



**Ohio Standards**

**Connections:**

Social Studies Skills  
and Methods

Benchmark B:

Critique data and  
information to  
determine the  
adequacy of support  
for conclusions

11<sup>th</sup> Grade

Indicator 6: Critique  
the conclusions drawn  
from survey and  
research data by  
questioning

12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Indicator 3: Research  
an issue or topic by  
gathering, recording,  
evaluating and  
interpreting relevant  
data.

**Research Roadmap**

**11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Lesson Two**

Research is the foundation of a History Day project. The entire project is based on the sources, images, quotes, and interviews students find during their research journey. In this lesson students will understand the difference between primary and secondary sources, understand how to decipher reliable sources from unreliable sources, begin to develop a research plan and identify institutions to conduct research.

**Estimated Duration:**

One to two class periods

**Commentary:** This second lesson in a series of four can be used to establish the importance of historical research and help students understand local community resources available to them. 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will be assessed on source scenarios and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will be assessed on the collection of twenty sources.

**Pre-Assessment:**

Using their textbooks, ask the students to find at least two pieces of information about the creation of the textbook.

**Scoring Guidelines:**

Information that students can find:

- \_\_\_ Copyright or publication date
- \_\_\_ Author(s) or editor(s)
- \_\_\_ The publisher
- \_\_\_ Sources used to create the book
- \_\_\_ Publication location

If students do not bring up these points in discussion, go over each one. This information will also be important in creation of an



annotated bibliography

This information can help students determine reliability or credibility of a source. How? If a particular group or organization publishes a source the information can provide clues about its intended audience or bias. For example: A pamphlet published in 1900 on the adverse effects of voting on women may be confusing until you discover it was printed by an anti-suffrage society. It can also help students detect the bias of the authors or publishers. We assume that textbooks are reliable. Why?

**Post-Assessment:**

11<sup>th</sup> Grade- Source Scenarios

12<sup>th</sup> Grade- 10 sources, at least two primary

**Scoring Guidelines:**

11<sup>th</sup> Grade- Source Scenarios

Question	Points	Criteria
1	1	Correctly identifies author
2	1	Correctly identifies creation date(s)
3	1	Correctly identifies where it was created
4	1	Correctly identifies the intended audience
5	1	Provides reasonable explanation about author's expertise
6	1	Provides reasonable explanation about the author's bias
7	1	Correctly identifies the sources as primary or secondary
8	1	Identifies the author's main point
9	1	Provides an explanation with evidence for either agreement or disagreement with the author's main point.
10	1	Provides a reasonable explanation for use in a History Day project



12<sup>th</sup> Grade- Ten Sources, two primary

Points	Criteria
1	Collected less than 20 sources, not all relevant, no primary
2	Collected less than 20 sources, not all relevant, at least one primary
3	Collected 20 sources, not all relevant, at least one primary
4	Collected 20 relevant sources, 5 primary
5	Collected 20 relevant sources, at least 10 are primary

**Instructional Procedures:**

Activity 1- Primary vs. Secondary

Primary Sources: Were created by someone at the time of an event or by someone who witnessed the event.

Secondary Sources: Were created after the event, using or analyzing primary or other secondary sources.

- Use any primary source or the Western Union Telegraph message sent from Orville Wright to his father in Ohio and either display it on the overhead screen or hand out copies of it to students and then use a book from the library or text book as a secondary source.
- Tell the students that each of these sources provides information about the first sustained flight by the Wright Brothers.
- Ask the students to describe what is similar and what is different about these two sources.

Some points to draw out:

One was written at the time, or by one of the Wright Brothers.

One was written years after it happened by someone who did not witness the event.

- Define primary and secondary source for the students.

Activity 2- You are the topic!

This activity will help students think about the different types of sources that could be used in research.

Examples include: diaries, yearbooks, scrapbooks, photo albums, newspaper articles, report cards, interviews with people who know the student, birth certificate, items that belong to the student, census

The federal government only releases the US Census rolls 75 years after the data was collected. In 2005, the 1930 Census rolls were released. For more information on the census go to <http://www.census.gov>



information (if the student happened to live more than 75 years ago), government records, court records, etc.

- Tell the students that 100 years in the future, a historian decides to write a biography about their lives.
- Ask the students to think about what sources the historian would be able to use to put together their biographies.
- Give the class time (5 minutes) to write down their ideas.
- Have the students share ideas and ask them to determine if the source is primary or secondary.

