



ANALYZING SOCIAL SCIENCE SOURCES IN THE 3RD-5TH GRADE CLASSROOM

Diving Deep into Written Documents, Objects, Oral
Accounts, Maps, Data Sets and More

By focusing on the documents, objects, photographs, and oral histories—students can get a glimpse into the past beyond what a textbook can provide. Analyzing sources is crucial to the study of history. They provide tangible links to the past that help students build personal connections to history.



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Analyzing sources should be a part of every K-12 classroom but is also an important part of college and/or career life. Rather than students glancing through sources or having someone telling them what sources reveal, students should be challenged to become better equipped to analyze sources and come to their own conclusions. The following tools can provide educators assistance in helping students analyze a variety of documents important to the Illinois Social Science Standards.

The purpose of this document is to provide teachers tools to assist students as they examine and analyze sources. Examining sources is a part of all Social Science Standards K-12. Please feel free to use materials “as is” or adapt for classroom use.

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Social Science Standards Connection to Sources

To meet the Illinois Social Science Standards for K-5, students must engage with a wide variety of sources. The following Illinois Social Science Standards address sources specifically.

Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS.IS.2.K-2: Explore facts from various sources that can be used to answer the developed questions. • SS.IS.3.K-2: Gather information from one or two sources with guidance and support from adults and/or peers. • SS.IS.4.K-2: Evaluate a source by distinguishing between fact and opinion
1st Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS.IS.2.K-2: Explore facts from various sources that can be used to answer the developed questions • SS.G.1.2: Construct and interpret maps and other graphic representations of both familiar and unfamiliar places • SS.H.3.2: Explain how different kinds of historical sources (such as written documents, objects, artistic works, and oral accounts) can be used to study the past.
2nd Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS.IS.2.K-2: Explore facts from various sources that can be used to answer the developed questions. • SS.IS.3.K-2: Gather information from one or two sources with guidance and support from adults and/or peers. • SS.IS.4.K-2: Evaluate a source by distinguishing between fact and opinion. • SS.G.1.2: Construct and interpret maps and other graphic representations of both familiar and unfamiliar places. • SS.H.3.2: Explain how different kinds of historical sources (such as written documents, objects, artistic works, and oral accounts) can be used to study the past.
3rd Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS.IS.3.3-5: Determine sources representing multiple points of view that will assist in answering essential questions. • SS.IS.4.3-5.: Gather relevant information and distinguish among fact and opinion to determine credibility of multiple sources. • SS.IS.5.3-5: Develop claims using evidence from multiple sources to answer essential questions. • SS.IS.6.3-5: Construct and critique arguments and explanations using reasoning, examples, and details from multiple sources. • SS.H.3.3: Identify artifacts and documents as either primary or secondary sources of historical data from which historical accounts are constructed.
4th Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS.IS.3.3-5: Determine sources representing multiple points of view that will assist in answering essential questions. • SS.IS.4.3-5.: Gather relevant information and distinguish among fact and opinion to determine credibility of multiple sources. • SS.IS.5.3-5: Develop claims using evidence from multiple sources to answer essential questions. • SS.IS.6.3-5: Construct and critique arguments and explanations using reasoning, examples, and details from multiple sources. • SS.G.1.4: Construct and interpret maps of Illinois and the United States using various media. • SS.H.2.4: Using artifacts and primary sources, investigate how individuals contributed to and the founding and development of Illinois.
5th Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS.IS.3.3-5: Determine sources representing multiple points of view that will assist in answering essential questions. • SS.IS.4.3-5.: Gather relevant information and distinguish among fact and opinion to determine credibility of multiple sources. • SS.IS.5.3-5: Develop claims using evidence from multiple sources to answer essential questions. • SS.IS.6.3-5: Construct and critique arguments and explanations using reasoning, examples, and details from multiple sources. • SS.H.2.5: Use information about a historical source-including the maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose-to judge the extent to which the source is useful for studying a particular topic.

Analyzing Written Documents

Every piece of paper that people leave behind is full of clues. From diaries and letters to newspapers, speeches and census reports, documents tell us about the circumstances of everyday life and about significant events. Historians spend a lot of time in archives studying all kinds of documentary evidence and glean rich information from the written word.

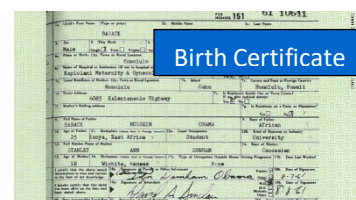
To be most useful, documents must be studied carefully and critically. While it might be clearly stated who the writer is and who the audience is, the intended message may not be obvious. Researchers, whether student or professional, must look beyond the intended meaning to consider hidden agendas, unintended meanings, and bias or point of view of the creator of the document. Other elements to analyze include tone, grammar, word choice, and style. This information will enable the researcher to interpret the document with a critical eye.

Like all other primary sources, documents must be studied in conjunction with other evidence. While documents often reveal information, it is important to verify the information with photographs, objects, oral histories, or other available sources.

Documents: Printed or written material relied upon to communicate, record, or prove something.

Examples include:

Diaries, letters, certificates of birth, death, or marriage, deeds, contracts, constitutions, laws, court records, tax records, census records, wills, inventories, treaties, report cards, medical records, passenger lists, passports, visas, naturalization papers, and military enlistment or discharge papers.



