



HCDSB LIBRARY SERVICES

Searching and Evaluating Primary Resources

Using library databases to search for Primary Sources:

When searching for primary sources, there are certain subject headings that indicate the resource is a *primary source*. These include:

- Biography (of people involved with the event)
- Correspondence (letters usually)
- Diaries (journals or personal diaries)
- Interviews (of people at an event or interviews with main characters)
- Oral histories
- Personal narratives (personal accounts of the event)
- Photographs (of the event)
- Speeches (of people involved at the event)
- Quotations, maxims, etc.

To conduct a search, go to the home screen of the library database you are using and enter key word(s) that describe your topic and add one of the headings from above. For example:

- World War II personal narratives
- Local history photographs
- Civil Rights speeches

The 6 Cs of Primary Source Evaluation

- **CONTENT** - Main Idea - Describe in detail what you see.
- **CITATION** - Author/Creator - When was this created?
- **CONTEXT** - What is going on in the world when this was created?
- **CONNECTIONS** - Prior Knowledge - Link s to other things that you already know.
- **COMMUNICATION** - Point-of-view or bias - Is this source reliable?
- **CONCLUSIONS** - How does this contribute to our understanding of history?

Adapted from The History Project at UC Irvine <https://historyproject.uci.edu/curriculum-and-resources/>