

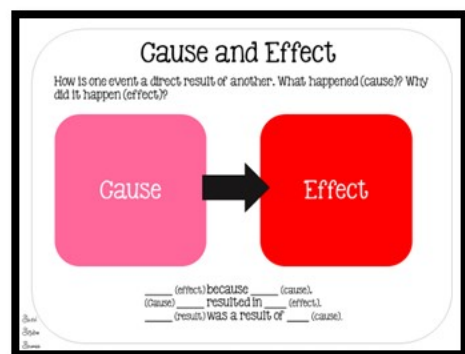
# Westward Expansion

## Primary Source Practice

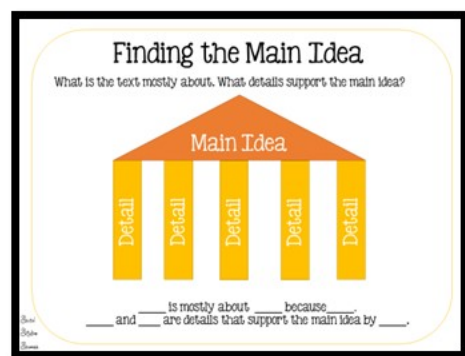


# Primary Source Practice

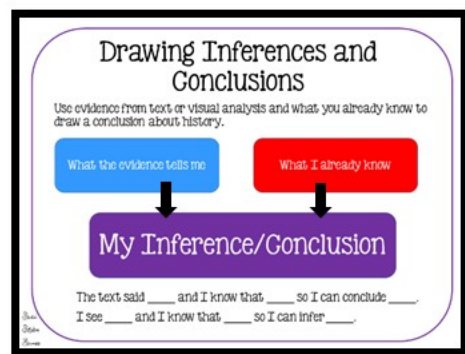
Students often struggle analyzing primary sources. The traditional strategies are not successful in helping students practice the thinking that is required for primary source analysis on state level exams such as the STAAR. After a careful analysis of test released questions, I have determined that a majority of primary source test items are dependent on four specific Social Studies skills. I have created graphic organizers to help students think through each of these four specific skills: **cause and effect**, **main idea**, **inferencing**, and **drawing a conclusion**.



This particular skill appears in two ways on the STAAR; both the causes and effects of a primary source event. To help students think through the process of analyzing the cause and effect of primary source events, I have developed two different graphic organizers that show both the events leading to a cause, and the effects of a cause.



Finding the main idea is a skill often associated with reading primary source excerpts. Students are required to read the excerpt and identify the topic prior to answering a specific question about the primary source. These graphic organizers will help students find the main idea in order to answer subsequent questions.



Creating an inference and drawing a conclusion are actually two different discrete skills that are often associated together. They require different methods to practice each skill. Each of the graphic organizers I have designed will help students either create an inference or draw a conclusion.

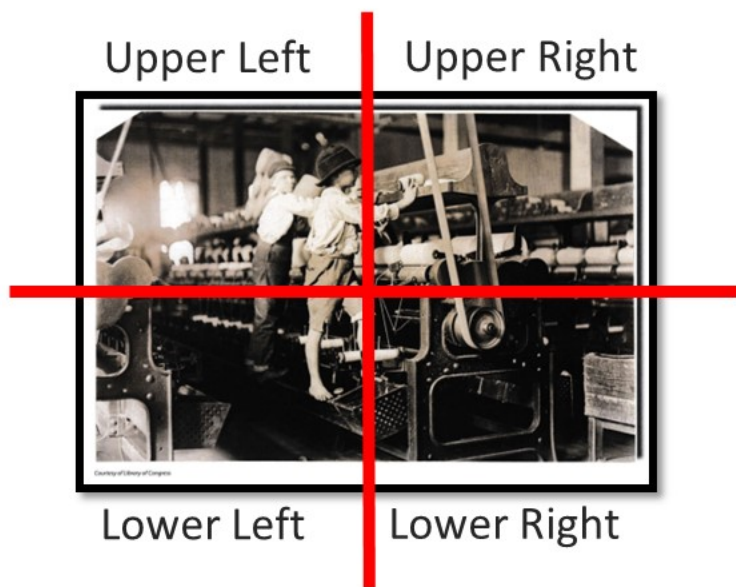


# Primary Source Practice

The first step of introducing *Primary Source Practice* is to MODEL THE THINKING that is involved with analyzing a primary source. Read the primary source excerpts to your students and define any unfamiliar words. Explain to your students that analyzing a primary source is based on specific thinking skills and if they can recognize the skill, the primary source will become easier to read and analyze. Project one of the *Primary Source Practice* pages and model step by step how you would analyze the source. Ask questions as you model, so that your students can help you complete the graphic organizer. Use these *Primary Source Practice* pages towards the end of your unit. The more background knowledge your students have on the topic, the easier the primary sources will be for your students to analyze.



For the image analysis, I have included both a large image for you to project, as well as the smaller image in the graphic organizer. Practice examining the image by breaking it down into smaller quadrants. Look at the upper left, the upper right, the lower left, then the lower right. Ask questions about what they see in each portion of the image.



# Main Idea

Who was involved?

What is happening?