Teacher Tips

If the document is lengthy or difficult to comprehend, try chunking the text in smaller sections. Then ask students to respond to each chunk with any combination of the following:

- Note taking
- Creating a visual
- Answering a question
- Discussing with a partner

Questions for Analyzing Documents	Strengths and Limitations of Using Documents
<p>First Impressions Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your first impressions? • What kind of document is it (letter, ad, newspaper, etc)? How do you know? <p>Looking More Closely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through the document closely. Make a list of any unusual words or phrases. • Is there a date on it? If so, what is it? • If not, are there any other clues that might indicate when it was written? • Is there a location indicated? What is it? • Who wrote or created the document? How can you tell? • For whom was the document written or created? How do you know? • What is the purpose of the document? What made you think this? <p>Thinking Further</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think the writer thought was the most important information to convey? Why? • Does the document convey a certain tone? What does it imply without stating directly? • Can you tell the point of view of the writer? Is it objective? • What is the relationship between the writer and the audience? How can you tell? 	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information on the who, what, where, when, why, and how of an event • Can be a clue to the level of education of the author • Sometimes offers evidence of emotion • Can stimulate the personal involvement of the reader <p>Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a thoroughly objective source • Possibly difficult to read: handwriting difficult to decipher; words or phrases that are unfamiliar, meaning changed over time. • Must be evaluated in conjunction with other evidence to determine whether the document presents information that is exceptional or conforming with previously established patterns. • Bias and agenda of the author to be considered • Identity of the author often unclear (especially true in the case of government documents) • Language is unfamiliar.

Adapted from <http://historyexplorer.si.edu/PrimarySources.pdf>

Analyzing a Written Document

Name of Document: _____ Name: _____

- Letter
- Chart
- Report
- Speech

- Patent
- Email
- Presidential document
- Congressional document

- Telegram
- Identification document
- Advertisement
- Other: _____

Meet the Document

Are there any special markings on the document?

- _____ Stamp
- _____ Postmark
- _____ Handwritten Note
- _____ Official Seal
- _____ Special Letterhead
- _____ Other

Is the document
 _____ handwritten
 _____ typed
 _____ both

Notes:

Try to Make Sense of It

What is the main idea of this document?

Use two quotes (words from the document) that help support the main idea.

- 1.

- 2.

Why do you think this document was written?

Observe its Parts

Who wrote this document?

Who read or received this document?

What is the date of the document?

What other events were occurring at the time of this document?

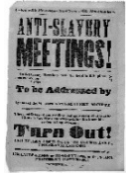
Write down any words you don't know. Look them up and define them in your own words.

What else did you notice/wonder about this document?

Adapted from the National Archives

Analyzing Posters

Posters, also called broadsides, were a popular form of communication in Colonial America. The Massachusetts Historical Society explains “Broadsides are single sheets printed on one side that served as public announcements or advertisements... bringing news of current events to the public quickly and often disappearing just as quickly.” Posters use visuals and words to convey ideas and compress these ideas into a limited amount of space. The purpose of posters could be informational, persuasive, or a combination of the two.



Propaganda Posters



Posters served as propaganda tools in the past, especially during World War I and World War II. The United States Government issued propaganda posters to encourage citizens to take action by enlisting, buying war bonds, or working in factories. Propaganda posters often appeal to emotion over logic. They do this by using popular images of home or nation, vibrant colors, and large fonts to convey simple, direct commands or statements.

Teacher Tips

- Model, model, model how to analyze a poster before students analyze a poster.
- Are there any vocabulary words that need to be defined or how will you tell students to find the meanings of any unknown words?
- It is beneficial for students to work within collaborative groups as discussion can lead to deeper analysis.

Questions for Analyzing Posters

1. Ask students to look deeply at the picture for a good long time. Have them observe shapes, colors, textures, the position of people and/or objects, etc...
2. Have students write down what they see without making any interpretation about what the poster is trying to say.
3. Ask students: What questions do you have about this poster that you would need to have answered before you can begin to interpret it? Ask as many questions as you have.
4. Have students discuss their questions with two other students in the class to try to find some answers.
5. Given the historical context and subject of the piece, ask students what they think the artist is trying to say (what does the poster mean), and who they think is the intended audience?
6. Discuss your interpretation with the class, and be prepared to support your view by referring to specific elements of the image and what you know about the history of the time.
7. Take a few moments to discuss with students how they experienced this process of analyzing posters. For many, it may feel uncomfortably slow, but by practicing and discussing this process, students will begin to respond more thoughtfully and critically.

Strengths and Limitations of Using Posters

Strengths:

- Visual record of a particular moment in time.
- Conveys a variety of details about people, places, objects, and events.
- Conveys information about everyday life and behavior that is best communicated in visual terms (hair and clothing styles, interior design).
- Sometimes provides evidence of the photographer or painter’s beliefs.
- Important to the study of people who did not leave many written records.
- Can stimulate the personal involvement of the viewer.
- Can be used to stimulate the memory of an oral history informant.

Limitations:

- Not a complete or objective source: the image that serves as the lasting record may not equate directly with the reality of the event itself.
- One must consider the bias or perspective of the person/persons who created the poster.
- The people, place, date, and creator are often not identified.

Additional Resources:

- World War II: Posters and Propaganda
<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/world-war-ii/resources/world-war-ii-posters-and-propaganda>
- Elementary Interactive Poster
<http://teachinghistory.org/historical-thinking-poster-1>

Analyzing Posters

Name(s) _____

Scan the poster. What do you notice first?

Words

Is there a printed message on the poster?

Who created the poster?

What words do you think are the most important and why?

Visuals

List the people, objects, places and activities in the poster?

What are the main colors used?

Are there any symbols on the poster?

Additional Questions:

What time period is the poster from? _____

What was happening in history when this poster was created?

Who do you think is the intended audience?

Why was the poster created? List evidence from the poster that tells you this. _____

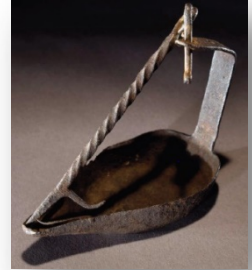
Additional Notes:

Analyzing Objects

Historians study objects, the material culture that people from the past left behind, in order to understand history. Because objects are the products of human workmanship—of human thought and effort—objects tell something about the people who designed, made, and used them.

