

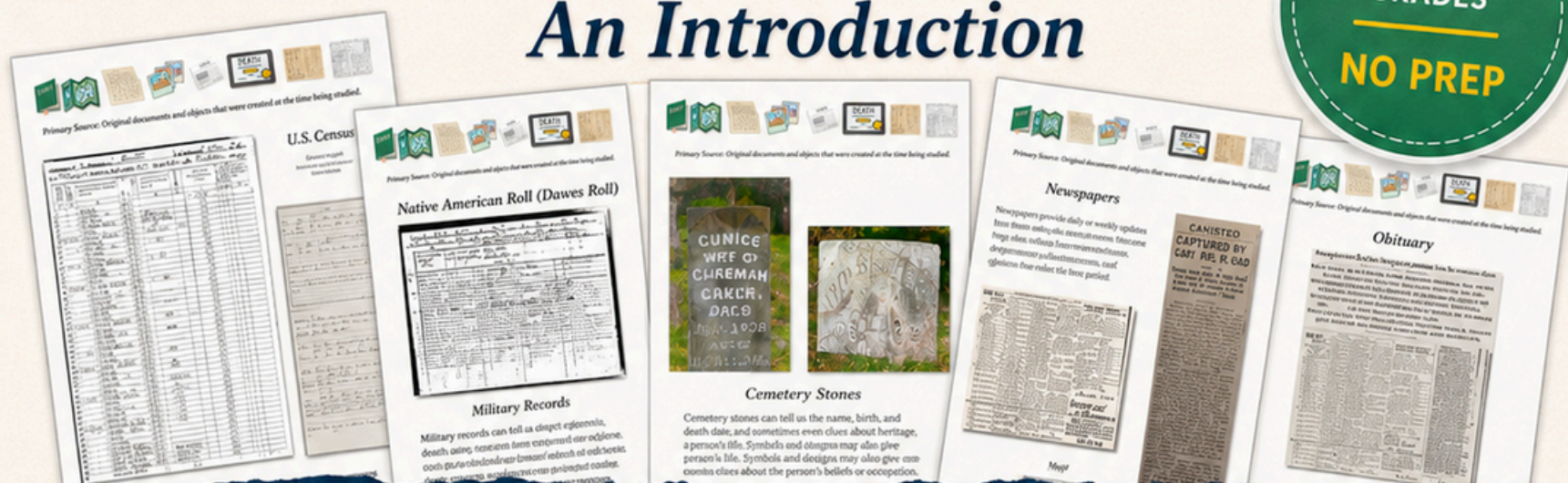


WORKING WITH PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS SERIES

Primary Sources

An Introduction

INTERMEDIATE
GRADES
NO PREP



Examples and descriptions of
11 common documents.



BIOGRAPHIES



ENCYCLOPEDIAS



DICTIONARIES



THESIS



TEXTBOOKS



MEDIA



REVIEWS

ENGAGING ACTIVITIES • CRITICAL THINKING • READY TO TEACH



Poster Set with 11 Common Primary Sources

Every community has religious members. Records of addresses, ages and...

These records are usually kept at a...

Military Records

Military records are kept for people who serve in the armed forces – the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and Space Force.

These records often have basic information, like a person's birthdate, a physical description, when the person joined or left the military, and what group the person served in.

These are just two examples of military records. Only older records are available for research; records for living people are private.

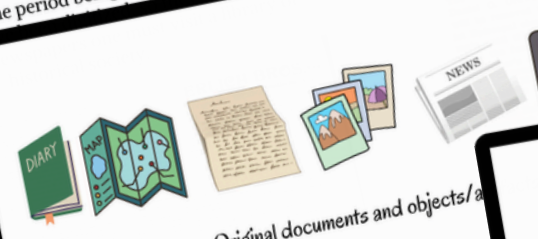
Above is a Civil War Era Muster Roll Abstract published in 1863. It tells when Nathan S Baker enlisted, when he mustered in (joined the unit) and when he left the organization. It also gives notes about when and how he was wounded.



Primary Sources: Original documents and objects/artifacts that were created at the time being studied.

Newspapers

Newspapers used to be a daily or weekly publications that printed all the news. Not all parts of a newspaper are a primary source. An article that was written at the time an event occurred, or by someone who was a witness, is a primary source. Editorials or opinion pieces are not primary sources. Newspapers provide information on the events and people of the time period being studied.



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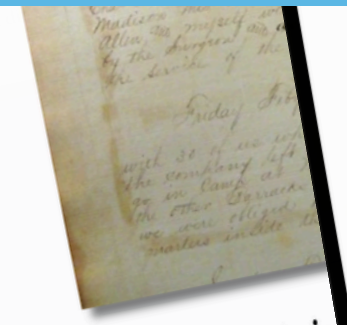
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Descriptions & Images



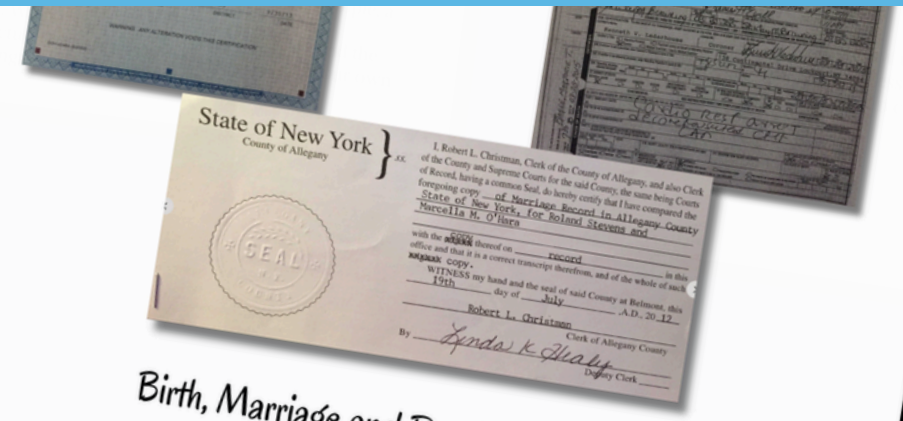
Diaries

A personal diary lets us learn about a person's life. This page is from the diary of John B. Baker, a resident of Allegany County, New York. He wrote his family and friends about what happened to him.



Cemetery Stones

If a cemetery stone was erected at the time a person died, it is often a good source of information. But, as with all sources, it is important to check with other sources to see if they agree. Some stones have extra information, like the name of the person's spouse, or parents. Sometimes they just list the name with the year the person was born, and the year the person died. It used to be one had to visit a cemetery and try to find the stone of the person being studied. Now information about most cemeteries is online.



Birth, Marriage and Death Certificates

The government keeps track of when people are born, when they get married and when they die. For each of these events they issue a certificate. These certificates provide dates and locations for the events, and often the names of the person's parents and spouse. These documents are private while a person is living.

Maps

Things were located at the time they were made. Some maps show the location of land and owners. Historic street maps show how a city was laid out. Historic maps to current maps to see what changes have happened.

Matching game to review.

Matching Game for Review

Business Directories and Phone Books

Business Directories and Phone Books

These sources are not common any more, but not too long ago every family had a phone book in their house. It listed all the residents of an area their telephone numbers and addresses. A business directory listed all the businesses in town, with their address and phone number.

Old phone books can often be found in libraries and historical societies.

Today we find this information on the internet.