

Historical Fiction
Language Arts/Social Studies Unit
Mary Reger

Lesson 2

Essential Questions: What is a primary source and how can it be used to learn about history?

Enduring Understanding: The students will learn more about primary sources. They will look at several different kinds (pictures, letters, diaries, advertisements, and newspaper articles) and be able to decide what kind it is and what it is telling us about.

Assessment: Each student will complete one worksheet per resource: “[Studying Written Resources](#)” and “[Studying Visual Resources](#)”.

Materials:

- [“Photos/Paintings”](#) (one for each student)
- One copy of a [diary page](#) for each student
- One copy of a [letter](#) for each student
- One copy of an [advertisement](#) for each student
- One copy of a [newspaper article](#) for each student
- Copies of the worksheets “[Studying Written Sources](#)” and “[Studying Visual Sources](#)”

Suggested Procedures:

It is suggested that this lesson be completed in 2-3 days in a small group of 6-8 students.

1. Give each student a different picture. It may be a copy of a photo or it may be a copy of a painting. Have them first tell a partner what they see in the picture. Tell them to tell their partner when they think the picture was taken. Which of the 4 periods in history. Have them tell their partner what they think is happening in the picture.
2. Pass out the “[Studying Visual Resources](#)” and have the students complete it using their picture.
3. Give each student a page from a diary. Have them read it and then discuss with a partner what period it was written in. Have them discuss how the person might have been feeling when they wrote it. Have them talk about why it was written (for information, for prosperity, for their records, to get their feelings out etc.) Pass out the “[Studying Written Resources](#)” and have the students complete it using the page from a diary.
4. Give each student a copy of a letter. Have them read it and then discuss with a partner what period it was written in. Have them discuss why the letter was written (to inform someone of news, to communicate to a friend etc.) and how the person writing it might have felt.
5. Pass out the “[Studying Written Resources](#)” and have the students complete it using the letters.

6. Give each student a copy of a newspaper article. Have them look it over and read it and then discuss with a partner what period it was written in. Have them discuss what the article is telling about (is it a war, a crime, peoples rights, town news, etc.). Have them talk about how it is different from news articles they've read currently.
7. Pass out the "[Studying Written Resources](#)" and have the students complete it using the newspaper article.
8. Give each student a copy of an advertisement. Have them look it over and read it and then discuss with a partner what era it was written in. Have them discuss what it is advertising and if they think it is a good advertisement. Have them talk about how it is different from our advertisements of today.
9. Pass out the "[Studying Written Resources](#)" and have the students complete it using the advertisement.