Portail de l'éducation de Historica Canada

Primary Source Pyramid

3D Pyramid: 5 Steps to Analyze Primary Sources

THE 5WS: Question the source. Who created it? When and where was it created? What is the source about? Why was the source created?
CONTEXT: Situate the source in space and time, placing it in the wider picture of history. What else was happening at the time?
EXPLORING: Examine the details of the source. What is it about? What words, images or symbols are used? What was its purpose?
REACHING CONCLUSIONS: Use context, evidence and observations to develop conclusions. What can the source reveal?
FINDING PROOF: Compare your conclusions with other primary and secondary sources to corroborate your findings. Do other sources confirm or challenge your conclusions?