

Identifying Primary and Secondary Sources: The American Revolution



Historians use many types of sources to study past events.

Primary sources are made by people who witness historical events. These sources are usually created when the events took place.

Examples:

- newspaper articles
- photographs
- diaries
- letters

Secondary sources are made by historians or other people who research historical events. These sources are usually created after the events took place.

Examples:

- history books
- textbooks
- scholarly articles
- documentaries

Directions: Read the table containing different sources about the American Revolution (1775-1783). Put a check mark to show whether each source is **primary** or **secondary**.

	Source	Primary	Secondary
1.	<i>The Declaration of Independence</i> , a document from 1776 saying the colonies were independent		
2.	<i>Liberty! The American Revolution</i> , a documentary produced in 2004 about the Revolutionary War		
3.	<i>The Articles of Confederation</i> , a document adopted by the Second Continental Congress in 1777		
4.	<i>The American Revolution Reconsidered</i> , a scholarly article written by Meier Schlesinger in 1919		
5.	The book <i>1776</i> , written by historian David McCullough in 2005		
6.	A sketch by an English officer just after the Battle of Long Island in 1776		
7.	<i>Diary of a Common Soldier in the American Revolution, 1775-1783</i> , a military journal written by soldier Jeremiah Greenman		