Sometimes objects are the only evidence remaining from past peoples who, for various reasons, did not leave a written record of their lives. Some cultures did not have a written language. Others, like many enslaved African Americans in the early 19th century, were legally forbidden to learn to read and write. Still other cultures placed less emphasis on the written word and instead followed an oral tradition. In many cases, written evidence was not preserved.

Objects alone will not tell us the whole story, but they help us to understand parts of the story that other sources cannot. Like other primary sources, objects must be studied carefully and critically. Additionally, objects may also include artistic works such as paintings, sculpture, architecture, and jewelry.



Teacher Tips

The Smithsonian X 3-D is a tool released by the museum allowing students, educators and laypeople to eventually interact with 3D models of the museum's 137 million artifacts. They are scanning items each year, with only a fraction available right now. This tool offers students the ability to explore some of the Smithsonian's most treasured objects with a level of control that has never been possible until now. The tool will also allow for 3D print scale models of artifacts (including fossils and the Wright Brothers' aircraft) that could otherwise never be touched.

Watch an overview and explore this new resource at <https://3d.si.edu/article/educators>.

Questions for Analyzing Documents	Strengths and Limitations of Using Objects
<p><i>(If examining a picture of an object, you will not be able to answer all of these questions. Write your answers to as many questions as possible based on what you see.)</i></p> <p>First Impressions Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your first impressions of this object? • Do you have any idea what the object might have been used for? <p>Looking More Closely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it made of? What is the texture, color and smell? Can it be held? Is it heavy or light? Is it intact, or does it look like parts are missing? Is it clean or dirty? Does it look old or new? Does it make a noise? Is it handmade or made by machine? Where was it made? Who made it? • Function: Does it have a practical use or is (was) it used for pleasure? Has it been used? Is it still in use? Has the use changed? Where can it be found? Where could it have been found? What value does it hold to you and to others? • Design: Is it designed well? Is it decorated? How is it decorated? Does it remind you of anything else? <p>Who May be Connected with the Object?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of person might have used the object? • What type of person might have made this object? • What does this object tell us about the maker and user? 	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides clues about its function. • Convey information of everyday life. • Tells of ideas and information which either are not or cannot be expressed effectively in writing or speech (forms, colors, effects of visual arts; personal fantasies, idioms of taste, unspoken significance, customs, and prejudices). <p>Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is only one object to look at, the following challenges exist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How typical the object is of its time or of its type. ○ Whether there are parts missing. ○ Whether decoration is sparse or elaborate.
<p>Thinking Further</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this type of object still being made today? Is it still in use? If not, why do you think it isn't use? • Should this object be in a museum collection? Why or why not? • What questions do you have about the object that you can't answer from just looking at it? 	

Analyzing an Object

Name: _____

What do you think the object is?

What do you think the object is made of?

How do you think the object feels?

What is the color of the object?

What is the shape of the object?

What size is the object?

What are three words that describe the object?

What do you think the object was used for?

Who do you think would have used the object?

Do we still use this object today? If so, how is it different?

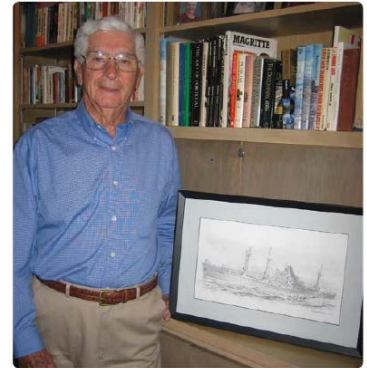
Draw the object:

Adapted from National Archives

Analyzing Oral Histories

Oral histories are the collections of people’s reminiscences, accounts, and interpretations of the past in their own words. They are a record of an individual’s direct feelings and opinions about the events in which he or she was involved. Often, oral histories provide information about significant events that may otherwise lack documentation in written or archival records. Oral histories are obtained through interviews and are preserved on audio and video recordings, in films, and in written transcripts.

Historians study oral histories as primary sources and recognize the advantages they have as source materials. Many times, oral histories record the experiences of individuals who were not able, or who lacked the time, to leave written accounts. The interviewer’s questions often create spontaneity and candor that might not be present in a personally written account. Moreover, in a recorded interview, the informant’s voice may reveal unique speech characteristics and tone that could not be captured in other sources.



Teacher Tips

- Model, model, model how to analyze an oral history.
- Is there any background knowledge students will need before analyzing the oral history?
- It is beneficial for students to work within collaborative groups as discussion can lead to deeper analysis.

Questions for Analyzing Oral Histories	Strengths and Limitations of Using Oral Histories
<p>Before the Interview/Recording Write down/record the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informant name • Date of the interview, location, personal circumstances, and the topic of the interview • What people, places, and dates does the informant mention? • What topics is the informant discussing? Does the informant reveal any emotions about these topics such as excitement, sadness, or happiness? <p>During the Interview/Recording:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of words or phrases does the informant use? Are any of these unusual? If so, write them down and find definitions for them using a dictionary. Do they tell you anything about the informant’s character or history? What was the informant’s role in the events he or she describe? <p>After the Interview/Recording:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the informant affected by the events he or she described? • How does the informant and his or her unique story fit into the broader history you are studying? • How could information obtained from other primary sources reinforce the informant’s story? • Does the informant mention any previously unknown aspects of the event that deserve further exploration? 	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalizes history by recording an individual’s remembrances (or opinions) about their life or an event in which they were involved. • Provides information about a topic or time period that may otherwise lack documentation in written or archival records. • Often conveys emotion clearly. • Contains spontaneity and candor not always present in a personally written account. • May contain unusual dialect or speech patterns. • Often informant is living and may be consulted for clarification or additional information. <p>Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How accurate is oral history? Memory of the informant is fallible. • Self-serving motives of the story teller. • The bias, objective, or the relationship of the interviewer to those being interviewed must be considered. • Informant’s testimony may not be consistent from one interview to the next. • Interviewer’s questions may intentionally or unintentionally influence the informant’s response.
<p>Additional Resources How can I teach students to conduct research in oral history? http://www.oralhistory.org/how-can-i-teach-students-to-conduct-research-in-oral-history/</p> <p>Oral Histories for Your Classroom https://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/education/classrooms/oral-histories.htm</p> <p>Truman Library Oral Histories https://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/oral_his.html</p>	

Analyzing an Oral History

Name _____

Is there a title of what you will be listening to?

