

Primary vs. Secondary Sources

Secondary sources

- A history book—This could be a textbook, a popular history book, or an academic monograph (i.e. a detailed study of one specific history topic).
- A history documentary made by historians
- A history museum exhibit
- **Anything created *after* the time we are studying by someone who wanted to understand and explain the time we are studying.**

Primary sources

Anything created *during* the time we are studying. This could be virtually anything that helps a historian understand the time period she is studying:

- A history book written during that time
- A novel
- A documentary made during that time
- Any other kind of film
- A photograph
- A painting
- A drawing
- A memoir
- A diary
- A recipe
- Any other piece of writing
- A statue
- A vehicle
- Virtually any object that can tell us more about the time (Provided a *writing system* also existed at the time, has survived until today, and historians have been able to translate it. Human societies that did not have writing systems are primarily studied by archeologists.)