**Primary Sources:** People use original, first-hand accounts as building blocks to create stories from the past. These accounts are called primary sources, because they are the first evidence of something happening, or being thought or said.

Primary Sources are created at the time of an event, or very soon after something has happened. These sources are often rare or one-of-a-kind. However, some primary sources can also exist in many copies, if they were popular and widely available at the time that they were created.

**Examples:**
- Diaries
- Letters
- Photographs
- Art
- Maps
- Video and film
- Sound recordings
- Interviews
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Published first-hand accounts, or stories

**Summary: Primary Sources**
- created at the time of an event, or very soon after
- created by someone who saw or heard an event themselves
- often one-of-a-kind, or rare
- letters, diaries, photos and newspapers (can all be primary sources)

**Secondary Sources:** Second-hand, published accounts are called secondary sources. They are called secondary sources because they are created after primary sources and they often use or talk about primary sources. Secondary sources can give additional opinions (sometimes called bias) on a past event or on a primary source. Secondary sources often have many copies, found in libraries, schools or homes.

**Examples:**
- History textbooks
- Biographies
- Published stories
- Movies of historical events
- Art
- Music recordings

**Summary: Secondary Sources**
- created after event; sometimes a long time after something happened
- often uses primary sources as examples
- expresses an opinion or an argument about a past event
- history text books, historical movies and biographies (can all be secondary sources)
Identifying Primary and Secondary Sources

Name:

Determine if the source would be a Primary Source (P) or a secondary Source (S).

- A **Primary Source** is information that was created at the same time as an event or by a person directly involved in the event.
  
  *Diaries, speeches, letters, official records, autobiographies.*

- A **Secondary Source** is information from somewhere else or by a person not directly involved in the event.
  
  *Encyclopedias, textbooks, book reports.*

1) A play showing how Benjamin Franklin flew a kite during a lightning storm. **P**

2) A short story describing Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla's 'electrical' battle. **S**

3) Anne Frank's diary describing her life during World War 2. **P**

4) A cartoon showing how Pocahontas met John Smith. **S**

5) A text book describing the civil rights movement. **S**

6) A news report about the opening of a power plant. **S**

7) A scientist explaining what it was like for Buzz Aldrin to walk on the moon. **P**

8) A YouTube video describing how the pyramids were built. **S**

9) An interview with Alexander Graham Bell about how he invented the telephone. **S**

10) A radio broadcast from the day the Soviet Union launched Sputnik. **S**

11) An autobiography about the 40th president, Ronald Reagan. **S**

12) A book describing Christopher Columbus sailing to America. **S**

13) A famous artist's painting of what cowboy life was probably like. **P**

14) A journal by a cowboy about the cattle drives from Texas to Kansas. **P**

15) The United States Constitution. **P**