*"Whenever called upon to determine upon the solemn question of peace or war, Congress must consider and deliberate and decide upon the motives, objects and causes of the war.... Among the resolutions, which it is my intention to present for your consideration, at the conclusion of this address, one proposes, ... to disavow, any desire, on our part, to acquire any foreign territory whatever, for the purpose of introducing slavery into it."*

Henry Clay speaking to Congress on the Mexican-American War, 1847

When is this occurring? What era?

Where is this taking place?



Main Idea

What is the main idea of the primary source?

# Cause and Effect

## Causes of Primary Source

What are the causes of the event identified in the primary source?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

## Primary Source

*"Raining all day...and the boys are all soaking wet and look sad and comfortless. The little ones and myself are shut up in the wagons from the rain. Still it will find its way in and many things are wet; and take us all together we are a poor looking set, and all this for Oregon...I am thinking as I write, 'Oh Oregon, you must be a wonderful country'"*

-Amelia Stewart Knight, June 1, 1853

## Content Analysis

Who was involved? What is happening? When is this occurring? Where is this taking place?

PREVIEW

## Summary

How can you summarize the primary source in 1-2 sentences?

## Main Idea

What is the main idea of this primary source?

## Final Question

What is the relationship between the primary source its causes?

# Cause and Effect

1. Resolved, That California...ought...to be admitted as one of the States of this Union, without...any restriction in respect to the exclusion...of slavery within those boundaries.
2. Resolved, That...it is inexpedient (unwise) for Congress to provide by law either ...introduction into, or exclusion from any part of said territory [lands acquired by the U.S. from Mexico]...conditions on the subject of slavery.

-Excerpt from Clay's Resolutions of 1850 which would become the Compromise of 1850

## Content Analysis

Who was involved? What is happening? When is this occurring? Where is this taking place?

## Main Idea

What is the main idea of this primary source?

## Effects of Primary Source

What are the effects of the event identified in the primary source?

## Summary

How can you summarize the primary source in 1-2 sentences?

## Final Question

What is the relationship between the primary source and the effects?



# Drawing a Conclusion

*"This war did not spring up on our land; this war was brought upon us by the children of the Great Father who came to take our land without a price, and who, in our land, do a great many evil things... This war has come from robbery – from the stealing of our land."*

-Spotted Tail, 1823-1881, leader of the Brule Sioux

Content Analysis

Who was involved?

What is happening?

When is this occurring?  
What era?

Where is this taking place?

Main Idea

What is the main idea of the primary source?

Explanation

What does this primary source mean in my own words?



Drawing a Conclusion

Based on the information I have analyzed, I can conclude....

# Creating an Inference

*"Washington [D.C.] is not a place to live in. The rents are high, the food is bad, the dust is disgusting, and the morals are deplorable. Go West, young man, go West and grow up with the country."*

-Attributed to Horace Greeley, New-York Daily Tribune, July 13, 1865

Content Analysis

Who was involved?

What is happening?

When is this occurring?  
What era?

Where is this taking place?

## Explanation

What does this primary source mean in my own words?

## Background Knowledge

What do I already know about this era? The people who are involved? The events that are being described? The actions that are being described?



Creating an Inference

Based on the information I have analyzed, I can infer...





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# About the Author

## What do I believe about Social Studies instruction?

- ✓ Students need to be engaged to learn.  
-Schlechty's *Design Qualities of engagement*
- ✓ History can be fun and rigorous at the same time.  
-Bower's *Bring Learning Alive!*
- ✓ All students can learn – we just need to support them in different ways.  
-Seidlitz's *Seven Steps*
- ✓ Kids need to continuously review content through games and engaging activities.  
-Himmele's *Total Participation Techniques*
- ✓ Writing is essential for learning, not just assessment.  
-Daniels' *Content Area Writing*
- ✓ Vocabulary instruction must be intentional and engaging.  
-Marzano *Academic Vocabulary*
- ✓ History should not be trivial pursuit – dig deeper and teach with essential questions and enduring understandings.  
-Wiggins & McTighe *Essential Questions*
- ✓ Students are social – purposeful talk is crucial to learning.  
-Walsh *Quality Questioning*
- ✓ Students need to read in Social Studies – reading informational text cannot be mastered without constant practice.  
-Kinsella's *Considerate Text*
- ✓ "Soft skills" of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity are essential to future success in the job market.  
-Muir *Reasons Millennials Get Fired*
- ✓ The best way to improve reading comprehension and scores, is to focus on building knowledge through Social Studies instruction.  
-Wexler *The Knowledge Gap*



Dawn Viñas has served in education for over a quarter of a century.

Dawn earned her Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Texas A&M University. In her education journey, she was shaped by her various roles as a classroom teacher, instructional coach, curriculum coordinator, professional development trainer, university professor, and teacher-author. Dawn has provided Social Studies professional development for over 20 years to more than 10,000 teachers from Alaska to Florida. In 2015, Dawn started Social Studies Success® with the mission to revolutionize social studies instruction. With a goal of improving instruction, Dawn is currently providing consulting, classroom resources, and professional development services to several school districts across the state of Texas. Do you have a question, or would you like to purchase a license for your district? You can reach Dawn [here](#).

