

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Historical Retelling-How important are primary sources?**

Today, you will be doing an experiment that will help you understand the difference between a primary source and a secondary source.

**Part 1-Your job:** Think of an important moment in your life. It can be something *little* (example: a time you scraped your knee) or something *large* (example: the first time you were able to ride your bike on your own).

What is important is that *this memory stands out*-you remember a lot of details around what happened, both the *physical details* (5 senses memories) and the *emotional details* (how you felt while it was happening).

**Write your memory here:** (Remember, use specific physical and emotional details)

My Memory:

Why you feel it was important enough for you to remember so well:

**Now, turn over this sheet to move to step 2.**

**Part 2-Share your story:** Find a person in the room that you do not know very well. This person may know you, but wouldn't know the memory you wrote on part one.

For Part 2, you will tell your memory, in detail, to the partner you have chosen. Please read your memory directly from what you wrote, but DO NOT show the written portion during or after sharing the memory. The partner is to listen, but is NOT to write down what you told him or her-yet.

**Part 3-Listen to your partner's memory:** After telling your story, it is your turn to listen. As in Part 2, listen closely to your partner's memory, but do not look at their written version of the story. You may NOT take notes while they are telling the story.

**Part 4-Recall your partner's story:** *On the separate sheet of paper provided*, write down AS MUCH of your partner's memory as you can remember. Remember, include both physical and emotional details you remember your partner sharing with you.

USE SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER PROVIDED FOR YOUR ANSWER

**Part 5-Compare your story with your partner's retelling:** Now that you both have finished writing down your recollection of your partner's story, it's time to see how accurately they wrote it down.

Collect their written retelling of your story. Read the retelling.

**How did they do? Rate the retell. Circle your opinion:**

0	1	2	3	4
<i>Didn't recall at all.</i>				<i>They remembered it exactly.</i>

**Now, go back through their paper.**

- Circle everything they remembered correctly.
- Put a box around any information that has *changed* in their version, but is *still somewhat correct*.
- Finally, *underline* anything that is *all together wrong*.

*Now, Chart the information you tagged:*

<b>Correctly remembered</b>	<b>Somewhat correct</b>	<b>All together wrong</b>

**Part 6-Process what you've learned:**

***Definitions:***

*A primary source* is a document, artifact, or firsthand account from a person who was *actually there* in the moment in history that is studied.

*A secondary source* is any retelling of an event, whether written or oral, that has been *passed down by examining that primary source and interpreting it.*

**Turn to next page:**

C. Adrian, June 2006

Look at your written story, and then your partner's retelling of your story. Which story is more reliable? Why?

Your Answer:

Be honest: When you were writing down your important memory, were you 100% sure you remembered everything correctly? Is it possible that someone else who was there might have seen the event differently, or remembered it differently?

Your Answer:

Final question: Do you think it is reliable to understand a historical event by only studying primary sources? Secondary sources? How would you go about finding the most reliable understanding of an event?

Your Answer:

C. Adrian, June 2006

Part 4-Recall Your Partner's Story Here: Remember to write down AS MUCH as you can remember, including both physical and emotional details.

My partner's story:



***When you are finished, hand this sheet only to your partner. Make sure to get their retelling of your memory as well.***