

Primary Sources

What are Primary Sources?

- Primary sources are documents or artifacts created during a historical event or by someone who personally witnessed a historical event.
- Primary sources can take many forms, including:
 - First-hand accounts—oral histories, memoirs, diaries, letters, interviews, etc.
 - Media accounts—newspaper or television report
 - Political or legal documents—Congressional Records, Presidential Papers, Court rulings, Speeches, census or tax records
 - Artistic works—Photographs, paintings, sculptures, films
 - Artifacts—clothing, buildings, pottery
- All primary sources, except first-hand accounts, must have been created at the time of the historical event that you are researching.
- First-hand accounts must be an explanation of the historical event that you're researching by someone who personally witnessed the event.



Where Can I find Primary Sources?

There are many places to find primary sources online, like websites for archives and museums. Here are some places where you can find primary sources:

[Library of Congress](#)

[National Archives and Records Administration](#)

[History Matters](#)

[National Security Archive](#)

[FBI Archive](#)

[Foreign Relations of the United States](#)

[Tenement Museum](#)

[Herbert Hoover Library](#)

[Franklin D. Roosevelt Library](#)

[Harry S. Truman Library](#)

[Dwight D. Eisenhower Library](#)

[John F. Kennedy Library](#)

[Lyndon B. Johnson Library](#)

[Richard Nixon Library](#)

[Gerald Ford Library](#)