

Source Analysis

What is Source Analysis?

Source Analysis is a way of checking whether a source is reliable through six elements.

What elements should be analysed?

When doing a source analysis, you should look for the **context** of the source, the **reason (motive)** for making the source, the **audience** the source was aimed at, the **origin** of the source and its creator, the **perspective** the source shows, and the **information** the source gives out. Use these elements to assess the reliability, the validity, and the type of source.

What are the different types of sources?

The two types of sources are primary and secondary sources. A primary source is a first-hand account or retelling of an event or topic. Most diaries, letters, artworks, minutes, artifacts, ruins, geoglyphs, corpses, interviews, photos, videos, and recordings are primary sources. Primary sources are generally very reliable, but in some cases (e.g., the Bayeux Tapestry) they can be misleading. Secondary sources are sources that analyse, interpret, restructure, or restate primary sources. Examples of these are textbooks, essays, theses, and articles. Secondary sources can sometimes obscure the facts with opinions and aren't always as reliable as some primary sources.

Worksheets

Complete the following worksheet on Source Analysis (skip Question 3), either in your books or in a document.

Check your learning 5.2

Remember and understand

- 1 In your own words, write a definition for primary and secondary sources.
- 2 Make a table that lists some examples of primary and secondary sources.

Apply and analyse

- 3 Explain what we can learn from oral history and identify some of the advantages and disadvantages of oral accounts.
- 4 Imagine you are a historian in the year 2100, studying the life of a person who died in 2013. What primary and secondary sources could you use to gather evidence about their life? List two of each.

Evaluate and create

- 5 Compare and contrast the usefulness of primary and secondary sources. List three advantages and three disadvantages of each.