

What did Americans know about Kristallnacht?

Being a historian is a lot more than just remembering dates, names, and facts. Rather, being a historian is a lot like being a detective. Many historians begin their search with a **big question**; this is what he or she would like to learn about our past. It could be something that no one has ever researched before, or a question that thousands of people throughout history have tried to understand. To seek the answer, a historian must find sources through research, determine their reliability through interrogation, and finally **weave together a logical and plausible story based upon the facts in front of him/her**.

Afterward, many historians go on to construct an argument and write an article or book on why their interpretation of the events is the most accurate.

In this multi-part lesson, **you will have the opportunity to become a historian**. The big question that you are trying to answer is: What did Americans know about the Holocaust?

Name: _____

Article: _____

Primary and Secondary Sources

When historians work toward answering a question, they read both primary and secondary sources to create a well-rounded, and informed interpretation of the event.

In your own words, what is a **primary source**?

Name some examples of primary sources:

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-
-
-

In your own words, what is a **secondary source**?

Name some examples of secondary sources:

-
-
-
-

Primary and Secondary Sources

What questions do you think you should ask when working with a primary source document?

What questions do you think you should ask when working with a secondary source document?

What kinds of information might you get when working with a primary source that you would not get with a secondary source?

Why do you think historians use both primary and secondary sources?

Reading a Primary Source Document

Reading a primary source document is different from reading a textbook. When reading a primary source, you must ask questions to determine a source's argument, bias, and reliability. All of these questions stem from: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How and Which. Use the graphic organizer below to help guide your understanding of your primary source:

WHO?	Who wrote the article?	
	Who do you think was the target audience?	
WHERE?	Where was the article published?	
	Which newspaper published it?	
WHEN?	When was the article published?	
	What was the historical context?	

Reading a Primary Source Document

WHAT? <i>(What is the author trying to say?)</i>	What is the topic of the article?	
	What is the author saying about the topic (the argument/main idea)?	
	What is one sentence from the article that summarizes this main idea?	

Reading a Primary Source Document

HOW? <i>(How does author construct his/her argument?)</i>	What words does the author use to describe the topic?	
	What evidence does the author use to support his/her main idea?	
	How is this primary source different from the secondary source you read?	

Reading a Primary Source Document

WHY? <i>(How does the author feel about the topic? Why did the author write this article?)</i>	Is the author biased towards the topic?	
	What is the author's attitude toward the topic?	
	What was the author's goal in writing this article (to persuade, to inform, etc.)?	

Reading a Primary Source Document

In order to craft a deeper and more accurate answer to the big question, historians use multiple resources. Historians often compare these sources, looking at what information in them is different and what is shared. **Find another pair within your class that has a different article than you and make a group.** Within your group, share the information about your articles and then fill out the Venn diagram below:

