Primary Sources

*What are Primary Sources?*

- Primary sources are documents or artifacts created during a historical event or by someone who personally witnessed a historical event.
- Primary sources can take many forms, including:
  - First-hand accounts—oral histories, memoirs, diaries, letters, interviews, etc.
  - Media accounts—newspaper or television report
  - Political or legal documents—Congressional Records, Presidential Papers, Court rulings, Speeches, census or tax records
  - Artistic works—Photographs, paintings, sculptures, films
  - Artifacts—clothing, buildings, pottery
- All primary sources, except first-hand accounts, must have been created at the time of the historical event that you are researching.
- First-hand accounts must be an explanation of the historical event that you’re researching by someone who personally witnessed the event.

*Where Can I find Primary Sources?*

There are many places to find primary sources online, like websites for archives and museums. Here are some places where you can find primary sources:

- Library of Congress
- National Archives and Records Administration
- History Matters
- National Security Archive
- FBI Archive
- Foreign Relations of the United States
- Tenement Museum
- Herbert Hoover Library
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Library
- Harry S. Truman Library
- Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
- John F. Kennedy Library
- Lyndon B. Johnson Library
- Richard Nixon Library
- Gerald Ford Library