# **What are Primary and Secondary Sources?**

**Primary sources:** materials that were created at the time the event occurred or materials created by those who experienced the event. These materials include letters, speeches, diaries, newspaper articles from the time period, interviews with people who were around when the event occurred, documents, photographs, and artifacts such as tools, weapons, clothing from the time period.

**Secondary sources:** materials that were created after the event. These materials might tell you about an event, person, time or place, but they were created by someone not from the time period. Secondary sources can include history books, school textbooks, encyclopedias, History magazines, websites, and documentaries.

# **Identifying Primary and Secondary Sources**

* **Primary Source:** a record made by people who saw or took part in an event (originates from the past)

# **Examples of a primary source are:**

* Original **documents** such as diaries, speeches, manuscripts, letters, interviews, records, eyewitness accounts, autobiographies.
* Empirical scholarly works such as research articles, clinical reports, case studies, dissertations.
* Creative works such as poetry, music, video, photography.

# **Secondary Source**: a record of an event written by someone not there at the time

# **Examples of secondary sources include:**

* journal articles that comment on or analyze research.
* textbooks.
* dictionaries and encyclopedias.
* books that interpret, analyze.
* political commentary.
* biographies.
* dissertations.
* newspaper editorial/opinion pieces (can be primary too).