

SIUE TPS WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES FOR PD

ACTIVITY NAME	Defining Primary Sources with Christopher Columbus
OVERVIEW	This is an activity comparing two sources about Christopher Columbus. One source was created in Columbus' time the other was created 400 years later. The understanding goal for students is that primary sources are those created at the time under study.
BEST FOR	<p>This activity is best suited for educators of the following grade levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 4-12</li> </ul> <p>This activity is best suited for educators of the following content areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Studies</li> <li>• Literacy: Reading Language Arts</li> <li>• Any subject that will be using primary sources</li> </ul>
GOALS	Learning a method for defining primary sources with students.
TIME REQUIRED	20 minutes
OBJECTIVES	<p>Participants will learn a method for defining primary sources by participating in an activity in which they will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm words and ideas they associate with the term "primary sources"</li> <li>• Compare two sources about Christopher Columbus</li> <li>• Offer sourced-based evidence for their determinations of whether the sources are primary or secondary</li> <li>• Conclude that primary sources are those that are/were created at the time under study</li> <li>• Conclude that bias can be present in any source be it primary, secondary or otherwise.</li> </ul>
MATERIALS/ RESOURCES	<p>Library of Congress <b>Primary</b> Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Columbus, Christopher. "A Letter of Christopher Columbus" (Spanish version). After 29 Apr. 1493, manuscript. Rome, Stephan Plannck, after 29 Apr. 1493. <i>Parallel Histories: Spain, the United States, and the American Frontier, Global Gateway</i>. Lib. of Congress. 25 Sept. 2012 &lt;<a href="http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?intldl/esbib:@OR(@field(NUMBER+@od1(rbsp+0001_0007)))">http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?intldl/esbib:@OR(@field(NUMBER+@od1(rbsp+0001_0007)))</a>&gt;.</li> <li>• Columbus, Christopher. "A Letter of Christopher Columbus" (First English version). After 29 Apr. 1493, manuscript. Anonymous S.1., s.n., after 29 Apr. 1493. <i>Parallel Histories: Spain, the United States, and the American Frontier, Global Gateway</i>. Lib. of Congress. 25 Sept. 2012 &lt;<a href="http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?intldl/esbib:@OR(@field(NUMBER+@od1(rbsp+0001_0015)))">http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?intldl/esbib:@OR(@field(NUMBER+@od1(rbsp+0001_0015)))</a>&gt;.</li> <li>• Prang, L. &amp; Co. "Columbus Taking Possession of the New Country". c.1893. <i>Popular Graphic Arts, 1890-1900. Prints and Photographs Online Collection</i>. Lib. Of Congress. 25 Sept. 2012 &lt;<a href="http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91481671/">http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91481671/</a>&gt;.</li> </ul> <p>Other Resources and Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Columbus' Account of 1492 Voyage</i>, About this Item. Exhibition item information. <i>Exploring the Early Americas</i> 12 Dec. 2007. MyLOC. Lib. of Congress. 25 Sept. 2012 &lt;<a href="http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/EarlyAmericas/ExplorationsandEncounters/ColumbusandtheTaino/ExhibitObjects/ColumbussAccountof1492Voyage.aspx">http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/EarlyAmericas/ExplorationsandEncounters/ColumbusandtheTaino/ExhibitObjects/ColumbussAccountof1492Voyage.aspx</a>&gt;</li> <li>• <i>Christopher Columbus: Man and Myth</i>. Web page. <i>1492: An Ongoing Voyage</i>. Jun. 1993. Exhibitions. Lib. of Congress. 25 Sept. 2012 &lt;<a href="http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/1492/columbus.html">http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/1492/columbus.html</a>&gt;</li> <li>• "Defining Primary Sources" handout adapted from <i>Defining Primary Sources</i>, Northern Virginia Adventure of the American Mind Partnership. 2 Oct. 2006 (attached)</li> <li>• <i>Christopher Columbus Saw Land!</i> October 12, 1492. Web page. <i>Jump Back in Time. America's Story from America's Library</i>. Lib. of Congress. 25 Sept. 2012 &lt;<a href="http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/colonial/jb_colonial_columbus_1.html">http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/colonial/jb_colonial_columbus_1.html</a>&gt;</li> <li>• <i>What Makes a Source a Primary Source?</i>, Blog. <i>Teaching with the Library of Congress</i>. 4 Oct. 2011. Lib. of Congress. 25 Sept. 2012 &lt;<a href="http://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2011/10/what-makes-a-primary-source-a-primary-source/">http://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/2011/10/what-makes-a-primary-source-a-primary-source/</a>&gt;</li> </ul>
PREPARATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If background knowledge of Christopher Columbus is needed, a review of the above "Other Resources and Materials" may be beneficial</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print at least one copy of the “Defining Primary Sources” handout for every two participants/students.</li> </ul>
PROCEDURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Divide class into groups of 2-3 students.</li> <li>2. Ask the groups to brainstorm what the terms “primary source” and “secondary source” means to them. Explain that there are no wrong answers in a brainstorming session. One person in the group should be a recorder and write down everything that their group members offer. (2-3 min.)</li> <li>3. To the whole group, have someone in each group share something from their brainstorming session. (Usually the person who had to write does not have to be the one who shares aloud.)</li> <li>4. Using a T-chart (one side for primary the other for secondary), write the groups’ ideas on the board for all to see. (If more than one group has the same idea, tally marks could be added.)</li> <li>5. Pass out one copy of the “Defining Primary Sources” sheet to each pair (group) of students.</li> <li>6. Ask the participants to read the definitions of a primary &amp; a secondary source offered on the handout. Ask whether they agree or disagree with that definition. Mention that the dictionary does not give a definition for either.</li> <li>7. Ask the participants to look closely at both sources and consider these questions with their group members. (Questions are also on the handout.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Are these primary or secondary sources?”</li> <li>• “What evidence makes you say that?”</li> <li>• “What do the items tell you about Christopher Columbus?”</li> <li>• “What don’t the items tell you about Christopher Columbus?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>8. Ask for volunteers to share their group’s thoughts about whether each source is a primary or a secondary source aloud. With each answer, ask them, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What in the source or in the bibliographic information makes you say that?”</li> <li>• “What do you know about Christopher Columbus that makes you think that?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>9. After a few groups have shared their thoughts, ask the class to vote by a show of hands as to each source’s status as either primary or secondary.</li> </ol>
ASSESSMENT/ REFLECTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate a discussion about the concept of primary sources with questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “What background information will your students need for this activity?”</li> <li>○ “What may cause many students to think that the painting is a primary source?” (“It looks old.”)</li> <li>○ “Is there a situation in which the painting could be considered a primary source?” (“Studying art, educational materials, or attitudes about Columbus in the late 1800s.”)</li> <li>○ “Because something is a primary source, does that mean it is true?”</li> <li>○ “Are primary sources automatically more reliable than secondary sources?”</li> <li>○ “Is there bias evident in the secondary source about Columbus (the painting)?” “What is that bias?” How is it visible?”</li> <li>○ “Might there be bias in the ‘primary source’ (letter)?” “What might that bias be?” “What might have caused the creator’s bias?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Facilitate a discussion of this method of introducing students to the concept of primary sources with questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Were you and your group members thinking critically with these sources?”</li> <li>○ “Would an activity such as this would help your students to understand the difference between primary and secondary sources?”</li> <li>○ “What grade level would be appropriate for this activity?”</li> <li>○ “What background information and/or skills would your students need for this activity?”</li> <li>○ “What changes and/or variations of this activity would you use with your students?”</li> <li>○ “What else could be done to help students understand the difference between primary and secondary sources?”</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Extension	<p>Share other defining primary sources activities. See:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “When is a Source a Primary Source?”</li> <li>○ “Primary Sources Can Tell a Story”</li> <li>○ “Mindwalk Activity”</li> </ul>