If so what does this tell you?

What do you hear in the sound recording?

- Talking
 - Singing
 - Speech
 - Music
 - News Report
 - Interview
 - Discussion
 - Other
- _____
- _____

What is the recording about?

Write two words that describe the recording?

Who do you think made the sound recording?

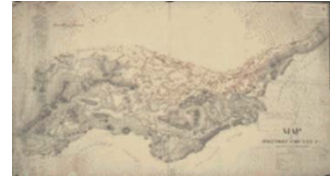
Who do you think the recording was made for?

What questions do you have about this recording?

Draw what you think person(s) in the recording looks like:

Analyzing Maps

Historical maps often hold information retained by no other written source, such as place names, boundaries, and physical features that have been modified or erased by modern development. Historical maps capture the attitudes of those who made them and represent worldviews of their time.



Learning to use and create maps builds students’ spatial thinking skills as well as language skills in the early years. Spatial thinking is important for students to develop as they connect the “why of where” in geography, Earth and environmental sciences, and history. Students who acquire robust spatial thinking skills will be at an advantage in our increasingly global and technological society and will also build a foundation for analyzing environmental issues and challenges.

Teacher Tips

- When introducing young students to the concept of maps as representations of places, begin with classroom maps and community maps.
- Model, model, model how to read maps.
- Are there any background knowledge or spatial concepts students will need before understanding the map?
- It is beneficial for students to work within collaborative groups? Discussion can lead to deeper analysis.

Questions for Analyzing Maps

These simple, open-ended questions push students to look closely at the map without pressuring them to come up with a “correct” interpretation. Students can notice details and make observations without rushing, while the cyclical nature of the questions keeps sending them back to look for more details.

- What is going on in this map? (boundaries of state, show what land was purchased, etc..)
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can you find?

Strengths and Limitations of Using Maps

Strengths

- Maps can measure and describe places.
- Different maps can show us different things about the world and our place in it.
- Maps have become more accurate over time.
- Historical maps often hold information retained by no other written source, such as place-names, boundaries, and physical features that have been modified or erased by modern development.
- Historical maps capture the attitudes of those who made them and represent worldviews of their time.

Limitations

- Students reading a map must understand the idea of *representation*. (what symbols mean, etc...)
- Students need deliberate instruction to understand the idea of representation.
- Not every map is well-designed or well-explained.
- Historical maps capture the attitudes of those who made them and represent worldviews of their time and they do not necessarily represent all views.

Additional Resources:

Map Skills for Elementary Students: <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/education/map-skills-elementary-students/>
 Lessons include directions, objectives, preparation, background and vocabulary. Many lessons for the following grade bands are available.

- Kindergarten & 1st Grade Classrooms; 2nd – 4th Grade; 5th & 6th Grades

Teaching with Maps:

<http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/teaching-with-maps.html>

Historic Maps in K-12 Classrooms

http://publications.newberry.org/k12maps/module_index/index.html

Analyzing A Map

Name _____

1. What is the map of?

2. What is the date of the map?

3. Can you tell who made the map?

4. Where was the map made?

5. In your opinion, why was this map made?

6. What evidence do you have to support your opinion?

7. List three important things learned by studying the map.

8. Which physical qualities of the map do you see?

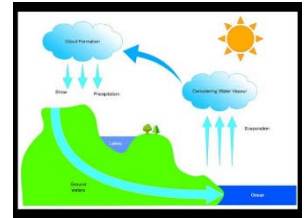
_____ Compass _____ Handwritten _____ Cartographer _____ Scale
_____ Date _____ Title _____ Legend (key) _____ Other

9. What questions are left unanswered by the map?

Adapted from the Truman Presidential Museum & Library

Analyzing Tables, Charts and Graphs

Research examining children's abilities to read and use graphical devices such as tables, charts, graphs, timelines, and more suggests that mastering these skills is no easy task. Students' abilities to comprehend and use these kinds of graphical devices seem to improve with age or experience. For better or worse, the texts that young students encounter on a regular basis are likely to include a multitude of graphics, many of which carry meaning that cannot be gained from the text alone (Fingeret, 2012). However, many students have not acquired all concepts of graphics or developed a high level of proficiency in interpreting graphical devices, even by third grade. This makes it important for us to emphasize the value of graphics and to provide thoughtfully planned instruction in how to make meaning from graphics.



Preparing students to interpret graphical devices is challenging because what is to be interpreted is a fast-moving target. Students are presented with more and more digital, Web-based informational texts, which contain a myriad of new graphical devices, ranging from the simple (e.g., captioned pictures that contain hyperlinks to additional information) to the dynamically complex (e.g., animated, interactive charts and graphs that allow the viewer to explore and transform presented data).

