

Is it a Primary OR secondary source of history?



A primary source is an original material created during the time under study. Primary sources can be original documents (such as letters, speeches, diaries), creative works (such as art, novels, music and film), published materials of the times (newspapers, magazines, memoirs, etc.), institutional and government documents (treaties, laws, court cases, marriage records) or relics and artefacts (such as buildings, clothing, weapons, tools etc.).

Primary sources of information can include:

- literary works
- original documents such as diaries, letters, original manuscripts
- archival material, such as official documents, minutes, etc. recorded by government agencies and organizations
- original research studies, also called empirical studies
- first-hand oral accounts/interviews/testimony

Examples of primary sources include:

- Artefacts
- Books
- Diaries
- Ephemera
- Journals
- Ledgers
- Maps
- Letters
- Manuscripts
- Newsletters
- Pamphlets
- Photographs
- Videos

Secondary sources put primary sources in context. They comment, summarise, interpret or analyse information found in primary sources.

Secondary sources are usually written by individuals who did not experience firsthand the events about which they are writing.

Examples of secondary sources include:

- academic books
- biographies
- journal articles
- magazine articles
- dissertations
- theses
- essays
- encyclopedia articles

