

Mapping the Guidelines: A Sample Scope and Sequence for the Primary Source Literacy Guidelines

Introduction

The Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy provide a key set of competencies and related learning objectives for students working with primary sources. With 22 learning objectives in 5 key areas outlined, no educator can plan to teach to mastery for all the objectives in any one lesson, group of lessons, or course. A “scope and sequence” can be used to plan how the learning objectives will be addressed at a curricular level, so that the learning objectives can be planned for with the right breadth and depth over time (scope) and arranged in a logical progression (sequence).

This sample scope and sequence imagines that students are on a four-year progression, such as towards a baccalaureate degree. Acknowledging that some students may have a great deal of familiarity with concepts around primary courses from their K-12 education, while others may not write their first research paper until the 3rd or even 4th year toward their degree, this map assumes that a 4-year baccalaureate student may follow roughly the progression of tasks outlined below.

Novice/1st year students will begin to learn the difference between primary and secondary sources in scholarly writing and will be aware of some local repositories holding materials. They will have seen digital surrogates of primary source material in an online database or in a course.

Beginning/2nd year students will have seen primary source material in a campus repository classroom.

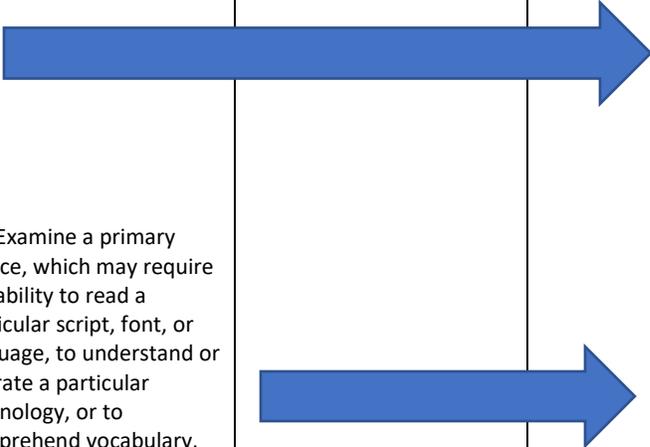
Intermediate/3rd year students will have requested and used primary source material in a campus repository reading room.

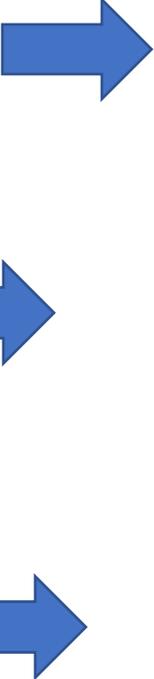
Advanced/4th year students will be able to incorporate research from multiple sources into a full-length scholarly essay (e.g., 6,000-10,000 words) or capstone project.

In the chart below, the Primary Source Literacy guidelines have been arranged according to major domain on the left and distributed across these stages across the top. In most cases, the year in which an objective appears is the one in which this concept will be introduced; for some particularly complex and important objectives, arrows indicate that these skills will need to be addressed iteratively over time. Any proposed sequence will be based on local experience at any given institution, and a good scope and sequence will be constructed with knowledge of broad curricular objectives and through conversation with various stakeholders.

	Novice/1 st year	Beginning/2 nd year	Intermediate/3 rd year	Advanced/4 th year
Conceptualize	1A. Distinguish primary from secondary sources for a given research question. Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelatedness of primary and secondary sources for research.	1B. Articulate what might serve as primary sources for a specific research project within the framework of an academic discipline or area of study.	1C. Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions	1D. Understand that research is an iterative process and that as primary sources are found and analyzed the research question(s) may change.

Find & Access	<p>2A. Identify the possible locations of primary sources</p>	 <p>2C. Distinguish between catalogs, databases, and other online resources that contain information about sources, versus those that contain digital versions, originals, or copies of the sources themselves</p>	<p>2B. Use appropriate, efficient, and effective search strategies in order to locate primary sources. Be familiar with the most common ways primary sources are described, such as catalog records and archival finding aids</p> <p>2D. Understand that historical records may never have existed, may not have survived, or may not be collected and/or publicly accessible. Existing records may have been shaped by the selectivity and mediation of individuals such as collectors, archivists, librarians, donors, and/or publishers, potentially limiting the sources available for research.</p> <p>2E. Recognize and understand the policies and procedures that affect access to primary sources, and that these differ across repositories, databases, and collections.</p>	
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<p>Read, Understand, & Summarize</p>	<p>3B. Identify and communicate information found in primary sources, including summarizing the content of the source and identifying and reporting key components such as how it was created, by whom, when, and what it is.</p>	<p>3A. Examine a primary source, which may require the ability to read a particular script, font, or language, to understand or operate a particular technology, or to comprehend vocabulary, syntax, and communication norms of the time period and location where the source was created.</p>	<p>3C. Understand that a primary source may exist in a variety of iterations, including excerpts, transcriptions, and translations, due to publication, copying, and other transformations.</p>	
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Interpret, Analyze, & Evaluate	<p>4F. Demonstrate historical empathy, curiosity about the past, and appreciation for historical sources and historical actors.</p>	<p>4A. Assess the appropriateness of a primary source for meeting the goals of a specific research or creative project.</p> <p>4B. Critically evaluate the perspective of the creator(s) of a primary source, including tone, subjectivity, and biases, and consider how these relate to the original purpose(s) and audience(s) of the source</p> <p>4E. Factor physical and material elements into the interpretation of primary sources including the relationship between container (binding, media, or overall physical attributes) and informational content, and the relationship of original sources to physical or digital copies of those sources.</p>	<p>3C. Situate a primary source in context by applying knowledge about the time and culture in which it was created; the author or creator; its format, genre, publication history; or related materials in a collection.</p>	 <p>3D. As part of the analysis of available resources, identify, interrogate, and consider the reasons for silences, gaps, contradictions, or evidence of power relationships in the documentary record 6 and how they impact the research process.</p>
Use & Incorporate			<p>5A. Examine and synthesize a variety of sources in order to construct, support, or dispute a research argument.</p> <p>5B. Use primary sources in a manner that respects privacy rights and cultural contexts.</p> <p>5C. Cite primary sources in accordance with appropriate citation style guidelines or according to repository practice and preferences (when possible).</p>	<p>5D. Adhere to copyright and privacy laws when incorporating primary source information in a research or creative project.</p>

