

Resource Sheet #2

Primary Source Questions Historians Ask

First, determine what type of primary source it is from the left-hand column, and then answer the corresponding questions in the right.

Types of Primary Sources	Questions
Ad or Broadside	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is it promoting?• What is the main idea?• Who is the audience?• What images are used?• What current ad is similar?
Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What “Elements of a Good Map” can you find on the map?• What does the map tell you about the place and time it was created?• What is the purpose of this map?
Newspaper Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What phrases and words catch your attention?• What was the author’s purpose in writing the article?• What important historical information does this source provide?
Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the object.• What is it made of?• How might it have been used?• What does the object say about the life, times, and technology of the people who used it?• Is there anything that has replaced this object today? How is it different?
Pictures and Photographs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What clues can you find about the location and date?• What are the main messages?• What is the most important historical information this source provides?
Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When was the document written?• Identify FATP.• Why was this document created?• Why do you think someone chose to save this document?