

What are Primary and Secondary Sources?

"Primary sources are the raw materials of history—original documents and objects which were created at the time under study. They are different from secondary sources, accounts or interpretations of events created by someone without firsthand experience."

Library of Congress, Using Primary Sources. <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/> (accessed 8/14/2017).

Examples of Primary Sources:

Examples of Secondary Sources:

Teacher's What are Primary and Secondary Sources?

Read aloud the following excerpt, more than once if needed to help full comprehension. Optionally, review the citation for the excerpt to review/introduce how an online source is cited.

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Library of Congress, Using Primary Sources. <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/> (accessed 8/14/2017).

Examples of Primary Sources:

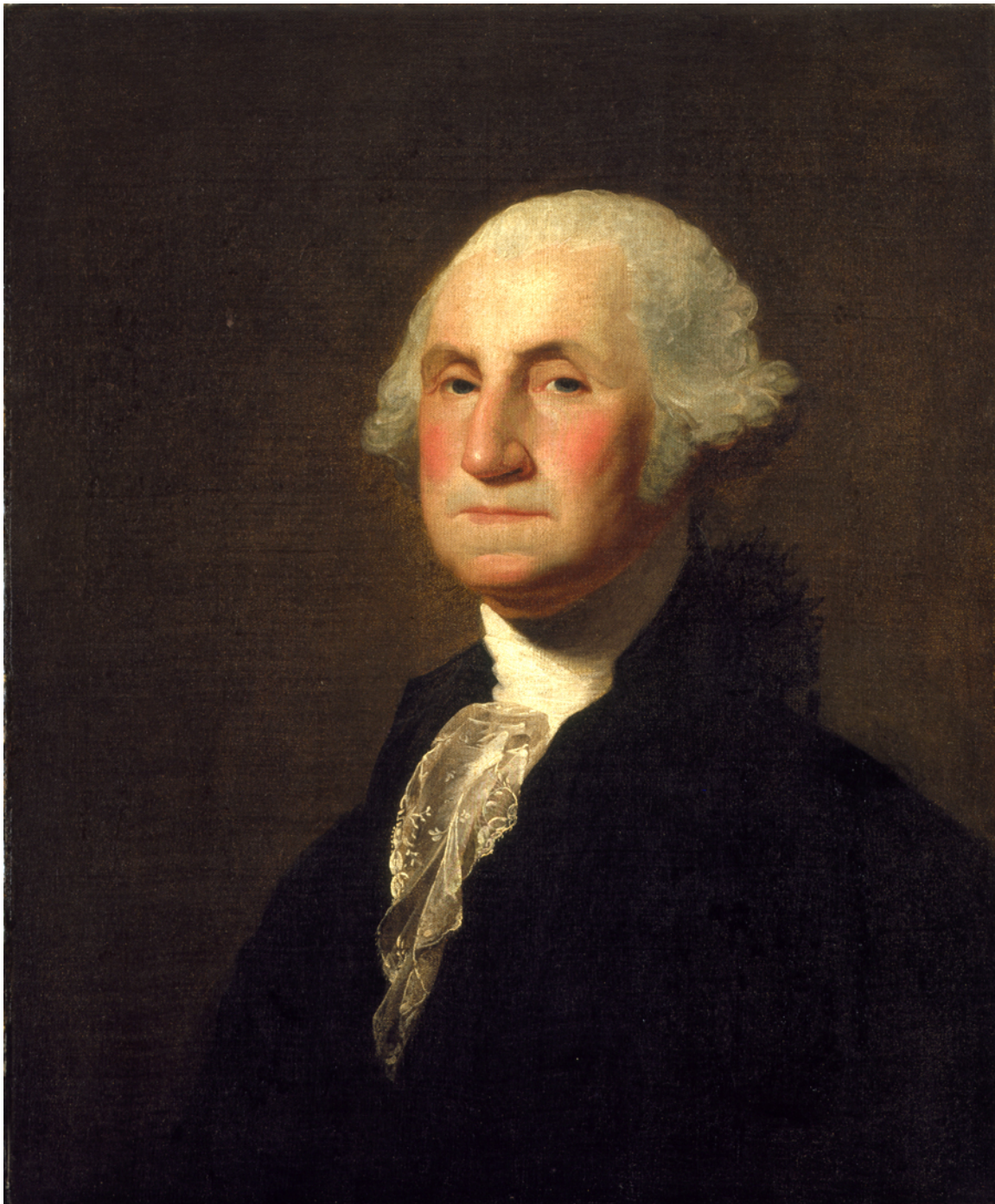
Students should name original documents, creative work, or artifacts, all of which were created by those who lived during and experienced the time that is under study. Primary sources provide inside views of a particular event, person(s), and/or environment. Some examples that students might mention are:

