



## LESSON PLAN

# UNDERSTANDING AND USING PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

## Post-Secondary

### OBJECTIVE

According to the Library of Congress, “primary sources provide a window into the past—unfiltered access to the record of artistic, social, scientific and political thought and achievement during the specific period under study, produced by people who lived during that period” (Library of Congress). Primary sources can also “bring people into close contact with unique, often profoundly personal, documents and objects” that give them a better sense of the past, as well as a closer connection to it. Students practicing primary source analysis learn to think like historians, constructing theories supported by facts.

Using primary and secondary source audiovisual material, students will analyze and compare varied Texas and U.S. history topics of the 19th and 20th century, and develop analytical and critical thinking and viewing skills, identifying the strengths and limitations of varied historical resources. This lesson highlights the contributions of significant individuals, including U.S. Representative Barbara Jordan, President Lyndon Baines Johnson, Mary Kay Ash, and the infamous outlaws Bonnie and Clyde. It also highlights important topics such as the Texas Alamo, the Galveston Hurricane of 1900, the King Ranch, and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Students will better understand important historical topics and the differences between secondary and primary sources in this lesson.

### PROCESS

#### Prior Knowledge

Students should have knowledge of the following areas to successfully take part in this activity:

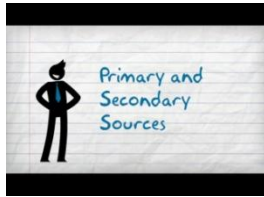
- The following activity assumes students know that history is multifaceted and based on facts and available records.
- Students should know that records are used to explain the past and can differ with one another.
- Students should be able to give a few examples of historical sources.
- Students should be able to look at their classroom textbooks’ indexes or work cited pages to identify the different resources used in the textbook.
- Students should be somewhat aware of the differences between a primary and secondary source.



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### Hook

Play this short film for your students.



#### **“Primary and Secondary Sources”**

by Rob Redman

[https://www.texasarchive.org/2014\\_03977](https://www.texasarchive.org/2014_03977)

After watching the short film, give each student a note card. Instruct them to draw a T chart on it and write “primary sources” on the left and “secondary sources” on the right. Next, have students anonymously list 3-4 examples of each type of source. Collect their notes and review their comprehension. See if any gave examples that were not mentioned in the video. Read aloud the students’ responses and discuss the basic differences between primary and secondary source examples.

On another note card, have students write down their own definitions of a primary and secondary source. Collect them and assess students’ comprehension. As a class, discuss the differences between the two definitions.

As a class, write the best comprehensive definitions of primary and secondary sources on the board; be sure to include examples from students’ prior examples. Students should now have a basic understanding of the two sources at this point.

### Lesson

*approx. 90 - 120 minutes*

As a preview for the lesson, have students think about how videos and film can also be primary or secondary sources. Ask students to give some examples of film sources.

Divide students into small groups (3-4 students per group). Assign groups a topic (listed below). As a group, students will research and analyze their topic(s) using a variety of assigned primary and secondary source film and video from [texasarchive.org](https://www.texasarchive.org).

#### ***Group Topics:***

- The Alamo
- U.S. Representative Barbara Jordan
- Bonnie & Clyde
- The Galveston Hurricane of 1900
- The King Ranch
- President JFK’s Assassination



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- President Lyndon Baines Johnson
- Mary Kay Ash

Depending on your classroom set up, students may rotate around the room to various stations researching topics using their textbooks and classroom computers. Or you can have them do their research in the classroom using their textbooks first, and then you can take them all to the computer lab to work on the primary and secondary film viewing portion.

Have students start by researching their topics using their textbooks (secondary source) to become familiar with the basic knowledge of the event or person. Have students use the worksheet (see Worksheet) as a group to record their 10 facts. Make 4-5 copies of the worksheet's page 2, the film charts, for groups when using the computer for research. Have students refer to the primary and secondary source guide as they analyze the films. They will answer the following questions about their topic's sources:

- Why would a historian question the evidence or claims presented in this video?
- What evidence presented in this video can be used to support the claims of the creator or subject of the video?
- Do the videos try to present the creator or subject as average or exceptional? Why?
- What is the context of this video? Why would the films' creators choose to create this particular video at this particular time?
- What other information might be needed to determine the accuracy of the video?

