

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Reviewing Sources of Information

### Think about this!

When you learn history or do research you are dependent on information sources. Unless we were actually at an event, we have to look at sources to know how people were feeling or thinking at that particular time.

So how do we do this? We read people's diaries or letters. We look at the photographs they took, the pictures they drew, or the documents they created and signed. Maybe they made speeches, interviewed each other, or wrote music to express themselves. If we're lucky, they left actual artifacts. We call all of these **primary sources**.

When historians or researchers read or look at these primary sources they come up with their own ideas or interpretations about a particular event and we call these **secondary sources**.

When you do your own research you want to be sure and use the most dependable or reliable sources available. The best sources, if they're available, are **primary sources**. Primary sources aren't someone's interpretation, they're the "real deal." **Primary sources** get you as close to what happened as possible – unless you have a time machine and can go back!

Think carefully for each source listed below, and mark "P" for primary source, and "S" for secondary source.

\_\_\_\_\_ An artist's diary

\_\_\_\_\_ A textbook on sculpting

\_\_\_\_\_ An encyclopedia article on the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on America

\_\_\_\_\_ A photograph of the Twin Towers falling on 9/11

\_\_\_\_\_ A non-fiction book about pioneer children

\_\_\_\_\_ A book with actual letters from pioneer children

\_\_\_\_\_ An interview of a famous musician

\_\_\_\_\_ A reference book about rock stars

\_\_\_\_\_ A commentary on the "Gettysburg Address"

\_\_\_\_\_ Abraham Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address" on podcast

\_\_\_\_\_ A bandana belonging to Harriet Tubman

\_\_\_\_\_ A book about clothing worn during the Civil War

\_\_\_\_\_ Interpretations of the US Constitution

\_\_\_\_\_ A copy of the US Constitution, on-line at <http://www.loc.org>

\_\_\_\_\_ The autobiography of Malcolm X

\_\_\_\_\_ A biography about Malcolm X