

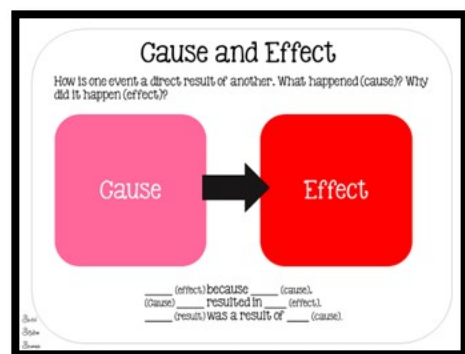
Civil War

Primary Source Practice

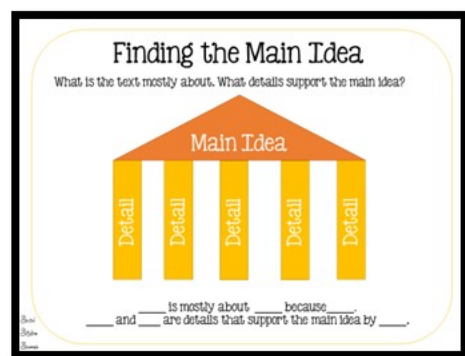


Primary Source Practice

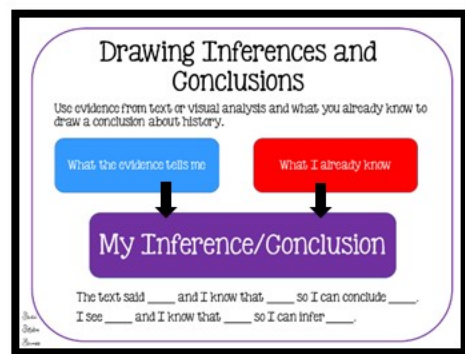
Students often struggle analyzing primary sources. The traditional strategies are not successful in helping students practice the thinking that is required for primary source analysis on state level exams such as the STAAR. After a careful analysis of test released questions, I have determined that a 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.

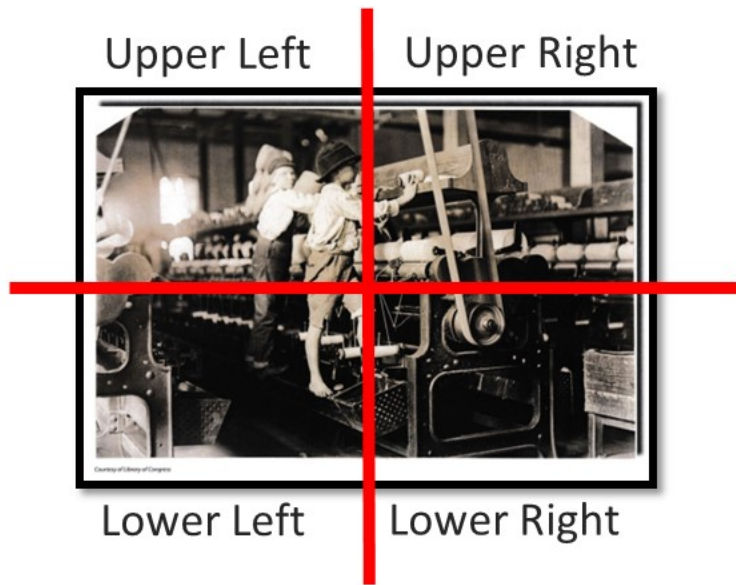
Primary Source Practice

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.

