

**Historical Fiction**  
**Language Arts/Social Studies Unit**  
Mary Reger

**Introductory Lesson**

**Essential Questions:** What is the meaning of history? How do we learn about history? What sources can we use to learn about history?

**Enduring Learning:** The students will activate prior knowledge and list ideas of what they think history is. The students will use pictures and other written sources to discuss what primary and secondary sources are.

**Assessment:** The students will complete the worksheet on primary and secondary sources.

**Materials:**

- Chalkboard and chalk
- selected primary and secondary sources (make overheads of these sources):
  - [pictures](#)
  - [diaries](#)
  - [letters](#)
  - [artifacts](#)
- Writing journal
- [“Primary and Secondary Sources” worksheet](#)

**Suggested Procedures:**

It is suggested this lesson be completed in one day as a whole group.

1. Write the word “History” on the chalkboard. Ask the students to give words or phrases that represent what the meaning of history. Make a list on the board.
2. Put up each transparency of the sources of history. Have each student write in their writing journal what period they think the source is from and what they think is going on. Discuss each source and student responses. Talk about the period the source covers and what was important and when it happened. Example: Source # 1 Letters from the Civil War- talk about why it was fought, when it was fought, and what the outcome was.
3. Talk about what primary sources are and how they are different from secondary sources. Make a list on the chalkboard of primary sources (photos, advertisements, diary excerpts, letters, etc.) and a list of secondary sources (paintings, movies, books, etc.). Show different examples from the appendixes.
4. Pass out the worksheet on primary and secondary sources and have students complete. Do the first worksheet together as a class with source #1 and then have the students do a worksheet for sources #2-4. Discuss each one as they finish.