

Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy Rubric

Assessment of Learning Objectives

The [Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy](#) document presents broad learning objectives which are intended to “be used as a whole or in part depending on particular learning needs and larger programmatic goals, and may be applied differently in different contexts” (Guidelines, p. 2). This rubric provides assessment criteria and performance measures to each of the learning objectives in the Guidelines. It is meant to be a tool that educators can adopt and/or adapt to suit their own teaching practice rather than a definitive statement on the assessment of primary source literacy. If you adapt this rubric at your own institution, please consider contributing it to the TPS Collective!

	Highly competent 4	Developing competency 3	Developing competency 2	Not achieved 1
LEARNING OBJECTIVE I: CONCEPTUALIZE	<p>Student is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguish the difference between primary and secondary sources Understand how primary and secondary sources are interrelated in the research process Identify individuals, groups and organizations that might produce primary sources about a research topic within the framework of their area of study Refine information needs and search strategies as necessary, based on search results and analysis of information sources Understand that research is often non-linear and iterative and that research questions may change as primary sources are analyzed 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to distinguish the difference between primary and secondary sources Begins to understand how primary and secondary sources are interrelated in the research process Begins to identify individuals, groups and organizations that might produce primary sources about a research topic Begins to refine information needs and search strategies as necessary, based on search results and analysis of sources Begins to understand that research is often non-linear and iterative and that research questions may change as primary sources are analyzed 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has trouble distinguishing the difference between primary and secondary sources Marginally understands how primary and secondary sources are interrelated in the research process Has trouble identifying individuals, groups and organizations that might produce primary sources about a research topic Has trouble refining information needs and search strategies as necessary, based on search results and analysis of sources Marginally understands that research is often non-linear and iterative and that research questions may change as primary sources are analyzed 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is not yet able to distinguish the difference between primary and secondary sources Is not yet able to understand how primary and secondary sources are interrelated in the research process Is not yet able to identify individuals, groups and organizations that might produce primary sources about a research topic Is not yet able to refine information needs and search strategies as necessary, based on search results and analysis of sources Is not yet able to understand that research is often non-linear and iterative and that research questions may change as primary sources are analyzed

	Highly competent 4	Developing competency		Not achieved 1
	4	3	2	1
LEARNING OBJECTIVE II: FIND & ACCESS	<p>Student is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify possible locations of primary sources related to the research topic or area of study Match information needs and search strategies to appropriate search tools, such as catalog records and archival finding aids Distinguish between online resources that contain information about primary sources verse those that contain digital versions, originals, or copies of sources Understand that historical records may never have existed, may not have survived, or may not be publicly accessible Recognize that existing records may have been shaped by selectivity and mediation Understand the policies and procedures that affect access to primary sources, recognizing that these differ across repositories, databases, and collections 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to identify possible locations of primary sources related to the research topic or area of study Begins to match information needs and search strategies to appropriate search tools, such as catalog records and archival finding aids Begins to distinguish between online resources that contain information about primary sources verse those that contain digital versions, originals, or copies of sources Begins to understand that historical records may never have existed, may not have survived, or may not be publicly accessible Begins to recognize that existing records may have been shaped by selectivity and mediation Begins to understand the policies and procedures that affect access to primary sources, and begins to recognize that these differ across repositories, databases, and collections 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has trouble identifying possible locations of primary sources related to the research topic or area of study Has trouble matching information needs and search strategies to appropriate search tools, such as catalog records and archival finding aids Has trouble distinguishing between online resources that contain information about primary sources verse those that contain digital versions, originals, or copies of sources Marginally understands that historical records may never have existed, may not have survived, or may not be publicly accessible Marginally recognizes that existing records may have been shaped by selectivity and mediation Marginally understands the policies and procedures that affect access to primary sources, and that these differ across repositories, databases, and collections 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is not yet able to identify possible locations of primary sources related to the research topic or area of study Does not match information needs and search strategies to appropriate search tools, such as catalog records and archival finding aids Is not yet able to distinguish between online resources that contain information about primary sources verse those that contain digital versions, originals, or copies of sources Is not yet able to understand that historical records may never have existed, may not have survived, or may not be publicly accessible Is not yet able to recognize that existing records may have been shaped by selectivity and mediation Is not yet able to understand the policies and procedures that affect access to primary sources, or that these differ across repositories, databases, and collections

