Primary sources are the raw materials of history — original documents and objects which were created at the time under study.

-Library of Congress
**Source Authority:** when and by whom the source was created

**Source Use:** how you are using the source
**Source Authority:** when and by whom the source was created

**Source Use:** how you are using the source
**Title:** The pilgrims signing the compact, on board the May Flower, Nov. 11th, 1620

**Creator:** Tompkins Harrison Matteson (1813-1884)

**Date Created/Published:** New York : Published by W. Schaus 629 Broadway, c.1859

**Medium:** 1 print : engraving ; 39 1/8 x 30 7/8 in.

**Summary:** Print showing the Pilgrims, below deck on the Mayflower, signing the Mayflower Compact.

**Repository:** Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division
Source Authority: when and by whom the source was created

Source Use: how you are using the source
...at least one semester must be civics, which shall help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives.

Civics course content shall focus on government institutions, the discussion of current and controversial issues, service learning, and simulations of the democratic process.
TEACHER’S GUIDE
ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

OSERVE

Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:
What do you notice first? · Find something small but interesting. · What do you notice that you didn’t expect? · What do you notice that you can’t explain? · What do you notice now that you didn’t earlier?

REFLECT

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

Where do you think this came from? · Why do you think somebody made this? · What do you think was happening when this was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this item? · What tool was used to create this? · Why do you think this item is important? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What can you learn from examining this?

QUESTION

Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.

Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:

Beginning
Have students compare two related primary source items.

Intermediate
Have students expand or alter textbook explanations of history based on primary sources they study.

Advanced
Ask students to consider how a series of primary sources support or challenge information and understanding on a particular topic. Have students refine or revise conclusions based on their study of each subsequent primary source.

For more tips on using primary sources, go to http://www.loc.gov/teachers
# Primary Source Analysis Tool

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## Further Investigation
Election Day!