# Defining Primary Sources

## Investigative Question

When is a source a primary source?

1. Read the information below and examine the source items.

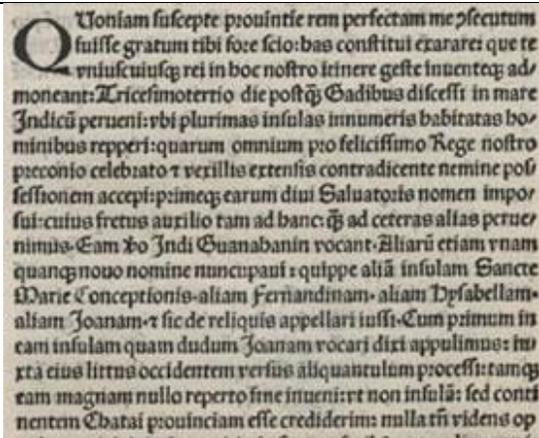
A **primary source** is something that was created in the time under study. A primary source is an original work created by someone who witnessed or wrote close to an event.

A **secondary source** is created using information provided by someone else. Secondary sources are often created with some distance from the event.

2. Consider these questions:
  - Are these primary or secondary sources?
  - What do the items tell you about Christopher Columbus?
  - What don't the items tell you about Christopher Columbus?
3. Discuss: When is a source a primary source?
4. Brainstorm and discuss answers to finish these statements:

Primary sources are \_\_\_\_\_

Primary sources are not \_\_\_\_\_



**TITLE:** Epistola . . . de Insulis Indie nuper inventis (Letter Concerning the Islands Recently Discovered.)

“There I found very many islands, filled with innumerable people, and I have taken possession of them all for their Highnesses, done by proclamation and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me.”

**CREATED/PUBLISHED:** by Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) in Rome: 1493, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress



**TITLE:** Columbus taking possession of the new country.

**CREATED/PUBLISHED:** Boston, U.S.A.: Published by the Prang Educational Co., 1893. 1 print : chromolithograph, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

**Understanding Goal:** Primary sources are created at the time under study.



Published by THE FRANG EDUCATIONAL CO., Boston, U.S.A.

### COLUMBUS TAKING POSSESSION OF THE NEW COUNTRY.

The voyage had lasted 70 days (35 of which being lost by delay at the Canary Islands), from August 3 to October 12, 1492, when Columbus landed on the island called Guanahani by the natives, and named by him San Salvador. This island was rediscovered by the English, and by them called Watling Island. Columbus took possession of the land in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, for the crown of Castile.