Teacher Tips

12 recommendations for teaching comprehension and composition of graphics in informational text at the elementary level are as follows:

1. Help students see that good readers read the captions/text
2. Talk about graphics during read-alouds and shared reading
3. Emphasize the concepts of importance and extension in talking about text
4. Have students read and write graphics for the same reasons people do outside of a schooling context
5. Use books with clear, persuasive, and engaging graphics
6. Discuss why the illustrator chose to include some specific graphical devices and not others
7. Have students plan the graphics in their own compositions
8. Provide students with opportunities to give and receive feedback on the graphics they create.
9. Pair students to read texts that include rich graphical devices
10. Group children by their graphical development needs
11. Fill the classroom environment with graphics
12. Develop a schoolwide plan for teaching students to comprehend and compose graphics in text

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/diagrams-timelines-and-tables>

Questions for Analyzing Tables, Charts and Graphs	Strengths and Limitations of Using Tables, Charts and Graphs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the title or caption. What is the subject or topic of the chart/table/graph/timeline? • Read any other words and determine what kind of information is being presented. • What information is being presented in each row/column heading? • Are there any unknown words? If so, what are they? How can you determine what they mean? • What do you think the purpose of the table/graph/chart/timeline is? • What is the main idea of the entire visual? • Can you summarize the information? 	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates information visually. • Can provide information in a simpler format than text. • Can be used to organize large amounts of numerical data. • Can show comparisons or relationships in a visual appealing way. <p>Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need help developing the skills to analyze and interpret information correctly. • Data can be shown in ways intended to persuade instead of inform. • Graphs and tables can be misleading when numbers are left out or benchmarks are not used.
<p>Additional Resources Comprehensive Guide of All Things Tables, Charts, Graphs http://www.readingrockets.org/article/diagrams-timelines-and-tables</p>	

Analyzing Tables/Charts/Graphs

Name _____

What is the title or caption?

What is the subject or topic?

Read all the headings and labels. List them here.

What information is being presented?

What is the main idea of the entire visual?

Summarize the information and apply it to what you are learning in class or in what you are reading.

Analyzing Political/Editorial Cartoons

A political cartoon is a cartoon that can make a point about a political issue or event. Many can be found in newspapers. They are typically found on the editorial pages. You can also find them in newsmagazines and on political Web sites.

Political cartoons can be humorous, especially if the reader understands the issue that they're commenting on. Their main purpose, though, is not to amuse, but to persuade. A good political cartoon makes the reader think about current events, but it also tries to sway opinion toward the cartoonist's point of view. The best political cartoonist can change a reader's mind on an issue without the reader realizing it.

To analyze cartoons, it is important to be aware of the persuasive techniques used in political/editorial cartoons. Cartoonists use several methods, or techniques, to get their point across. Not every cartoon includes these techniques, but most political cartoons include at least a few. Some of these terms include:

- **Symbolism:** Cartoonists use simple objects, or symbols, to stand for larger concepts or ideas.
- **Exaggeration:** Sometimes cartoonists overdo, or exaggerate, the physical characteristics of people or things to make a point.
- **Labeling:** Cartoonists often label objects or people to make it clear exactly what they stand for.
- **Analogy:** By comparing a complex issue or situation with a more familiar one, cartoonists can help their readers see it in a different light.
- **Irony:** Irony is the difference between the ways things are and the way things should be, or the way things are expected to be. Cartoonists often use irony to express their opinion on an issue.



Teacher Tips

- Model, model, model how to read a political cartoon.
- Note any background knowledge or spatial concepts students will need before understanding the cartoon.
- It is beneficial for students to work within collaborative groups as discussion can lead to deeper analysis.
- Provide groups a graphic organizer or a series of questions to help them identify the key parts of a cartoon that need to be focused on to analyze the author's message/point of view.

Questions for Analyzing Political Cartoons

Once the persuasive techniques listed above have been identified, the following questions could be used.

1. What is going on in this editorial cartoon?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more can you find?

Strengths and Limitations of Using Political Cartoons

Strengths

- Can be engaging to students.
- Can be used to teach perspective/point of view.

Limitations

- Cartoonists use simple objects, or **symbols**, to stand for larger concepts or ideas. These symbols may not be understood by students.
- Analyzing a cartoon is dependent on students' abilities to recognize and define labels, analogies, irony, exaggeration and symbolism.

Additional Resources and Lesson Ideas:

- Cartoon Analysis Guide: This guide includes an overview, about this activity section, learning activity, cartoon analysis guide, learn more about political cartoons section as well as resources for the teacher.
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/activities/political-cartoon/index.html>
- Analyzing Political Cartoons Unit Plan <https://hsp.org/education/unit-plans/understanding-history-through-political-cartoons-for-elementary-students/analyzing-political-cartoons>
- Lesson from Kentucky Historical Society
<https://history.ky.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Cartoons-are-not-just-for-fun.pdf>
- Analyzing an Editorial Cartoon Graphic Organizer
<https://static01.nyt.com/images/blogs/learning/pdf/2015/AnalyzingEditorialCartoon2LN.pdf>

Analyzing a Cartoon

Name _____

Meet the cartoon.

Quickly scan the cartoon. What do you notice first?

What is the title or caption?

Observe its parts.

Words

(Are there labels, descriptions, thoughts, or dialogue?)

Visuals

(List the people, objects, and places in the cartoon.)

Try to make sense of it.

Words

(Which words or phrases are the most significant?)

(List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed?)

Visuals

(Which of the visuals are symbols?)

(What do they stand for?)

Who drew this cartoon?

What time period is it from?

What events were taking place in history during the publication of this cartoon?

What is the message? List evidence from the cartoon or your knowledge about the cartoonist that led you to your conclusion?

Use it as historical evidence?

What did you find out from this cartoon that you might not learn anywhere else?

What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this event or topic?

