

What are Primary and Secondary Sources?

Primary Sources are materials written by people who lived during historical events. Examples include:

- letters
- diaries
- film footage
- autobiographies
- speeches
- eyewitness accounts
- photographs
- interviews
- e-mail
- music

Secondary Sources are materials designed to discuss or teach about an event. Examples include:

- social studies books
- encyclopedia articles
- dictionary entries
- essays
- critiques
- most magazine or newspaper articles
- most reference books
- most books
- most websites

Sources:

Bednarz, Sarah W., et al. *World Cultures and Geography*. Evanston, IL.: McDougal Littell, 2005.

“What is a Primary Source?” <http://www.library.unr.edu/instruction/help/primary.html>
(29 September 2005).