

Difference between Primary and Secondary sources

Sources That Historians Use

Primary Sources

- Written at the time of the event
- Eyewitness to history
- Reliable source for historians
- Includes letters, diaries, tools, clothing

Secondary Sources

- Written after an event
- Author did not witness the event
- Contains facts about an event
- Includes textbooks and encyclopedias

Primary Sources

Secondary Sources

Data and Original Research	Encyclopedias
Diaries and Journals	Chronologies
Speeches and Interviews	Biographies
Letters and Memos	Monographs (a specialized book or article)
Autobiographies and Memoirs	Most journal articles (unless written at the time of the event)
Books or articles written at the time of the event	Most published books (unless written at the time of the event)
Government Documents	Abstracts of articles
Census Statistics	Paraphrased quotations
Organizational Records	Dictionaries
Documentaries	Textbooks
Photographs	
Art (from the time period)	
Maps (from the time period)	