

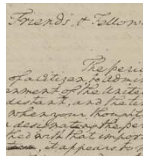
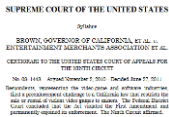
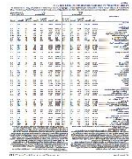




What are Primary and Secondary Sources?

Primary Sources:

- are the raw evidence, artifacts or documents that mostly closely record an event
- include first-hand accounts created by those who witnessed or experienced an event
- are typically created during or recently after an event
- are, more broadly, from the time period being studied
- include objects of creative expression, such as a poem or piece of artwork

Secondary Sources:

- are texts or other media created from the analysis of primary sources
- include scholarly texts such as journals and books published by professors
- are often further removed – both in time and perspective – from the actual event
- include contemporary analyses of past events
- include an analysis or commentary on any type of creative work

Types of Primary Sources:	Primary Source Example:	Secondary Source Example:
Personal Papers speeches, interviews, letters, diaries, notes, drafts, manuscripts, email, digital files	George Washington's Farewell Address 	Addressing America : George Washington's Farewell and the Making of National Culture, Politics, and Diplomacy, 1796-1852
Government Documents and Official Records laws, court cases, public hearings, transcripts, agency records, birth records, websites	Supreme Court Case: Brown v. EMA 	"Violent Video games and the Supreme Court: lessons for the scientific community in the wake of Brown v. EMA"
Data datasets, surveys, polls, data publications, transcripts, statistical reports	Panel Study of Income Dynamics 	"Measuring poverty using the Supplemental Poverty Measure in the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, 1998 to 2010"
Media newspaper articles, T.V. and radio broadcasts, social media, blogs, twitter and facebook posts, advertisements	Washington Post newspaper articles 	"News Frames and Story Triggers in the Media's Coverage of Human Trafficking"
Creative Works Novels, short stories, poems, drama, musical scores, artwork	To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf 	"The Global Resonances of Modernism and Feminism in Virginia Woolf and Shen Congwen"
Visual & Audio Materials Photographs, maps, films, audio recordings	National Wetland Inventory maps 	"Beyond the wetland border: Estimating the impact of roads for two species of water snakes"
Original Findings Technical reports, field and lab notes, direct scientific findings reported by the researcher	"Use of oral cholera vaccines in an outbreak in Vietnam: a case control study" 	"Post-licensure deployment of oral cholera vaccines: a systematic review"

What are Primary and Secondary Sources?

Caveats

- What counts as a primary source may vary by discipline. For example, in the social sciences, newspaper articles are a common type of primary source because they are firsthand journalistic accounts of recent events. However, if a newspaper article is reporting on a scientific discovery, scientists may consider the research report published by the scientist to be the primary source and not the newspaper article. If in doubt, ask a librarian or your professor!
- In some cases, what counts as a primary source may also vary depending on the vantage point from which the source is viewed. For example, consider Noam Chomsky's book, "Culture of Terrorism," published in 1988. In this book, Chomsky discusses a number of newspaper articles, including a New York Times article published in 1987. In 1989, we might talk about the 1987 New York Times article as a primary source and Chomsky's book, "Culture of Terrorism" as a secondary source. However, if you were to analyze Chomsky's book today, Chomsky's book might also legitimately be considered a primary source because the book reflects a perspective from the late 1980s and also directly communicates Chomsky's point of view. Again, if in doubt, ask a librarian or your professor!