

Sourcing Reference Guide

Sourcing a document, image, or artifact is to evaluate its reliability based on what one can find out about the date it was created, the author, and form that it takes. It's not the content itself, but whether one can trust the content.

Before reading a document, looking at an image, or listening to a person, ask yourself: what am I trying to learn from it? Based on this 'research question' use the following chart to see if there are problems with the reliability of your document and then consider how significant they are.

MORE TRUSTWORTHY

LESS TRUSTWORTHY



<p>1. WHEN WAS IT MADE?</p> <p>The source was created during or soon after the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information less likely to have change • Fresh memories • Eyewitnesses are available 	<p>The source was created long after the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information more likely to change as time goes by • Old memories are unreliable • Filtered through many people
<p>2. WHO MADE IT?</p> <p>a. The author was an eyewitness (primary source).</p>	<p>The author was not present at the event and learn from other sources (secondary source).</p>
<p>b. The author is a qualified expert on the topic.</p>	<p>The author is unqualified or the expertise is unknown.</p>
<p>c. The author is unbiased or neutral about what happened in the event.</p>	<p>The author has a strong point of view on what happened at the event.</p>
<p>d. The author is trying to inform or record events.</p>	<p>The author is trying to persuade, entertain, or make money.</p>
<p>3. WHAT TYPE OF SOURCE IS IT?</p> <p>Useful examples include: a diary entry, news story, documentary, photograph, or official report.</p>	<p>Less useful examples include: a painting, op-ed or other persuasive essay, advertisement, or political campaign speech.</p>

“The First Thanksgiving” by, JLG Ferris -- Evaluating the SOURCE

Your research question is: “What was the relationship between the Wampanoag Indians and the Pilgrim settlers?”

1. When was this image created? _____

- Does this make it MORE or LESS reliable
- Why?

2. Who created this source? _____

- Was he present? YES = More reliable / NO = Less reliable
- Was he an expert? YES = More reliable / NO or unknown = Less reliable
- Was he unbiased? YES = More reliable / NO or unknown = Less reliable
- Was he trying to INFORM = more reliable / ENTERTAIN = less reliable

3. What type of a source is it? _____

- Does this make it MORE or LESS reliable

Consider how you’ve rated this source across the different questions. Overall, this does not seem a reliable source for this research question.

Could this be a useful source for a different research question? Yes! For example, if you wanted to know more about the painting style of JLG Ferris.

What’s the Mashpee Wampanoag version of the 1621 meal?

In 1621, a mutual defense treaty was signed by the leaders of the Plymouth Colony and the Wampanoag nation.

In the fall of 1621, people in Plymouth celebrated their first successful harvest with a feast. Some of the colonists were shooting guns and cannons as a celebration, which concerned the local Wampanoags. So Massasoit gathered up some 90 warriors and showed up at Plymouth prepared to fight if there was trouble. When they arrived it was explained through a translator that the colonists were celebrating the harvest, and the Wampanoags were invited to stay.

- There is very little evidence about what actually happened at this “First Thanksgiving.” President Abraham Lincoln established Thanksgiving as a national holiday during the Civil War, and the feast has since become an American tradition.

Primary and Secondary Sources

Primary source: a document or physical object that was created during the time under study. Examples include: diaries, letters, manuscripts, autobiographies, official records, news stories, photographs, etc.

Secondary source: is one or more steps removed from a primary source, and is the information is interpreted and/or analyzed by the author of the secondary source. Examples include: textbooks, biographies, magazine articles, news analysis, retelling of events, etc.