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE III: READ, UNDERSTAND, & SUMMARIZE	<p>Student is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and understand information found in a primary source, which may entail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully navigating textual features like scripts, fonts, or languages Comprehending vocabulary, syntax, and communication norms of the time and place in which the source was created Understanding or operating the technology needed to access or retrieve information found in a primary source Communicate the information content of a primary source Identify and communicate key information about a primary source, including source type, and/or how, when, and by whom it was created Understand that a primary source may exist in various iterations due to publication, copying, or other transformations 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to identify and understand information found in a primary source. Navigates textual and other information related to the source's content and process of creation with partial success. Begins to communicate and summarize the information content of a primary source Begins to identify and communicate key information about a primary source, including source type, and/or how, when, and by whom it was created Begins to understand that a primary source may exist in various iterations due to publication, copying, or other transformations 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marginally identifies and understands information found in a primary source. Has trouble navigating textual and other information related to the source's content and process of creation. Marginally communicates and summarizes the information content of a primary source Marginally identifies and has trouble communicating key information about a primary source, including source type, and/or how, when, and by whom it was created Marginally understands that a primary source may exist in various iterations due to publication, copying, or other transformations 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is not yet able to identify and understand information found in a primary source. Does not navigate textual and other information related to the source's content and process of creation. Is not yet able to communicate and summarize the information content of a primary source Has trouble identifying and communicating key information about a primary source, including source type, and/or how, when, and by whom it was created Is not yet able to understand that a primary source may exist in various iterations due to publication, copying, or other transformations

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE IV: INTERPRET, ANALYZE, & EVALUATE	<p>Student is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the fit between a primary source and a particular research question Recognize and evaluate the perspective, subjectivity, and credibility of the creator(s) of a primary source, including how these relate to the source's intended purpose(s) and audience Situate a primary source in context. Applies knowledge about the source type or format; how, when, and by whom it was created; or related materials in a collection Identify and interrogate the reasons for silences, gaps, contradictions, or evidence of power relationships in the documentary record and how they impact the research process Understand the relationship between physical attributes and informational content of a primary source, including the relationship between original sources and physical or digital copies of that source Express a sense of historical empathy, curiosity about the past, and appreciation for historical sources and historical actors 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to assess the fit between a primary source and a particular research question Begins to recognize and evaluate the perspective, subjectivity, and credibility of the creator(s) of a primary source, including how these relate to the source's intended purpose(s) and audience Begins to situate a primary source in context. Begins to apply knowledge about the source type or format; how, when, and by whom it was created; or related materials in a collection Begins to identify and interrogate the reasons for silences, gaps, contradictions, or evidence of power relationships in the documentary record and how they impact the research process Begins to understand the relationship between physical attributes and informational content of a primary source, including the relationship between original sources and surrogates of that source Expresses a developing sense of historical empathy, curiosity about the past, or appreciation for historical sources and historical actors 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has trouble assessing the fit between a primary source and a particular research question Marginally recognizes and has trouble evaluating the perspective, subjectivity, and credibility of the creator(s) of a primary source Marginally situates a primary source in context. Has trouble applying knowledge about the source type or format; how, when, and by whom it was created; or related materials in a collection Has difficulty identifying and interrogating the reasons for silences, gaps, contradictions, or evidence of power relationships in the documentary record and how they impact the research process Marginally understands the relationship between physical attributes and informational content of a primary source, including the relationship between original sources and surrogates of that source Expresses a vague or marginal sense of historical empathy, curiosity about the past, or appreciation for historical sources and historical actors 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not assess the fit between a primary source and a particular research question Is not yet able to recognize and evaluate the perspective, subjectivity, and credibility of the creator(s) of a primary source Is not yet able to situate a primary source in context. Does not apply knowledge about the source type or format; how, when, and by whom it was created; or related materials in a collection Is not yet able to identify and interrogate the reasons for silences, gaps, contradictions, or evidence of power relationships in the documentary record and how they impact the research process Is not yet able to understand the relationship between physical attributes and informational content of a primary source, including the relationship between original sources and surrogates of that source Does not express a sense of historical empathy, curiosity about the past, or appreciation for historical sources and historical actors

	Highly competent 4	Developing competency 3	Developing competency 2	Not achieved 1
LEARNING OBJECTIVE V: USE & INCORPORATE	<p>Student is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine and synthesize a variety of sources in order to construct, support, or dispute a research argument Use primary sources in a manner that respects privacy rights and cultural contexts Cite primary sources in their own information production, using appropriate style guidelines and/or repository practices Adhere to copyright and privacy laws when incorporating primary source information into their own information production 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to examine and synthesize a variety of sources in order to construct, support, or dispute a research argument Begins to use primary sources in a manner that respects privacy rights and cultural contexts Begins to cite primary sources in their own information production, using appropriate style guidelines and/or repository practices Begins to adhere to copyright and privacy laws when incorporating primary source information into their own information production 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has trouble examining and synthesizing a variety of sources in order to construct, support, or dispute a research argument Has trouble using primary sources in a manner that respects privacy rights and cultural contexts Has trouble citing primary sources in their own information production, including difficulty using appropriate style guidelines and/or repository practices Has trouble adhering to copyright and privacy laws when incorporating primary source information into their own information production 	<p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is not yet able to examine and synthesize a variety of sources in order to construct, support, or dispute a research argument Is not yet able to use primary sources in a manner that respects privacy rights and cultural contexts Does not cite primary sources in their own information production; does not use appropriate style guidelines and/or repository practices Is not yet able to adhere to copyright and privacy laws when incorporating primary source information into their own information production