Adapted from National Archives

Analyzing an Editorial/Political Cartoon

Name _____

1. Describe the action taking place in the cartoons.

2. Explain the cartoonist's message in the drawing and caption.

3. Is this cartoon easy to figure out? _____ Why or why not?

4. Does this cartoon require you to have a lot of background information on this issue, event or person?

_____yes _____no Explain

5. Who is the cartoonist?

6. List any persons portrayed in the drawing:

7. Did the cartoonist exaggerate any physical features of a person? If yes, describe how it was done.

8. Were any symbols use? ___yes ___no If yes, what do they represent?

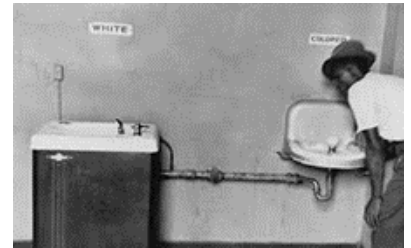
9. Which person or group(s) may be most likely to agree with its message?

Which person or group(s) may disagree with the cartoon's message?

Adapted from Truman Presidential Museum & Library

Analyzing Photographs

Photographs provide images of past events. Historians who study the everyday lives of anonymous people find photographs are an invaluable source. Sometimes photographs are the only means of reconstructing the material world and behavior of people who did not leave many written records. While photographs appear to be the most objective and accurate of all primary sources, they may not be. Photographs are the product of many variables, including, the photographer’s intention, the user’s need, the viewer’s interpretation and the equipment’s technical abilities. It is the photographer—and the camera’s frame—that defines the picture’s content. Thus, the photographer *chooses* what will be in the picture, what will be left out, and what the emphasis will be.



Teacher Tips

- Background knowledge may need to be provided to understand photographs.
- If using photographs as a primary source it is important that students identify the subject and content of the photograph, as well as the contextual information that may not be in the photograph. Like all other primary sources, photographs must be studied in conjunction with other evidence. One must look at many photographs, related documents, and oral histories to determine if a photograph’s information is unusual or part of a larger pattern.
- It is beneficial for students to work within collaborative groups to answer the questions as discussion can many times lead to deeper analysis.

Questions for Analyzing Photographs	Strengths and Limitations of Using Photographs
<p>Who was the photographer? What was the photographer’s intention?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make a list of any people in the photograph. ○ What is happening in the photograph? ○ Make a list of any activities you see going on in the photograph. ○ Are there any captions? A date? Location? Names of people? ○ What kind of clothing is being worn? ○ Is there any lettering on signs or buildings? ○ What time of year is pictured? Time of day? Cite your evidence. ○ Where was the photograph taken? Cite your evidence. ○ If people are in the photograph, what do you think is their relationship to one another? ○ Can you speculate on a relationship of the people pictured and someone who is not in the picture? ○ What do you think happened just before picture was taken? ○ What do you think happened just after the photograph was taken? ○ Who do you think took the photograph? Why? ○ What does this photograph suggest to you? Describe your reaction in a statement. <p>What questions do you have about the photograph? How could you try to answer them? What is one thing you would remember most about this photograph? Why?</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are important to the study of people who did not leave many written records • Can stimulate the personal involvement of the viewer. • Do not require fluency in a particular language to understand. • Can be used to stimulate the memory of people. <p>Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People, place, date, and the name of the photographer are often not identified. • The emotions and thoughts of those involved often are not evident. • Information from this kind of source is often suggestive rather than definitive. • Photographs must be studied in conjunction with other evidence. One must look at many photographs and/or other source materials such as documents and oral histories to determine if the information is unusual or part of a larger pattern.
<p>Additional Resources: Teacher’s Guide: Library of Congress http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Photos_and_Prints.pdf Analyzing Images https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/analyzing-images Analyzing Photographs Graphic Organizer https://hsp.org/history-online/media-library/documents/analyzing-photographs-graphic-organizer</p>	

Analyzing Photographs

Name _____

Fill in the answers to the following questions. Once all questions have been attempted, write a short summary of your analysis of the poster.

What do you notice first when you look at the photograph?

Type of photo (check all that apply):

- Portrait Landscape Aerial/Satellite Action Architectural Event Family
 Panoramic Posed Candid Selfie Documentary Other _____

Is there a caption? yes no

If yes, what is it?

List the people, objects and activities you see in the photograph.

People	Objects	Activities

Write one sentence summarizing the photograph.

Answer any of the following questions that you can find the answers for:

Who took this photo?

Where is it from?

When is it from?

What was happening at the time in history this photo was taken?

Why was it taken?

List evidence from the photo or your knowledge about the photographer that led you to your conclusion.

Where might you find more information about this topic?

Analyzing Photographs

Name _____

Fill in the answers to the following questions.

What do you see?

Is the photo? _____ Black & White _____ Color

Is there a caption? _____ Yes _____ No

If so, what does the caption tell you?

What objects do you see?

What people do you see?

Write two words that describe the photo.

Who do you think took the photo? Why do you think that?

Where do you think this photo was taken? What makes you think that?

How is this photo different from life today?

Where do you think we could find out more information about the people or objects in the photo?

The Huexotzinco Codex Overview

Adapted from Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/codex/>



Lesson Overview

Students will analyze a set of pictograph documents created by native peoples of Puebla, Mexico in 1531. Students will take on the role of historians, study the documents, and create a scenario to explain what these documents were for, who created them, and why. The codex was an accounting of excess taxation and students will decode the images and tabulate the quantities of goods paid to the local government.

Objectives

Students will:

- Analyze primary sources;
- Practice the process of historical inquiry;
- Apply math skills to calculate pictographs.

Illinois Social Science Standards Connections

- SS.IS.1.3-5: Develop essential questions and explain the importance of the questions to self and others.
- SS.IS.2.3-5: Create supporting questions to help answer essential questions in an inquiry
- SS.IS.5.3-5: Develop claims using evidence from multiple sources to answer essential questions.

Materials

Gather the requisite materials ready before each activity:

Review tips, questions and information found on page 13 and 14 of this document.

[Huexotzinco Codex](#) (8 sheets)

[Huexotzinco Math worksheets](#) (3 pages)

[Huexotzinco Math worksheets answer key](#) (3 pages)

[Tribute #1, #2, #3](#)

[Huexotzinco Codex Overview](#)

Procedure

Activity One - Document Analysis

Before class, print out enough sets of the Huexotzinco Codex for each student to have a section. (Students may work in pairs instead of individually.)

