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## SESSION 1.1: GUIDE TO ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary Sources give us first-hand evidence about an event, object, person, or work of art. They include first-hand accounts that put us close to the time period. Some common used primary sources are works of art, speeches, eyewitness accounts, legal documents, letters, diaries, journals, manuscripts, maps, newspapers, buildings, and photographs.

Questions to consider when analyzing primary sources:

- **Observe:** identify and note details.  
What do you notice first? Find something small but interesting. What do you notice that you didn't expect? What do you notice that you can't explain? What do you notice that you didn't earlier?
- **Reflect:** generate and test hypotheses about the source.  
Where do you think this came from? Why do you think somebody created this? What do you think was happening when this was created? Who do you think was the audience for this piece? What tool was used to create this? Why do you think this creation is so important? If somebody created this today, what would be different? What can you learn from examining this?
- **Question:** ask questions that lead to more observations and reflections.  
What do you wonder about? Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?