

Start with your specific research question then tell...

Why is this source a valuable source for my specific problem, and what should I be careful of when using this source to answer my question?

Origin:

What type of source is it?

Who is the author?

When was it created?

Who published it?

Is there anything pertinent about the creator/author that helps us better understand the source?

How do the answers to these questions help your specific project, what are the limits of these values (where does the value stop) when it comes to answering *your specific research question*?

Purpose:

Why was the source created?

For secondary sources...

What does the historian contribute that previous historians did not (thesis)?

Are there archives or primary source material that the historian used that others did not?

Does the historian ask questions of the primary sources that are unique?

For primary sources?

Why did the source need to be completed?

What was the intended reason for creating the source?

Who is/was the intended audience? How can you tell?

For secondary sources...

For the general audience?

For high school students, college students?

For other historians?

For primary sources...

Was it for public consumption?

Was it a private letter intended for only one person?

Was it a diary not meant to be read by others?

Was it a government document intended to be consumed by the public?

Was it a classified memo that was not supposed to be read at the time?

Why did the author choose the format that he/she chose?

How do the answers to these questions help your specific project, what are the limits of these values (where does the value stop) when it comes to answering *your specific research question*?

Content:

What is the story being told?

Who are the key figures?

Where do the events take place?

What impact or significance does the content have?

How do the answers to these questions help your specific project, what are the limits of these values (where does the value stop) when it comes to answering *your specific research question*?