Make sure students address these questions when they "report out" as a group and present their topics.

After students have completed their worksheet, researched their topic using the textbook or encyclopedia, viewed the primary and secondary source films assigned to them, and recorded their observations and thoughts, they can now "report out" as a group what they learned. This will be a short classroom presentation in which all members will participate.

Groups will present their historical person or event to the class. This should be a short (less than 10-minute presentation) for each group. They will discuss what they learned about the topic from the primary and secondary sources, and will comment on what was most different about the primary and secondary sources. Make sure students expand on what the book says



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about their topic based upon the different sources. Have them play short scenes of a primary and a secondary source to the class to demonstrate their differences.

### Independent Practice

After students have presented their topics to the class, have them take out some notebook paper and record a daily journal entry (their own primary source). Have students write down the date and time at the top of their paper. Then have them describe themselves at this moment. They are documenting their own histories today. Have them address what their interests are, their goals for the future, and their favorite things. Tell them that you will seal these up at the end of class and reopen them at the end of the year. They will get to read about their goals, hobbies, and interests from this specific moment and reflect upon how they changed. This is a personal, fun way to get students to record their own histories, creating primary sources of their own that they can reflect upon later in the year. Follow up: When they read these at the end of the year, you could have them analyze their personal histories (primary source) and create a secondary source synopsis of their primary source personal history.

### Extended Learning

Now that students understand their topics thoroughly, have them create their own encyclopedia or textbook entries for that topic. Have students write a 1-page description explaining their topic, combining what they learned and observed from both the primary and secondary source material. Have students correctly cite where they learned a particular fact in their paper (work cited page). Collect these accounts to read and assess student's understanding of primary and secondary sources and their topics as an individual grade.

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### Videos

#### The Alamo



**The David Ayala Collection, no. 7 – The Alamo (1970s)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2009\\_01617](https://texasarchive.org/2009_01617)



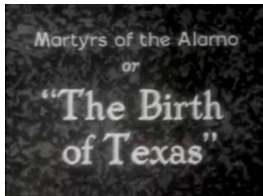
**The Porter Click Family, no. 5 – San Antonio Sightseeing (1970s)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_03937](https://texasarchive.org/2010_03937)



**Texas in Review – The Alamo (1958)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2012\\_00211](https://texasarchive.org/2012_00211)



**Martyrs of the Alamo (1915)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2014\\_00414](https://texasarchive.org/2014_00414)



**Freedom Highway (1956)**

Play the scene with Tex Ritter singing about the Alamo

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_01905](https://texasarchive.org/2013_01905)



**Our Texas Heritage (1963)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_01906](https://texasarchive.org/2013_01906)

#### U.S. Representative Barbara Jordan



**Barbara Jordan at the National Women's Conference of 1977**

[https://texasarchive.org/2014\\_00417](https://texasarchive.org/2014_00417)



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TEXAS ARCHIVE  
OF THE MOVING IMAGE



**Barbara Jordan Delivers the Democratic National Convention Keynote Address (1976)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2014\\_03974](https://texasarchive.org/2014_03974)



**The KHOU-TV Collection – News Clips, September 23, 1972 (play the Jordan speech)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2012\\_01554](https://texasarchive.org/2012_01554)



**Dr. Freeman Reflects on His Relationship with Barbara Jordan (1972) Oral History (2012)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_00005](https://texasarchive.org/2013_00005)

## Bonnie and Clyde



**Bonnie and Clyde Death Scene (1934)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2014\\_03976](https://texasarchive.org/2014_03976)



**The Texas Experience – Waylon Jennings Presents Bonnie & Clyde (1986)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2011\\_02112](https://texasarchive.org/2011_02112)



**Hugh V. Jamieson Interview at KERA**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_00481](https://texasarchive.org/2010_00481)



**The Retribution of Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker (1934)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_01894](https://texasarchive.org/2013_01894)



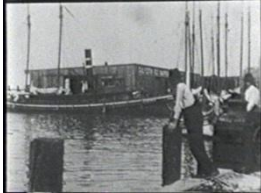
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### The Galveston Hurricane of 1900



