

Primary Source Activities

World History

ANCIENT WORLD • MIDDLE AGES • RENAISSANCE

Implementing CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2

Charlotte S. Jaffe

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To the Teacher: Using Primary Sources

Primary sources are records of events as described by the people who actually experienced the events. These records provide valuable, firsthand information and insights into the past. On the following pages, you will find letters, historical documents, diaries, photos, examples of fine art, poetry, maps, and other artifacts that are classified as primary sources. Students often look at the study of history as merely a study of facts, dates, and events because many authors write textbooks from their own points of view. However, using examples of primary sources in the classroom makes history come alive for the students. Through exposure to eyewitness sources, students will experience a new way to regard the people and events that shaped history.

Before You Begin: Introductory Activities

Explain the use of primary sources to your students by having them examine their own primary source artifacts. They can use birth certificates, school ID cards, report cards, award certificates, lunchroom cards, passports, diaries, yearbooks, and other personal records. Discuss how these primary sources reveal information about their society in general and about the individual. Have students share other primary sources, such as old family photographs. Discuss how fashions, hairstyles, transportation, and settings have changed over the years as seen in the photos. Ask students to conduct an interview with a family member or neighbor who has been an eyewitness to a special historical event or one who can recall a different way of life. Look through old newspapers or magazines and discover differences in the world of advertisement. Discuss the social changes that the ads reflect. Visit older homes or buildings in your neighborhood, and contrast them with today's structures. The worksheet on the next page can be used to help students analyze their own primary sources and can be adapted for use with other primary sources throughout the book.

Primary Source Activities: World History Topics is divided into three sections: Ancient World, Middle Ages, and Renaissance. Each section contains background information on the topic, a variety of primary sources, and challenging activities to help you integrate the artifacts into your curriculum. Through these activities, students will improve their abilities to analyze, create, discuss, hypothesize, and evaluate. These are the skills required in state standardized tests. They are also the skills needed by *all* citizens to meet the many complexities of the twenty-first century.

Notes

The secular terms BCE (before the common era) and CE (in the common era) are used throughout this text in place of BC and AD in keeping with the National World History Standards.

Many full-color images of the photographs can be found by using the source information listed in the Image Sources section at the end of the book.

Document-Analysis Worksheet

Written Documents

1. Type of document (newspaper, letter, map, advertisement, other)

2. Physical qualities of the document (spellings, handwriting, seals, postmarks, notations, other)

3. Date(s) of document

4. Author (creator) of the document

5. Three important facts found in the document

6. Reason this document was written (for what audience)

7. What does the document tell you about life in _____ during the time it was written?

8. What information would you like to have that is missing in the document? Write one or more questions to the author.

Photo Analysis

1. Study the photograph to form a general impression.
2. Divide the photo into four parts. Study each part to see if you can find details you may have missed looking at the whole. Think about the people, objects, and activities in the photo.
3. What might you infer after studying the photo?

4. What questions do you have? Where might you find the answers to these questions?

Unit 1

Ancient World

to 600 CE



This is the funerary mask of King Tutankhamun, whom people often refer to as King Tut.

Background Information

Many ancient civilizations have provided us with a foundation for the world we live in today. From the great pyramids and colorful artwork of the Egyptians to the architecture and literary classics of the Greeks and Romans, human societies have demonstrated the ability to advance their knowledge and culture effectively throughout the years. The ancient world has given us a rich legacy.

Egyptian Cosmetic Container

The men and women of ancient Egypt liked to keep up their appearances. They used various cosmetics such as black eyeliner, eye paints, and powders. Some people even believed that cosmetics could work magic!

Hymn of Enheduanna Tablet

Enheduanna was a Sumerian princess who liked to write poetry. In fact, her poems about religion made her the first named author in the history of the world.

Code of Hammurabi

King Hammurabi of Babylonia decided to establish a set of laws for his kingdom. With help from legal experts, he set forth a list of 282 laws that he hoped would bring a measure of justice to his citizens.

King Tutankhamun's Tomb

King Tutankhamun was the twelfth king of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty. He was the son of the powerful Akhenaten, also known as Amenhotep IV, and was in power from 1361 to 1352 BCE. Because Tutankhamun died at age eighteen, people often call him the Boy King. King Tutankhamun disappeared from history until the 1922 discovery by determined archaeologist Howard Carter of his nearly intact tomb.

After Carter made his discovery, he and his associates created record cards that described each of the more than five thousand objects in the tomb. He also kept a daily diary of the steps leading up to the discovery. Archaeologists have learned much from that discovery

Egyptian Chantress

Because ancient Egyptians believed that music could soothe the angry gods, they often taught their daughters to sing and play a musical instrument. Nehy, an Egyptian chantress, was known as a singer who was "true of voice."

Model Boat

Boats were part of a way of life for the ancient Egyptians. When Egyptians died, models of their boats were often included in their tombs. Archaeologists found thirty-five model boats in King Tutankhamun's tomb.



Royal Lion Hunt

When King Ashurbanipal ruled Nineveh, a popular sporting event people enjoyed was the lion hunt. The hunts took place in a large outdoor arena, but only the king could slay the lions. Dogs helped to keep the lions in place.

Mystery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Ancient scrolls, accidentally found near the Dead Sea, turned out to be a remarkable archaeological find. Most contain religious writings, but some include material that can be considered sectarian.

Greek Vase

Mythology was a popular theme for painters of amphorae in ancient Greece. Gods and goddesses were pictured on terra-cotta vases, jars, decanters, and other types of pottery. The Greeks used the painted pottery for practical purposes.

Alexander the Great

Alexander III of Macedon became known as Alexander the Great because of his military genius and bravery. His dream was to create the largest empire in the ancient world.

Intaglio Rings

Ancient Greeks enjoyed wearing carved gemstone rings created by talented artists who used a technique called intaglio. The rings often featured mythological characters carved into the stone.

Pompeiiian Icarus Panel

The myth of Icarus and Daedalus was the subject of an ancient wall painting discovered in, and later excavated from, Pompeii, Italy.

Rosetta Stone

A symbol of the ancient world, the Rosetta Stone was actually discovered in Egypt in 1799 by a French soldier while digging a fort. The ancient message to the king of Egypt was inscribed on the stone in three languages: ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, Demotic script, and ancient Greek. The deciphering of the inscriptions helped archaeologists break the code of the hieroglyphics.



Roman Arena in Arles

The Roman arena in Arles has functioned in different ways during its existence. First, it was an outdoor amphitheater where gladiators fought. Next, it was a fortified town. Later, it then became an arena for modern-day concerts and bullfights.