Primary Source Document Assignment

History 1302

Primary sources are the heart of all research. This project will send students to important libraries, artist and author websites, companies, journals, diaries and newspapers. Read the assignment carefully, enjoy.

**INSTRUCTOR**
Professor Strohmeier is the final authority on your paper.
Janice.M.Strohmeier@lonestar.edu

**ASSIGNMENT**
The assignment is to find a primary source and create a presentation for the class.

**MEET YOUR LIBRARIAN**
Call, Chat, Email, or Come in. Make an appointment with the librarian.
Sara.J.Mitchell@lonestar.edu

**WHAT IS A PRIMARY SOURCE?**

**Primary sources** are materials that have first-hand information about an event. They are created at the time of the event or later recalled by an eyewitness. You may have primary sources tucked away at home. Libraries, archives, and museums preserve primary sources for students and researchers for context, better understanding and knowledge about events that happened in the past. Primary sources come in an array of different formats. They include:

- **Original Documents**: Diaries, speeches, manuscripts (drafts of books), letters, interviews, news film footage, autobiographies, and official records
- **Creative Works**: Poetry, drama, novels, music, art
- **Relics or artifacts**: Pottery, furniture, clothing, buildings
- **Ephemera**: print documents that were created for a specific purpose that were generally designed to be thrown away after an event

**ARCHIVE COLLECTIONS**

The [National Archives](https://www.archives.gov) and Records Administration (NARA) is the nation’s record keeper. Of all documents and materials created in the course of business conducted by the United States Federal government, only 1%-3% are so important for legal or historical reasons that they are kept by us forever.
The image above is from a letter written by President Abraham Lincoln to Major General Hooker during the American Civil War. Read this and other letters (primary source) at the Library of Congress.

The Library of Congress has major collections of digitized documents, including videos, sound audios, letters, documents and more: Two major collections: 1. Digital Collections and 2. American Memory

SAMPLE Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project

Documenting the American South University of North Carolina was one of the early universities to see the importance of digitizing the archives. This site provides access to digitized primary materials that offer Southern perspectives on American history and culture. A Must See!

Washington State Archives – Digital Archives The Washington State Digital Archives is the nation’s first archives dedicated specifically to the preservation of electronic records from both State and Local agencies that have permanent legal, fiscal or historical value.

The University of California - San Diego library contains the Dr. Seuss digital collection. Theodore Geisel (Dr. Seuss): Went to war and Advertising UCSD’s Dr. Seuss Collection contains original drawings, sketches, proofs, notebooks, manuscript drafts, books, audio- and videotapes, photographs, and memorabilia. The approximately 8,500 items in the collection document the full range of Dr. Seuss’s creative achievements, beginning in 1919 with his high school activities and ending with his death in 1991.

Presidential libraries are filled with collections of documents written during the presidents time in office. These are wonderful primary sources in their collections. Many of these libraries have digitally collections.
History Study Center  This library database is a collection of primary and secondary sources in world history. Limit your search to historical documents or media and to the United States.

Lewis and Clark Journals  Before HIST1302, but if you are interested…From 1803-1806, in an exciting journey to the Pacific Ocean and back, Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery mapped the lands, described the natural wonders, and people of western North America. Their journal is one of the most familiar of this type of primary source, taking readers along on the journey of a lifetime.

Holocaust Museum  Use the Libraries and Archive Collection to access documents, photographs, films, oral history and more on the Holocaust.

SAMPLE This is an actual video of the 1961 Trial of Adolph Eichmann, Nazi colonel who masterminded the transportation of Jews to camps during World War II. He was found guilty and executed by hanging in 1962. The entire trial is available if you are interested.

OTHER COLLECTIONS WE LIKE
Find archived materials at state archives, large public libraries, large universities, major authors, artists, musicians, inventors, newspapers, and major companies.

- Houston Public Library: Houston Area Digital Archives
- New York Public library Digital Gallery
- Alaska’s Digital Archives
- The George Washington University National Security Archive
- Wilson Center Digital Archive of International History Declassified
- South Asian American Digital Archive
- Texas Archival Resources Online
- Online Archive of California
- University of South California Digital Library
- Texas Library and Archives Commission: Texas Heritage Online
- South Carolina University – Digital Collections
- Google Art Project – limit to United States. Artists, Collections, and Artworks.

Let the librarians know if you find a spectacular collection of primary sources. We will add them to this collection.

CITING SOURCES
Citing Sources Using the Library Style Guide  Examples and information for both print and electronic citations. Find information there about plagiarizing and turnitin.com. A hard copy of this guide is also available in the library.