### Activity 3- Do you trust it?

With the advent of the internet, there is a ton of information that students can tap into, but not all of it is trustworthy. In the same vein, sources at the library or archives can be biased or geared toward a particular audience and have to be interpreted based on those factors. A letter written home from a Civil War soldier may have lots of information on food or camp life and nothing about battle. This doesn't indicate that the soldier never saw action; he simply didn't share the details with his loved ones. Some sources are more objective. A birth certificate communicates specific information as an official record. An editorial in a newspaper is an opinion influenced by various factors. This activity will help students recognize some guidelines to help them think about sources. Who made the source? When? Why? Who was the intended audience?

- Show students the "Types of Sources" sheet.
- Explain: Each source was created by an author or authors to serve a purpose. That author may have certain opinions or biases.
- Look back over the responses the students gave about the sources they would use to tell the story of their own lives. Why were each of these sources created?
- Look at the "Types of Sources" sheet. Why would someone create these sources?
- To help differentiate between a reliable and an unreliable source, discuss guidelines for scrutinizing a source:
  - Was it published by a university press?
  - Is the author a professor or other professional expert in his or her field?
  - Did the person writing the account actually witness the event?
  - Are sources properly cited?



Does the author have a bias? Does he or she belong to a certain group (religious, political, etc) that affects the way he or she feels about the subject?

- Spend some time talking about how to evaluate Internet sources. Anyone can post material on the Internet, so any research done online needs extra scrutiny. Like other sources, it's important to know the creator. Never use a website where the source of information is unidentifiable.
- Discuss some of the Internet Do's and Don'ts

#### Internet Research Don'ts

DON'T cite Wikipedia. It can be used to get basic information, but there are a lot of gaps in the information it provides and anyone can change the content.

DON'T do all your research online. A bibliography filled with web addresses is not balanced.

DON't trust information on a website where there is no evidence of the author.

#### Internet Research Do's

DO trust websites sponsored by the Ohio Historical Society, National History Day, the Library of Congress, Smithsonian, or other nationally recognized research institution.

DO trust Universities (ending in .edu)

DO use online databases to search for journal articles (Ohio Link, INFOhio) or through library catalogs

- Divide students into groups
- Hand out the Source Scenarios, one per group
- Have students come up with a plan for deciding whether the source is reliable or not and answer the questions.
- After 5-10 minutes, have each group share their findings. Allow some time for discussion
- This activity can also be run as a writing activity or by having the class brainstorm together.

Be creative! Are there people or groups (like a Veterans' Association) that can be interviewed about historical events?

#### Activity 4: Making a Research Plan

History Day research may seem very daunting at the beginning of the project. Every community has local research institutions and



libraries that would be more than happy to have young student researchers. Check with your librarian or media specialists on policies about inter-library loans.

Check the OAHSM Directory of Organizations online to find a research institution in your area:

<http://www.ohiohistory.org/resource/oahsm/directory/>

- Tell students about the different types of places they can do to do research:
  - University Libraries
  - Public Libraries (especially if they have rare book rooms or local history rooms)
  - Local Historical Societies
  - Archives
  - Museums
- Ask the students to name places in and around the community where they can do research.
- Hand out the “Research Strategy Worksheet” and have students complete it in their groups or individually.
- Remind students that primary sources can often be found in the back of, or in the bibliography of secondary sources.

Assign a due date for the collection of at least 20 sources. 10 should be primary.

### **Homework Options and Home Connections**

Source Scenarios  
10 collected sources

### **Interdisciplinary Connections**

English Language Arts  
Research  
11<sup>th</sup> Grade

3. Determine the accuracy of sources and the credibility of the author by analyzing the sources’ validity (e.g., authority, accuracy, objectivity, publication date and coverage, etc.)

10<sup>th</sup> Grade

2. Identify appropriate sources and gather relevant information from



multiple sources (e.g., school library catalogs, online databases, electronic resources and Internet-based resources).

### **Materials and Resources:**

<i>For teachers</i>	Western Union Telegram, related secondary source, Source Scenario Teacher Key
<i>For students</i>	Types of Sources, Source Scenarios, Research Strategy Worksheet

### **Key Vocabulary**

Primary Source  
Secondary Source

### **General Tips**

Working with your schools media specialist can help identify places locally, regionally or online for the students to conduct research. National History Day and National History Day in Ohio list reliable internet resources for finding primary sources on their websites:

[www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org)  
[www.ohiohistory.org/historyday](http://www.ohiohistory.org/historyday)

The Internet can be a powerful tool for deciphering the reliability or bias of sources. Searches can be done on authors to help decide what his or her bias is or academic background. A good rule of thumb: get a second opinion. If one website says an author has one political leaning, make sure to receive confirmation. Tools like Amazon can be helpful for book reviews, but make sure to double-check any information.

### **Attachments**

Western Union Telegram  
Source Scenarios  
Source Scenarios Teacher Key  
Types of Sources  
Research Strategy Worksheet

National History Day in Ohio  
Teacher Resources: Lesson 2

Grades 11-12