**Galveston Hurricane of 1900 – Panorama of East Galveston**

[https://texasarchive.org/2006\\_00114](https://texasarchive.org/2006_00114)



**Galveston Hurricane of 1900 - Panorama of Wreckage of Water Front**

[https://texasarchive.org/2006\\_00117](https://texasarchive.org/2006_00117)



**Galveston Hurricane of 1900 – Searching Ruins on Broadway, Galveston, for Dead Bodies**

[https://texasarchive.org/2006\\_00112](https://texasarchive.org/2006_00112)



**The Storm (2013)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_01921](https://texasarchive.org/2013_01921)



**Caroline Schaper Harris's Recollections of the 1900 Storm (1986)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2014\\_03978](https://texasarchive.org/2014_03978)

### The King Ranch



**A.M. Harper, King Ranch**

[https://texasarchive.org/2009\\_02542](https://texasarchive.org/2009_02542)



**John Connally Presented Texas Racing Association Award (1968)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2009\\_01472](https://texasarchive.org/2009_01472)



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TEXAS ARCHIVE  
OF THE MOVING IMAGE



**The Texas Experience - Waylon Jennings Presents the King Ranch (1986)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2011\\_02109](https://texasarchive.org/2011_02109)



**Vaquero (2003)**

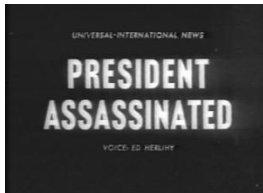
[https://texasarchive.org/2009\\_03275](https://texasarchive.org/2009_03275)



**Our Texas Heritage (1963)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_01906](https://texasarchive.org/2013_01906)

## The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy



**Special Release: President Assassinated (1963)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_01504](https://texasarchive.org/2013_01504)



**Governor Connally Speaks about President Kennedy's Assassination, Part II (1965)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_02687](https://texasarchive.org/2013_02687)



**JFK Assassination Witness Linda Willis in Dealey Plaza**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_02553](https://texasarchive.org/2010_02553)



**Cactus Pryor Interviews J. Frank Dobie (1963)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_03799](https://texasarchive.org/2010_03799)





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### **Interview with Professor Pennebaker about the Effects of the JFK Assassination on Dallas (1991)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_04528](https://texasarchive.org/2013_04528)

## President Lyndon Baines Johnson



### **Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 8, 1964**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_00040](https://texasarchive.org/2010_00040)



### **Remarks Upon Signing the Civil Rights Act, April 11, 1968**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_00049](https://texasarchive.org/2010_00049)



### **The President – 1966**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_00058](https://texasarchive.org/2010_00058)



### **The Texas Experience – Barbara Jordan Presents Lyndon Baines Johnson**

[https://texasarchive.org/2011\\_02116](https://texasarchive.org/2011_02116)



### **The Rancher (2012)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2012\\_03825](https://texasarchive.org/2012_03825)

## Mary Kay Ash



### **Mary Kay Cosmetics - Capture the Vision (1981)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2010\\_00144](https://texasarchive.org/2010_00144)



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**Mary Kay - All Your Tomorrows (1980)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_00629](https://texasarchive.org/2013_00629)



**Mary Kay - It's a Way of Life (1977)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_00628](https://texasarchive.org/2013_00628)



**KOSA-TV - Mary McDowell: Mary Kay Sales Director (1978)**

[https://texasarchive.org/2013\\_01465](https://texasarchive.org/2013_01465)

## WORKSHEET

**Worksheet - Understanding and Using Primary and Secondary Resources - Post-Secondary**

<https://texasarchive.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/Worksheet%20-%20Primary%20and%20Secondary%20Sources%20-%20Post-Secondary.pdf>

## RESOURCES

**The Texas State Historical Commission's Timeline of Texas History**

<https://texasalmanac.com/index.php?q=topics/history/revolution-and-republic-texas>

**Redman, Rob. Primary vs. Secondary Sources**

[https://www.texasarchive.org/2014\\_03977](https://www.texasarchive.org/2014_03977)

**Library of Congress. Primary Source Analysis Tool**

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/primary-source-analysis-tool/>

**Library of Congress. Using Primary Sources**

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>