- *Diary of Anne Frank*
- *The Liberty Bell in Philadelphia*
- *United States Declaration of Independence*
- *Michelangelo's David statue, as well as his writings and drawings*
- *Beethoven's Symphony No. 5*
- *Students' own photos, poems 'text messages,' and other items that they create originally*

Examples of Secondary Sources:

Students should provide examples of items that represent analyses and interpretations of events. Students might also demonstrate their understanding that some secondary sources include various types of primary sources. For example, an exhibition that shows how the Statue of Liberty was built might include pieces of materials used during the construction, personal items of those who worked on the statue, popular music of the time, etc. Some examples that they might name are:

- *a contemporary magazine article*
- *an exhibition about George Washington*
- *a book about the changing role of women in the US during and after World War II*
- *a history textbook*
- *a student's essay on the activism of Sojourner Truth*



George Washington by Gilbert Stuart, ca. 1798
Courtesy Mount Vernon Ladies' Association

Teacher's Primary Source Analysis: *George Washington* by Gilbert Stuart

1. OBSERVE

a. What kind of primary source is it?

The primary source is an art work, painting of George Washington, portrait, etc.

b. What do you see in the image? Note details of your observation.

Students might describe varying levels of details. Teachers can model critical observation habits by affirming various physical details of the portrait. Students might note details about the portrait being of an older Washington, various facial features and colors, the period attire worn by Washington, and the dark background. Students might also share the quality of painting that they observe, such as Washington's gazing out to the viewer, his appearing stately, rosy cheeks that make him look vital and strong, etc.

c. Read the text below the image. What information do you get from the text?

The painting's title identifies George Washington as the person being painted. The name of the painter is Gilbert Stuart, and the approximate ("ca.") year, 1798, is when the painting was created. The owner of the painting is noted as the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

2. REFLECT

a. What can you learn from studying this primary source?

Students might share what they know and think of George Washington, instead of having learned something new. Some possible new knowledge might be that it is owned by the Mt. Vernon Ladies Association and not by the government; how many paintings of Washington there might be, etc.

b. What do you know about the subject of the primary source? List two or more.

*Students might name various historical events related to Washington. When reviewing student answers to this question, teachers can refer to the "**Timeline**" section of **The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress** website; or **George Washington Biography** interactive at the Mount Vernon website. Also teachers can clarify and correct any myths about Washington that students might mention. For popular myths about George Washington, teachers can refer to **The Man & Myth**, a website by Mount Vernon*

c. What do you know about life at the time when the primary source was created? List two or more.

Washington finished his second presidential term a year before on March 4, 1797. The United States was an independent and agricultural nation. Slavery was legal in most of the U.S. territories. People traveled mostly on foot and on horses, and didn't shower, etc. Teachers can help students relate some of their knowledge to the health conditions of the late 18th century

3. QUESTION

a. What would you like to know more about, after having observed and reflected on the primary source?

Answers will vary.



George Washington and Family, oil on canvas, Thomas Pritchard Rossiter, 1858–1860
Courtesy Mount Vernon Ladies' Association

Teacher's Primary Source Analysis: *George Washington and Family* by T.P. Rossiter

1. OBSERVE

a. What kind of primary source is it?

The primary source is an art work, or painting of George Washington at home, etc.

b. What do you see in the image? Note details of your observation.

Students might describe varying levels of details. Teachers may model critical observation habits by encouraging students to identify various details of the painting. The people in this painting are George Washington, Martha Washington, her granddaughters Eleanor and Elizabeth Custis, and a slave maid carrying a tray with drinks in the background. They are in Washington's study with filled book cases, a lit fireplace with candles, vases, and a bust on its mantle, portraits or drawings on the wall, etc. Washington has a book on his left hand, while Martha and one of the granddaughters seem to look to him.

c. Read the text below the image. What information do you get from the text?

The painting's title identifies the painted subjects as George Washington and the others as "family." Thomas Pritchard Rossiter is named as the painter. It also provides the years when the painting was created as 1858-1860. This painting is owned by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

2. REFLECT

a. What can you learn from studying this primary source?

Students might mention that the painting tells them various things about Washington and his family. He read a lot and had granddaughters. He was a man of wealthy means in his time. Teachers can point out that the period when the painting was completed was nearly 60 years after Washington's death. Students might consider whether the painting also informs them about how the painter and his contemporaries remembered George Washington.

b. What do you know about the subject of the primary source? List two or more.

*Students might mention what they know about Washington's family life, such as he married Martha Curtis, a widow with two children. George Washington inherited Mt Vernon plantation where he, his family, and more than 300 slaves whom he owned lived. When reviewing student answers to this question, teachers can refer to the "**Timeline**" section of **The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress** website; or **George Washington Biography** interactive at the Mount Vernon website. Also teachers can clarify and correct any myths about Washington that students may mention. For popular myths about George Washington, teachers can refer to **The Man & Myth**, a website by Mount Vernon.*

c. What do you know about life at the time when the primary source was created? List two or more.

