Primary and Secondary Sources

Grade 3 Social Studies Worksheet - Challenge Me

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

1. Why might a historian use both the ballot and the encyclopedia article?

Source A

Encyclopedia article

Published years later

Town councils make decisions about local services, such as parks.

Source B

Election ballot

Used on election day, 1990

Choose one person for town council. Mark one box.

Both were written much later.
The ballot explains what councils do.
Both were used on election day.
One shows the real vote; one explains councils.

2. The program says 'Planting starts at 10.' What does this tell a historian?

Source A

Opening-day program

Printed for visitors on opening day

Welcome to our new garden! Planting starts at 10.

Source B

History book chapter

Written years later

Neighbors built the garden as a shared space for the town.

who wrote the history book
how the garden looks today
what was planned for opening day
why neighbors built the garden

3. The film was made 100 years after the station opened. What kind of source is it, and why?

Source A

Documentary film

Made in 2005

Crowds cheered when the first train arrived. The station helped the town grow.

Source B

Telegram to the mayor

Sent on opening day, 1905

First train arrived at noon. Crowd of 500 cheering.

primary, because it is a film
secondary, because it was made long after
secondary, because it is about trains
primary, because it shows the station

4. Rosa wrote, 'School is closed again.' What does the word again tell us?

Source A
Rosa's diary
Written during the storm, 1978
Snow is up to the windows.
School is closed again.

Source B
Weather website
Written in 2020
The storm of 1978 dropped three feet of snow.

School had closed before in that storm.
The snow had already melted.
Rosa liked school very much.
This was the first snow day.

5. What can Sam's letter tell us that the library book cannot?

Source A
Sam's letter
Written the day after the flood, 1936
Water came up to our porch. We moved to Aunt May's house.

Source B
Library book about floods
Written in 2010
In 1936, a flood covered many towns along the river.

what the flood was like for one family
how many towns the flood covered
what happened years after the flood
why rivers flood in spring

6. Which source would best tell how many towns flooded in 1936?

Source A
Library book about floods
Written in 2010
In 1936, a flood covered many towns along the river.

Source B
Sam's letter
Written the day after the flood, 1936
Water came up to our porch. We moved to Aunt May's house.

Sam's letter
the library book about floods
a photo of Sam's porch
a diary from one farm

7. What do the telegram and the film both say?

Source A
Telegram to the mayor
Sent on opening day, 1905
First train arrived at noon.
Crowd of 500 cheering.

Source B
Documentary film
Made in 2005
Crowds cheered when the first train arrived. The station helped the town grow.

Exactly 500 people came.
The first train arrived at noon.
People cheered when the first train came.
The town grew for 100 years.

8. The cleanup report used many interviews like this one. What does that show?

Source A

Volunteer interview

Recorded during the cleanup

I carried three bags of trash from the riverbank today.

Source B

Cleanup report

Written after many cleanups

Several cleanups helped remove trash from local rivers.

Secondary sources can be built from primary sources.
Interviews are always secondary sources.
Reports are made on the day of an event.
Primary sources are written after secondary ones.

9. The website says three feet of snow fell. How could a historian check this?

Source A

Rosa's diary

Written during the storm, 1978

Snow is up to the windows.
School is closed again.

Source B

Weather website

Written in 2020

The storm of 1978 dropped three feet of snow.

look for records made during the storm
count the words in Rosa's diary
ask a student today
read another website from 2020

10. Which question could the fair photograph answer best?

Source A

Magazine article

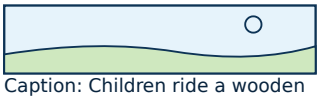
Written in 2012

The town fair has been held every summer since 1950.

Source B

Fair photograph

Taken at the town fair, 1952



Caption: Children ride a wooden merry-go-round.

Why did the town start a fair?
Who runs the fair today?
How many years has the fair been held?
What rides did children use in 1952?

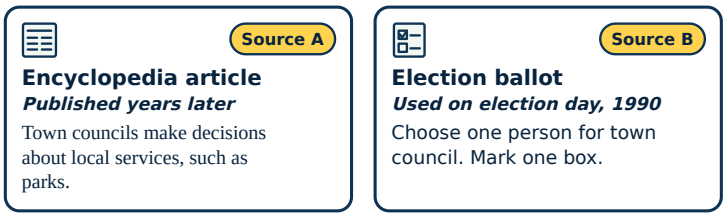
Scan to get this marked free. No screen time for your child.
Print it · do it in pencil · scan it · PencilGo picks the next sheet.

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Answer Key - Grade 3 Social Studies Worksheet - Challenge Me

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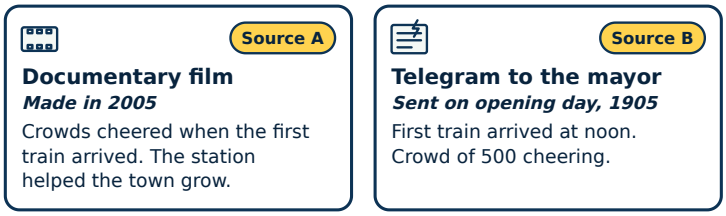
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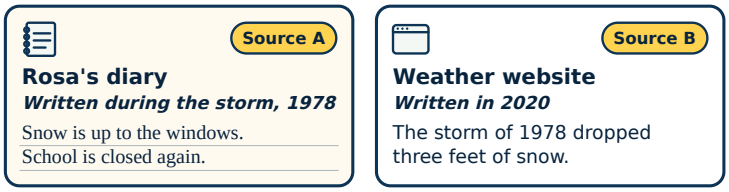
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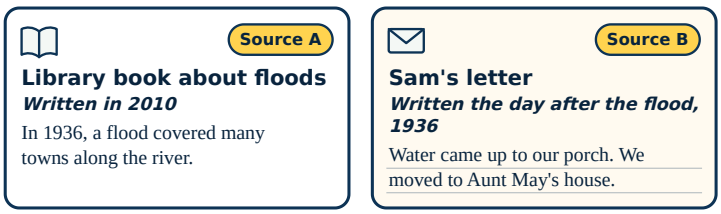
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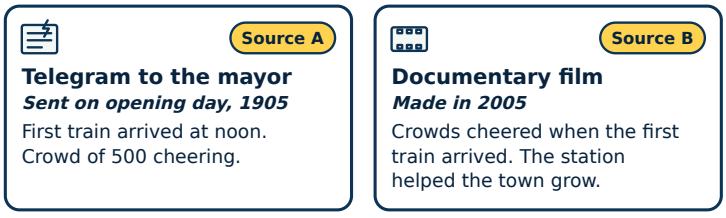
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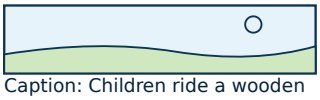
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