1. Create a scenario: **This set of documents was recently found in an old trunk. We know they are from somewhere in Mexico and that they are very old. We will be taking a closer look at these documents and forming an idea of: Who created them? What are they for? When were they created? Where were they created? Why they were created? We might also come up with other questions, too.**

2. Pass out Tribute 1: Ask students, “What do you see?” (Possible answers might include circles, rectangles, drawings, bundles, colors, pictures or symbols (peppers, corn, bird).) Ask students, “What do you think you know?” (Answers should indicate the item is a tabulation of some sort. Count some of the items and record on board or chart paper using cross hatches to indicate groupings for easy counting (bowls /// chilis // corn //// //)).
3. Ask students, “What do you want to know more about?” Continue the scenario: **When historians find things they sometimes have to guess. Then they work together and share theories or ideas. You will each analyze one piece of the document and then we will share our theories.** Continue the scenario: **Historians keep very detailed notes when they are analyzing an artifact. We will take notes about our investigation.** Use a note taking device such as the analyzing charts/tables/graphs graphic organizer on page 14. Allow time for individuals or pairs to study and make notes. Have students find others working with the same piece and share their ideas and observations.
4. Have each group report on its ideas.

Activity Two - Computation

Have the requisite materials ready before each activity: Huexotzinco Math worksheets (3 pages) – one sheet per student or one set per student Tribute #1, #2, #3 - one sheet per student or one set per student.

- a. Continue the scenario: **We received some information from a team of historians. They told us this was an accounting from a town called Huexotzinco (Way-hoat-ZINC-o). The people were required to make a tribute (pay taxes) to the regional government. The historians also told us that the following symbols stand for a numbering system.**
Flag on stick = 20
Bundle of sticks =400
Hanging frame = 8,000
- b. Pass out copies of Tribute #1, #2 and #3, one sheet per student or one set per student. Ask students to try to tabulate the numbers of items. See how they attack the challenge. Do they group items, do they make a list, etc. (If desired, assign particular students or pairs of students to count a particular item.) Pass out the Huexotzinco Math Worksheet(s). Ask students to record their calculations on this new document, to name each item, and to calculate the total numbers of each item. Have students complete one or all three computation sheets.
- c. Share the answers and allow students to self-correct. Explore the various ways students came to their tabulations.

Activity Three - Narrative Explanation

Have the requisite materials ready before each activity: Huexotzinco Codex Overview

- a. Students will work in their groups or individually to write a story outline of the Huexotzinco Codex. What would this set of papers be for? Why was it saved and by whom? Explain to students that **historians make predictions based on prior knowledge, but often their theories are changed when new information is available.** Students will make predictions, citing evidence from the codex. (Students may use all 8 pages or selected pages.) Ask students to share basic theories. Students with similar stories will compare their ideas and come up with a group story outline. Tell students the rest of the information from the Huexotzinco Codex Overview and distribute for their reference.

Ask students to consider their stories and see where they agreed with the overview and where they disagreed. As a class, make a list of questions for future research.

Local History: Mapping My Spot

Adapted from Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/mapping/procedure.html>



Lesson Overview

Students often think of history as tattered documents, worn photographs, and musty books, all of which have little or no relevance to their lives. Maps provide an often-overlooked source of information and a new and compelling perspective on the past. By revising the work of early twentieth century cartographers, and understanding the underlying motivation for their work, students can claim a historical spot of their own.

In an era of great mobility and immigration of families from other countries, students' homes are a haven and an anchor in a neighborhood. By learning about architectural styles and periods and identifying the best features of their homes, students begin to see their homes as places of value in relation to the broader community portrayed on the panoramic map of their town.

In this lesson, students create their town's history for coming generations and place themselves on the map in a literal as well as figurative sense, by producing portions of an updated version of an early twentieth century panoramic map from the American Memory collections. To complete this project, they gather information from a variety of primary sources, including the early twentieth century map, photographs, drawings, and site visits. Each student contributes to the revised map by creating a contemporary map of her or his block.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- become familiar with panoramic and other kinds of maps as primary sources of historical information and become proficient at observing and interpreting maps;
- appreciate their own role in affecting and making history; and
- contribute to a revised panoramic map of their town.

Illinois Social Science Standards Connections;

- SS.IS.1.3-5: Develop essential questions and explain the importance of the questions to self and others.
- SS.IS.2.3-5: Create supporting questions to help answer essential questions in an inquiry
- SS.IS.4.3-5.: Gather relevant information and distinguish among fact and opinion to determine credibility of multiple sources.
- SS.IS.5.3-5: Develop claims using evidence from multiple sources to answer essential questions
- SS.G.1.4: Construct and interpret maps of Illinois and the United States using various media.
- SS.G.2.4: Analyze how the cultural and environmental characteristics of places in Illinois change over time

Materials:

Check out pages 11-12 and pages 18-20 of this document for additional tips, questions, tools and resources for working with maps and photographs.

[American Memory map collections](#)

[Panoramic Maps](#)

[Dover, New Jersey 1903 panoramic map](#)

[Panoramic Photographs](#)

[Touring Turn-of-the-Century America: Photographs from the Detroit Publishing Company, 1880-1920.](#)

Procedure:**Activity One - Investigating Maps**

Students will analyze several different types of maps.

(Prior to the lesson: Search the [American Memory map collections](#) for examples and information that will be useful in helping students to interpret what they see. Assemble a variety of maps (contour, birds eye, panoramic) from various historical periods.)