Washington finished his second presidential term a year before on March 4, 1797. The United States was an independent and agricultural nation. Slavery was legal in most of the U.S. territories. People traveled mostly on foot and on horses, didn't shower, etc. Teachers can help students relate some of their knowledge to the health conditions of the late 18th century.

Some students may notice that the painting was created about 60 years after Washington finished his second presidential term and just before the start of the Civil War. At that time, the Union that Washington helped create was on the brink of the Civil War, fought over slavery and state' rights. People were enjoying the benefits of the Industrial Revolution with such innovations as trains and factory made good. The Civil War was to bring on new understanding and techniques in medicine.

3. QUESTION

a. What would you like to know more about, after having observed and reflected on the primary source?

Answers will vary.

Vocabulary: Book Caption

"Like others in the 18th century who needed medical assistance, Washington relied on a combination of home health remedies, common sense, herbal treatments, and medical science, as dispensed by an array of doctors, surgeons, dentists, barbers, apothecaries, nurses, midwives, and the occasional charlatan or quack. He turned to medical advice found in the books in his library, and ordered an assortment of common and patent medicines for his family, staff, and slaves."

TASK 1: Read the book caption above, and circle words that you do not know. List them on the left column in the table below. Note your definition of those words you understood in context in the middle column. Look up all listed words and note their dictionary definition on the right column.

TERM	YOUR DEFINITION	DICTIONARY DEFINITION
remedies		
dispensed dispense		
apothecaries		
midwives		
charlatan		
quack		
patent medicines		

TASK 2: Is the text primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.

TASK 3: Summarize the caption in your own words.

Teacher's Vocabulary: Book Caption

Some words are underlined as terms that students will need to define. Guide students through comprehension strategies for unknown words and for looking up their definitions in a dictionary.

"Like others in the 18th century who needed medical assistance, Washington relied on a combination of home health remedies, common sense, herbal treatments, and medical science, as dispensed by an array of doctors, surgeons, dentists, barbers, apothecaries, nurses, midwives, and the occasional charlatan or quack. He turned to medical advice found in the books in his library, and ordered an assortment of common and patent medicines for his family, staff, and slaves."

TASK 1: Read the book caption above, and circle words that you do not know. List them on the left column in the table below. Note your definition of those words you understood in context in the middle column. Look up all listed words and note

TERM	YOUR DEFINITION	DICTIONARY DEFINITION
remedies		<i>medicine, treatments for illness</i>
dispensed dispense		<i>prepared and distributed prepare and distribute</i>
apothecaries		<i>pharmacists, people who prepare and sell drugs/medicines</i>
midwives		<i>people who assist women in childbirth</i>
charlatan		<i>a person who talks of knowledge that she or he does not have</i>
quack		<i>a pretender to medical skill, an ignorant or dishonest practitioner</i>
patent medicines		<i>a packaged non-prescription drug which is protected by a trademark and whose contents are incompletely disclosed.</i>
<i>additional word</i>		
<i>additional word</i>		

**National Library of Medicine. "Medical Dictionary." In MedlinePlus.
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/mpldictionary.html> (accessed 8/14/2017)*

TASK 2: Is the text primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.

The excerpt is a secondary-source text as it is describing and interpreting what Washington had as medical resources.

TASK 3: Summarize the caption in your own words.

An example summary may read: Washington had access to what was available as medical care in the 18th century, which consisted of traditional cures and medical treatments that weren't always scientific from people who didn't always know what they were doing. Washington also used medical advice books to care for those for whom he had responsibility.

Pair Work Instructions

Step 1: Write the title of the exhibition section that is assigned to you.

My assigned section is _____

Step 2: Work on vocabulary for reading comprehension. Locate the copy of the Vocabulary Worksheet for your exhibition section. Follow the three instructions below and complete the worksheet during your first reading of your assigned exhibition section:

1. Read your exhibition section and note all words that you don't know on the left column.
2. Note 'your definition' in the middle column for those words for which you can guess their meaning through reading.
3. Look up all listed words and write their dictionary definitions in the right column.

Step 3: Find and review the questions in the "How did George Washington keep others healthy and safe?" handout for your exhibition section. Answer each question on the handout and, as needed, reread your exhibition section and closely examine the images of primary sources included in the section.

Step 4: Select one primary source that exemplifies evidence of George Washington's caring for the health and safety of a person or persons in his charge from your section of the exhibition. Complete a copy of the Primary Source Analysis worksheet for the primary source you have chosen.

Step 5: Be ready to report back and share your work with the class.

Teacher's How Did George Washington Keep Others Healthy and Safe?

AT THE BATTLEFRONT Section

1. As Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, what kind of preventative health decisions did Washington make to ensure the health of his troops?

