



Ready




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SUBMIT TOUCHSTONE

 Currently, it takes about 3-5 business days for a Touchstone to be graded.

Touchstones are projects that illustrate your comprehension of the course material, help you refine skills, and demonstrate application of knowledge. You can work on a Touchstone anytime, but you must complete this unit's assessments before you submit it. Once you've submitted a Touchstone, it will be graded and counted toward your final course score.

Touchstone 4: Analyzing Primary Sources

ASSIGNMENT: You have learned that the historian's craft involves using evidence from the past to learn and write about what happened. This evidence comes in the form of primary sources, or first-hand accounts or artifacts from the time the historian is writing about or studying. These sources provide the foundation for any historical narrative. Throughout this course, we have introduced you to the skill of [Analyzing Primary Sources](#) and to numerous primary sources that professional historians have used to develop a narrative of U.S. history. Now, you will practice the historian's craft by reading and analyzing two primary sources yourself.

The same skills you use to read and analyze historical sources can also be applied to current sources of information, such as newspaper articles, social media posts, television reports, and commercial advertisements. By practicing these skills now, you will develop your ability to perform historical research and think like a historian, but you will also become a more skilled consumer of information in general.

To complete this assignment, you will use the template provided below. [You will return the completed template as your Touchstone submission.](#) A sample assignment is also provided.

 [Touchstone 4: Analyzing Primary Sources Template](#)

 [Touchstone 4: Analyzing Primary Sources Sample](#)

In order to foster learning and growth, all work you submit must be newly written specifically for this course. Any plagiarized or recycled work will result in a Plagiarism Detected alert. Review [Touchstones: Academic Integrity Guidelines](#) for more about plagiarism and the Plagiarism Detected alert. For guidance on the use of generative AI technology, review [Ethical Standards and Appropriate Use of AI](#).

A. Directions

Step 1: Choose Two Primary Sources

Review the [U.S. History I Touchstone Primary Source List](#) and choose two for your assignment. Your two primary sources must come from different time periods.

Step 2: Download the Template

Download the [Touchstone 4: Analyzing Primary Sources Template](#). The template includes the prompts you will respond to when analyzing your sources.

Step 3: Read and Analyze Both Sources

Read and analyze both sources by following the prompts in the template, and record your responses. The template has five parts:

- Part 1: Meet the Primary Source
- Part 2: Observe its Parts
- Part 3: Interpret the Meaning (Historical Context)
- Part 4: Interpret the Meaning (Main Point and Purpose)
- Part 5: Use as Historical Evidence

HINT

Revisit the U.S. History I tutorials to help you do your analysis. The four time periods in the primary source list correspond to the four course units. Navigate to the most relevant unit and explore the tutorials. Then find information to relate each primary source to its specific historical context.

Step 4: Review the Rubric

Review the rubric (Section B) to ensure you understand how your work will be evaluated and revise as needed.

Step 5: Review the Requirements

Review the requirements (Section C) and the checklist below to ensure your Touchstone is complete and ready to submit. Do not submit your Touchstone until it meets these guidelines.

- Check that your chosen sources are on the provided list.
- Check that your chosen sources come from different time periods.
- Check that you have recorded your responses in the provided template.
- Check that all sections of the template are complete for both sources.
- Check that you have included your name and date.
- Check that your work is proofread for proper grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.

Step 6: Submit Your Touchstone

Submit your completed Touchstone using the blue button at the top of this page.