1. Students identify and examine the different kinds of maps. Invite them to consider and discuss what kinds of maps they're familiar with, and to compare the familiar maps to the historical maps. Lead students in an in-depth discussion of panoramic maps--their history, vocabulary, and purpose--as a form of persuasive medium designed to "sell" a city or town. Visit the [Panoramic Maps](#) collection and read about the maps and their creators.
2. Students compare and contrast the various maps in terms of scale, point of view, detail, date, purpose, and uses. Students record their thoughts on the Analyzing Maps graphic organizer on page 12. Before the students begin, select questions from the Analyzing Maps Teacher Tips on page 11 to focus the group work, and select additional questions to focus and prompt a whole class discussion of their analysis.

Activity Two - Investigating Community

Students analyze a historical map of their community and identify recognizable sites. They date the homes on their block and place their own homes in an historical context.

1. Arrange for time in the computer lab.
2. Students investigate a historical map of their community, such as the [Dover, New Jersey 1903 panoramic map](#) and locate sites that have personal meaning for them (the streets on which they live, schools, parks, and other places they frequent).
3. Students collect data about their homes:
 - Check one:
 - I live in a house
 - I live in an apartment
 - The best features of my home are: (check one or more)
 - It's close to transportation
 - It's close to schools
 - It's close to recreational facilities
 - It's been remodeled recently
 - It's on a quiet street
 - It has a large yard
 - It is very old (historic building)
 - (Write in another feature)
 - Check one and fill in the blank
 - I know my home was built in the year _____
 - I think my home is about _____ years old

- My home has the following spaces
 - Bedrooms
 - Dining room
 - Family room
 - Garage (for _____ cars)
 - Porch
 - Bathrooms
 - Eat-in-kitchen
 - Finished basement
 - Deck
 - Other room(s)?
4. Students take photographs of their homes.
 5. Students should look at the block on which they live. Students should be able to report on the number of houses on the block. Request other information, such as the number of stories each house has, as it meets your requirements for the project.
 6. For record-keeping purposes, keep a master file with the following information:
 - First and last name of student
 - Address
 - City or town
 - Nearest important building or landmark
 - Digital picture number or filename
 - Year in which house was built or approximate age if year cannot be determined

Activity Three - Real Estate Advertising

Students connect with the original purpose of panoramic maps-attracting prospective residents, businesses, and investors to the town-as they look at their own homes through the eyes of potential buyers or renters. They examine real estate advertisements and create advertisements for their own homes.

1. Collect a variety of home real estate ads that include photographs from a local newspaper. Saturday and Sunday newspaper editions usually provide the best selection. Enlarge and duplicate enough copies for each student to have three or four different ads. Ask students to do the following:
 - note the kind of information given in each ad;
 - observe the layout of the ad and print size for each type of information;
 - interpret abbreviations;
 - determine what kind of person might be a potential buyer for each home; and
 - look at the asking price.
2. Students apply what they have learned about their homes advertising to create real estate ads for their own homes. Ads should include photos and descriptive text highlighting the positive characteristics of their homes.

Activity Four - Creating Personal Maps

Students create a collage by drawing or photographing the homes and other structures on their blocks. After the blocks are completed and joined, students write letters to future children in their community explaining the mapping project.

1. Students create a collage that represents their blocks. Students paste the buildings to a paper backing in the correct position and add trees, streets, and other features, as needed (At this point, the drawings are not yet joined with other blocks and may be larger than they will appear in the final product).
2. Photocopy the collages, adjusting the size as necessary, to fit the size of the finished map.
3. Students write to children who live in their community in the year 2103. The letters should:
 - explain the project;
 - explain how working on the map has made them a part of history;

- explain how they have made history by working on the map; and
- invite the recipient to make a 2103 edition of the map.

Extensions

Students continue to draw grid sections of the contemporary map. Section by section, they gather data about structures erected since 1903. Students create drawings of those structures and affix them to the new map.

Further extension activities:

1. Students examine the panoramic photo of their town's main street from the American Memory collection [Panoramic Photographs](#). They identify buildings that are still standing and those that are not. In journals, they speculate on the activities of the people in the photo. They create their own contemporary panoramic photo of the same vista. Finally, they make a videotape of a student walking down the main street narrating what she or he sees compared with that in the turn of the century photo.
2. Students examine antique local postcards from the collection of a community member. They match the postcard images to buildings on the map. In their journals, they respond to the messages written by the senders of the postcards.
3. Students observe and respond in journals to photos of children from the American Memory collection, [Touring Turn-of-the-Century America: Photographs from the Detroit Publishing Company, 1880-1920](#). Students compare and contrast photos of children from 1900-10 to those of today.
4. Students make presentations to a variety of audiences, explaining their work as cartographers.

Additional 3-8 Lesson Plans with Primary Sources from the Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/>

[Civil War Photojournalism: A Record of War](#)

[The Civil War Through a Child's Eye](#)

[*The Evolution of the Book*: Introducing Students to Visual Analysis](#)

[The Minerva Mosaic of the Library of Congress: Taking a Closer Look](#)

[Local History: Mapping My Spot](#)

[*Marco Paul's Travels on the Erie Canal*: An Educational Voyage](#)

[Migration during the Great Depression: Living History](#)

[Out of the Dust: Visions of Dust Bowl History](#)

[French Canadian Immigrants in New England](#)

[German Immigrants: Their Contributions to the Upper Midwest](#)

[Japanese American Internment: Fear Itself](#)

[Drake's West Indian Voyage 1588-1589](#)

[Suffrage Strategies: Voices for Votes](#)

Library of Congress Primary Source Sets for the 3rd-5th Classroom

Primary Source Sets for Illinois

The extensive collections at the Library of Congress contain historic artifacts and cultural materials from across the U.S. Collections at the Library of Congress have also been provided just for Illinois teachers. Click here to access them.

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/states/illinois/index.html>

Click the following link in order to see the already compiled source sets for classroom teachers:

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/>