

Historians use both primary and secondary sources to study history.

**Primary Sources:** A primary source is an original work created by a person living during a time period being studied. For example, a primary source can be a letter written by a person who witnessed a historic event. A primary source could also be a material thing, such as the first automobile.

**Secondary Sources:** A secondary source is not created by an eyewitness. A secondary source is created by someone who learned about a historical event from another person. For example, a secondary source could be a newspaper article written by a reporter who interviewed someone who directly witnessed a historical event. Or a secondary source could be a school report about the Civil War. Since the student did not witness the Civil War, he or she had to read secondary sources to learn about it.

## Check for Understanding

Read each statement carefully. Decide whether it is a primary or secondary source.

1. A schoolbook on American history, written in 2005 \_\_\_\_\_
2. A journal entry dated 1908 \_\_\_\_\_
3. A building built in 1823 \_\_\_\_\_
4. The first music record \_\_\_\_\_
5. A T-shirt from a rock concert \_\_\_\_\_
6. An original copy of the Declaration of Independence \_\_\_\_\_
7. A book about the first presidents \_\_\_\_\_
8. George Washington's hat \_\_\_\_\_
9. A letter dated 1935 \_\_\_\_\_
10. A painting made in 2005 about the American Revolution \_\_\_\_\_
11. Writing on the wall of a 3,000-year-old mummy's tomb \_\_\_\_\_
12. A recording of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Fireside Chats" \_\_\_\_\_
13. Twentieth-century songs from the Appalachian Mountains about life in nineteenth-century Scotland and Ireland \_\_\_\_\_
14. A perfect piece of ancient Native American pottery \_\_\_\_\_
15. Five letters from John Adams to his wife about politics \_\_\_\_\_
16. An American book about the pyramids in Egypt \_\_\_\_\_