

# Primary Sources Can Tell a Story

We all have people, places and things throughout our lives that become a part of our story. This is an introductory lesson that will help students understand what a primary source is and how to observe a primary source for information.

## Lesson:

- Students will observe primary sources for information (dates for timeline, locations for mapping, text and image clues, etc.)
- Students will place the primary sources on a timeline to see progression
- Students will identify places related to primary sources, locate places on a map, and make connections between location, dates, and clues
- Students will learn about me through analysis of primary sources

## Materials Needed:

- 5 to 7 primary sources about the teacher
- “Investigating With Primary Sources” Graphic Organizer
- Note to family

**Step 1:** Students will observe and pull out information from each document. They will be given the information that these primary sources are about my life. The students are investigators that will examine each primary source for clues about me and my life. They will record their findings on the “Investigating with Primary Sources” graphic organizer.

**Step 2:** Through analysis, students within groups will see if they can make a claim on the progression and place of each primary source while demonstrating proof using text and images from the primary sources as evidence.

**Step 3:** Students will ask questions concerning the primary sources to learn more about their teacher.

**Step 4:** Students will write a description about me (teacher), using evidence from the “Investigating with Primary Sources” graphic organizer. They should include what questions that they still have about me and what other primary sources they think may be helpful to investigate their questions.

**Step 4:** Students will write about “how primary sources can tell a story”.

*Writing prompts: How can primary sources tell a story about a person? Are some primary sources better than others to help tell a story? Do primary sources tell the whole story?*



# Wordle Sheet [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Brainstorm words that describe you. Check your spelling with a dictionary.

People you know	
Your interests	
Things you do	
Places you love	

Dear Family,

Please help us with this project. Your child will need 3 to 5 primary sources.

What is a primary source you ask?

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

*Examining primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills.*

*-Library of Congress-*

Your child will need to bring 3 to 5 “primary sources” that tell about their life. Please do not send more than 2 photographs. The documents will become part of their poster. The sources can include a card, receipt, pamphlet, receipt, letter, ticket, or any document that tell who they are as an individual.

Thank you for your help.

Questions?

Please feel free to call.

## Investigating With Primary Sources

Source	What do you see or read? (Share at least 4 observations for each source)	What do you think... about what you see or read?	What do you wonder... about what you see or read?
#1			
#2			
#3			
#4			
#5			
#6			
#7			

Adapted from: "Learning About Primary Sources" organizer, Cheryl Best/2011

What questions do you still have about this person?

What other primary sources could you investigate to learn more about your teacher **or** to answer your questions?

I wonder...	Possible Primary Sources