accounts or descriptions. They are made by people who were present to see or experience something themselves.

Primary sources do not have to build on other sources.

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are **secondhand** accounts or descriptions. They are made by people who were not present to see or experience something themselves.

Secondary sources build on primary or other secondary sources.



- artifacts and buildings
- original novel or poem
- original artwork
- scientific experiment and data

- secondhand documentary
- artwork showing specific events the artist was not present to experience



Articles can be primary or secondary sources depending on whether or not the writer was present at an event or directly experienced the subject matter.

ALWAYS ASK:

- Was the creator present to see or experience it?
- Was the creator commenting on another source?