

## SIRS Common Core Guide: Understanding Primary Sources

### Step 1: Primary Sources 101

#### 1. What Are Primary Sources?

**Primary Sources** are original, first-hand materials about people, places, or events created by people who were personally involved.

Conversely, **secondary sources** are *analyses of* people, places, or events created by those who were not present.

#### 2. Examples of Primary Sources Include:

- Advertisements
- Court Records
- Government Documents
- Interviews
- Newspapers
- Objects
- Photographs
- Press Releases
- Speeches

#### 3. Find Primary Sources in [ProQuest SIRS Issues Researcher](#)

Narrow your search results by clicking on **Primary Sources for documents** or **Graphics/Multimedia for photographs**.

List three examples:

Example 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Example 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Example 3: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Common Core Standard\*

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.10](#) Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

#### Narrow your results

[Matching Subjects](#) (7 results)

[All source types](#) (870 results)

 [Newspapers](#) (473 results)

 [Magazines](#) (96 results)

 [Gov't Documents](#) (39 results)

 [Primary Sources](#) (21 results) 

 [Viewpoints](#) (44 results)

 [Reference](#) (7 results)

 [Graphics/Multimedia](#) (177 results) 

 [WebSelect Sites](#) (13 results)

# SIRS Common Core Guide: Understanding Primary Sources

## Step 2: Analyze Primary Sources

Select one of your examples from step one and review it carefully.

### Key Ideas and Details

List the following:

**1. Source Type**

---

**2. Source**

---

**3. Author(s)**

---

**4. Date**

---

**5. Location**

---

**6. Central Message**

Summarize the central message of this primary source.

---



---



---



---



---

### Common Core Standard\*

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.2** Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

### Sample



Primary Source Document

WHITE HOUSE PRESS RELEASE

Source Type

Mar 23, 2014,

Date

Executive Office of the President (EOP)

Source

### Remarks by the Vice President and Dr. Biden to the **Human Rights Campaign** Los Angeles Dinner

By Vice President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden

Authors

J.W. Marriott Los Angeles LA Live

Los Angeles, California

Location

## SIRS Common Core Guide: Understanding Primary Sources

### Step 2: Analyze Primary Sources (Cont'd)

#### Craft and Structure

##### 7. Audience

Who is the intended audience of this primary source?

---

##### 8. Purpose

What is the purpose of this primary source? For example, was the purpose to inform or to persuade?

---

##### 9. Tone

How do words, phrases and ideas expressed in the primary source affect the tone?

---

##### 10. Structure

How does the structure, or elements within the type of primary source, influence the central message?

---

#### Common Core Standards\*

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.5](#) Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

#### Definition

**Tone**<sup>¥</sup> is the general character or attitude of a place, piece of writing, situation, etc.

#### Need Help?

The **structure** of a primary source can influence a message. For example, advertisements contain visuals, photographs may be cropped, speeches involve how words are spoken, and newspaper articles can combine words and visuals. Pay attention to what is included and what is missing in the primary source structure.

SIRS Common Core Guide: Understanding Primary Sources

Step 2: Analyze Primary Sources (Cont'd)

11. Credibility

Is this primary source credible? Explain.

---



---



---

12. Bias

Is this primary source biased? Explain.

---



---



---

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

13. Reasoning

Does this primary source use effective reasoning to convey its central message? Explain.

---



---



---



---

**Common Core Standards\***

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.6](#) Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.8](#) Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

**Definitions**

- **Credibility**‡ is the quality of being trusted in and believed.
- **Bias**‡ is prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

**Need Help?**

Use [iThink](#) to learn how to evaluate sources and identify bias.



## SIRS Common Core Guide: Understanding Primary Sources

### Step 2: Analyze Primary Sources (Cont'd)

#### Common Core Standard\*

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9](#) Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

#### 14. Omissions

Are there any important points that this primary source fails to address?

---



---

#### 15. Context

Explain how events that were occurring when this primary source was created affect your understanding.

---



---



---



---

#### Tip

Go to **Research Tools** for any [Leading Issue](#) and click on **Timeline** to find relevant events:



#### 16. Compare and Contrast

Find an alternative, relevant primary source from this time period.

---

Does this alternative primary source alter your interpretation? Explain.

---



---



---



---

# SIRS Common Core Guide: Understanding Primary Sources

## Step 3: Apply Knowledge

### Evaluate Primary Sources

#### Common Core Standard\*

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1](#) Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

#### Evaluate:

- |                                      |  |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Source Type | <input type="checkbox"/> Location        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tone        | <input type="checkbox"/> Reasoning          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Source      | <input type="checkbox"/> Central Message | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure   | <input type="checkbox"/> Omissions          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Author(s)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Audience        | <input type="checkbox"/> Credibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Context            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Date        | <input type="checkbox"/> Purpose         | <input type="checkbox"/> Bias        | <input type="checkbox"/> Compare & Contrast |

**Draw inferences about the primary source using your research.** Include as many elements as you can from the checklist as evidence to support your conclusions.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

#### Need Help?

An **inference** is a conclusion based on evidence, or clues. For example, you could infer from a photograph of a dog next to a shredded pillow that the dog chewed-up the pillow. You could infer from a tone of voice in the speech that a speaker was passionate about a topic.