Washington made decisions about "food storage, placement of latrines, disposal of animal carcasses, and general provisions for clothing and shelter." He also ordered that new recruits be taken to Philadelphia to get smallpox inoculation.

2. Identify and list the primary source in the section that informs you about food supplies ordered by General Washington. What type of primary source is it? And what can you learn from it?

The manuscript is a list of provisions issued under General Washington at Valley Forge, April 1778. It is an original paper manuscript. I can learn that army supplies ordered by Washington were salt, fish, beans, rice, whiskey, rum, beer, and wine for his troops.

3. What event caused Washington to take bold action, what was that action, and why was it bold? List the primary source that is the evidence of Washington's action.

There was an outbreak of smallpox. Washington inoculated and quarantined his troops to prevent its spread. This was both bold and dangerous because it was possible to die from the inoculation, though that was less likely than dying from smallpox.

The primary source is the hand-written order from Washington to Lieutenant Colonel Grier on March 12, 1777.

4. How do the primary source materials you examined add to your view of George Washington?

Answers will vary.

5. What further questions do you wish could be answered?

Answers will vary.

Teacher's How Did George Washington Keep Others Healthy and Safe?

AT THE PLANTATION Section

1. What are the different kinds of sources we have in this section? Which of these tell us about Washington's care for the slaves who lived in his Mount Vernon plantation?

There are drawings, hand-written manuscripts, and tools of and from Washington's era.

There are Washington's list of slaves at Mount Vernon, a doctor's bill for treating both white and black residents at the plantation, and a dental scaler set. There are letters and financial records. In his list of slaves, he documented all of his slaves, including their medical conditions.

2. Washington wanted to be sure that the slaves who worked at Mount Vernon received "every necessary care and attention." What did he mean by that?

Washington wanted to keep his slaves healthy and wanted their ailments treated when they became ill or were injured. He felt that overseers often neglected the health of slaves and made them work when they were unwell instead of taking care of them and "comforting and nursing them."

3. What are the two examples of how Washington took care of the slave's health problems? What do they tell us about Washington?

There are two examples in this section. One is about Washington's long-time valet, William Lee. Lee had bad accidents that made him disabled. Washington changed Lee's job to shoemaker so that he would not have to struggle to walk. The other example is about Christopher Sheels, who was bitten by a rabid dog. Washington sent Sheels to William Stoy, a rabies specialist in Pennsylvania. Sheels survived and fully recovered.

Students will answer differently about what these stories tell us about Washington. Teachers can help students consider how much harder and more expensive it was to travel a long distance in the late 18th century. This may help students understand the extent to which Washington oversaw health efforts for the slaves at Mount Vernon.

4. How do the primary source materials you examined add to your view of George Washington?

Answers will vary.

5. What further questions do you wish could be answered?

Answers will vary.

Teacher's How Did George Washington Keep Others Healthy and Safe?

HOME AND HARDSHIP Section

1. George and Martha Washington never had children of their own. Instead of children of his own, for whom did Washington feel responsible?

Washington "took on the care of stepchildren and grandchildren, as well as orphaned nieces and nephews, for whom he felt a special sense of responsibility."

2. How did Washington help care for his half-brother Lawrence and his step-daughter Patsy?

When Lawrence had tuberculosis, Washington went with him to Barbados, hoping the warm sea air would help. While there, Washington got smallpox, and, despite this trip, Lawrence died. His step-daughter Patsy had epilepsy. He and Martha took her to six different doctors, tried many unsuccessful treatments, and took her to warm mineral baths. She died, too.

3. What were some of the illnesses George Washington suffered from?

George Washington looked strong and healthy, but his ancestors didn't live long lives and suffered from lung disease. In his lifetime, he had fevers, infections, and breathing problems, and he survived at least ten major illnesses including anthrax, smallpox, and malaria, which was very common at Mount Vernon.

4. How do the primary source materials you examined add to your view of George Washington?

Answers will vary.

5. What further questions do you wish could be answered?

Answers will vary.

Primary Source Analysis Worksheet

FIRST, list the primary source you choose as an excellent example of how George Washington looked after the health and safety of those under his care:

SECOND, complete the tasks below:

1. OBSERVE

- a. What kind of primary source is it? How do you know?

- b. What do you see in the image? Note details of your observation.

- c. Read the text below the image. What information do you get from the text?

2. REFLECT

- a. What can you learn from studying this primary source?

- b. What do you know about the subject of the primary source? List two or more.

- c. What do you know about life at the time when the primary source was created? List two or more.

3. QUESTION

- a. What would you like to know more about, after having observed and reflected on the primary source?

Summary Worksheet: George Washington and Medicine

Answer the following three questions. Be sure to provide an example or evidence for each answer.

1. What new information did you learn about George Washington?

2. What also did you learn about medicine during Washington's time?

3. How is the medicine at that time similar and different from today?