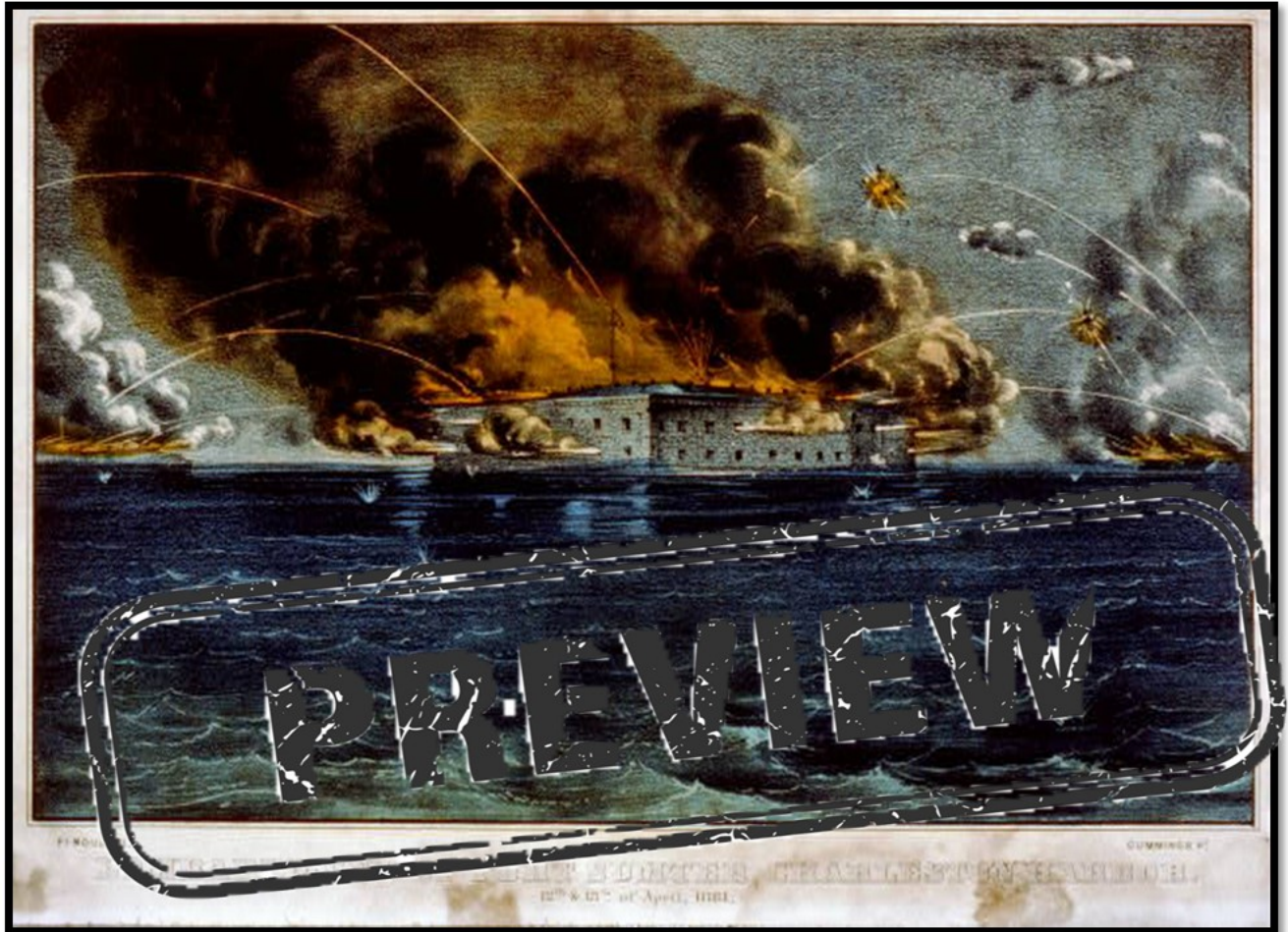


When you analyze excerpts or speeches, teach your students to "read the bottom first". Students can gain insight to the primary source by reading who wrote it and the date (commonly found at the bottom of the primary source), before they read the source.

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.



Primary Source Practice



Bombardment of Fort Sumter, Charleston Harbor: 12th & 13th of April 1861, Currier & Ives

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

PREVIEW

Main Idea

Who was involved?

What is happening?



PREVIEW

When is this occurring?

Where is this taking place?

PREVIEW

Main idea of the primary source?

Main Idea

Who was involved?

What is happening?

Vicksburg was important to the enemy because it occupied the first high ground coming close to the river before Memphis. From there a railroad runs east, connecting with other roads leading to all points of the Southern States. A railroad also starts from the opposite side of the river, extending west as far as Shreveport, Louisiana. Vicksburg was the only channel, at the time the only channel connecting the parts of the confederacy divided by the Mississippi. So long as it was held by the enemy, the free navigation of the river was prevented. Hence its importance. Points of the river between Vicksburg and Port Hudson were the only dependencies; but their fall was sure to follow the capture of the former place.

-From *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant*, a firsthand account of the Civil War

When is this occurring?

Where is this taking place?

PREVIEW

Main idea of the primary source?

Primary Source Practice



Scott's great snake. Cartoon map illustrating Gen. Winfield Scott's plan to crush the Confederacy economically. It is sometimes called the "Anaconda plan." Tightening naval blockade, forcing rebels out of Mississippi along the Mississippi River, Kentucky, and puts it on the fence. Idle cotton industry illustrated in Georgia.

December 1861 by J.B. Elliott

Cause and Effect

Causes of Primary Source

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

-
-
-
-
-

Primary Source



START HERE

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?

PREVIEW

Final Question

What is the relationship between the primary source and its causes?

Cause and Effect

Causes of Primary Source

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

-
-
-
-
-
-

"...It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

-Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, Nov. 19th, 1863

START HERE

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?

PREVIEW

Final Question

What is the relationship between the primary source and its causes?

Drawing a Conclusion

"I hold that ...the Constitution the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever, it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself."

-Lincoln's First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861

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?

PREVIEW

Explanation

What does this primary source mean in my own words?



Drawing a Conclusion

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

PREVIEW



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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.
-Seidnitz'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](#).