B. Rubric

	Advanced (100%)	Proficient (85%)	Acceptable (75%)	Needs Improvement (50%)	N P (0
<p>Meeting the Primary Source Identifies and describes the source. (8%)</p>	Shows a detailed understanding of what types of primary sources have been selected, and provides a description of one aspect of both sources.	Shows a general understanding of what types of primary sources have been selected, and provides a description of one aspect of both sources.	For one or both sources, shows a limited understanding of what type of primary source has been selected, but still provides a description of one aspect of both sources.	Shows little to no understanding of what types of primary sources have been selected, and/or the descriptions of the sources are inaccurate or confused.	Bo er or be pc
<p>Observation of its Parts Identifies the author, date, and audience. (17%)</p>	Author, date, and likely intended audience are fully and accurately identified for both sources. Two insights into the author's background are provided or, if the author is anonymous or unidentifiable, informed speculation is made about the likely background of the source's author.	Most of the elements are met for both sources: author, date, and likely intended audience are accurately identified; two insights into the author's background are provided; or, if the author is anonymous or unidentifiable, informed speculation is made about the likely background of the source's author.	Some of the elements are met for one or both sources: author, date, and likely intended audience are accurately identified; two insights into the author's background are provided; or, if the author is anonymous or unidentifiable, speculation is made about the likely background of the source's author.	Few of the elements are met for one or both sources: author, date, and likely intended audience are accurately identified; two insights into the author's background are provided; or, if the author is anonymous or unidentifiable, speculation is made about the likely background of the source's author.	Bo er or be pc
<p>Interpreting Meaning: Historical Context Interprets the historical context of the source. (17%)</p>	Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of the time period in which the sources were written, and relates each primary source to its specific historical context.	Demonstrates general knowledge of the time period in which the sources were written, and relates each primary source to its specific historical context.	For one or both sources, demonstrates general knowledge of the time period in which the source was written, but may not relate the primary source to its specific historical context.	For one or both sources, demonstrates very limited knowledge of the time period in which the source was written and therefore cannot relate the primary source to its specific historical context.	Fo co mi his litt su pc
<p>Interpreting Meaning: Main Point Interprets the main point of the source. (17%)</p>	Clearly interprets the main idea or point of both sources using specific evidence from the sources themselves to support the interpretation.	Clearly interprets the main idea or point of the sources using specific evidence from the sources themselves to support the interpretation, but the interpretation of one source may be stronger than the other.	Interprets the main idea or point of both sources, but one or both interpretations may show a more limited understanding of the sources or lack specific evidence to support the interpretation.	Attempts to interpret the main idea or point of both sources, but one or both interpretations show substantial misunderstanding or incompleteness.	Bo co mi litt su pc
<p>Interpreting Meaning: Purpose</p>	Clearly interprets the purpose of both sources by drawing specific connections to	Clearly interprets the purpose of both sources by drawing specific connections to	Interprets the purpose of both sources by drawing general connections to other	Attempts to interpret the purpose of both sources, but one or both interpretations	Bo co mi litt

	Advanced (100%)	Proficient (85%)	Acceptable (75%)	Needs Improvement (50%)	N P (0
Interprets the purpose of the source. (17%)	other aspects of the sources such as author, audience, or historical context.	other aspects of the sources such as author, audience, or historical context, but the interpretation of one source may be stronger than the other.	aspects of the source such as author, audience, or historical context, but one or both interpretations may show a more limited understanding of the sources.	show substantial misunderstanding or incompleteness.	su pc
Use as Historical Evidence Identifies historical evidence for the source. (17%)	For both sources, two relevant historical questions, two pieces of information to fact check, and two other needed perspectives are identified. Response demonstrates thoughtful reflection and a strong understanding of how to use primary sources as historical evidence.	For both sources, two relevant historical questions, two pieces of information to fact check, and two other needed perspectives are identified. Response demonstrates a general understanding of how to use primary sources as historical evidence.	Most of the elements are met for both sources: two relevant historical questions, two pieces of information to fact check, and two other needed perspectives are identified. Response demonstrates a more limited understanding of how to use primary sources as historical evidence.	Few of the elements are met for one or both sources: two relevant historical questions, two pieces of information to fact check, and two other needed perspectives are identified. Response demonstrates a very limited understanding of how to use primary sources as historical evidence.	Re to hc so ev wo su pc
Conventions Submission follows conventions for standard written English and meets requirements. (7%)	There are almost no errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization; all length and formatting requirements are met.	There are minor errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization that do not impede readability; length and formatting requirements are nearly met.	There are frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization that somewhat impede readability; length and formatting requirements are nearly met.	There are consistent errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization that significantly impede readability; length and formatting requirements are not met.	Su me th be

C. Requirements

The following requirements must also be met for your submission to be graded:

- Use a readable 11- or 12-point font.
- Composition must be original and written for this assignment and all writing must be appropriate for an academic context.
- Plagiarism of any kind is strictly prohibited.
- Submission must include your name and the date.
- Include all of the assignment components in a single .doc or .docx file.

Adapted from *Understanding Perspectives in Primary Sources, The National Archives*



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