



What is History?

- History is an account of the past.
- Accounts differ depending on one's perspective.
- We rely on evidence to construct accounts of the past.
- We must question the reliability of each piece of evidence.
- Any single piece of evidence is insufficient to build a plausible account.

How Do I Read Like a Historian?

sourcing

close
reading

contextualization

corroboration

Contextualization:

Contextualization just means being aware of when a source was created and what was going on at that time that might have influenced it.

This is important because it helps you understand how a document fits into a certain time and place.



BEFORE and **DURING**

reading, ask yourself:

- When and where was the document created? (source)
- What was different then?
- What was the same?
- How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?

Close Reading:

Close Reading just means reading a text multiple times to find specific information.

This is important because every story has more than one side and it is important to understand the author's bias and purpose for creating the source.



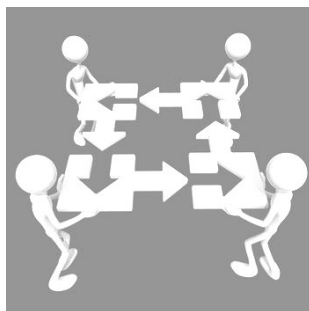
DURING reading, find:

- What claims does the author make?
- What evidence does the author use to support the claim?
- How does the document make you feel?
- What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) is used to convince you that he/she is right?
- What information does the author leave out?

Corroboration:

CORROBORATION just means finding evidence that supports a claim.

This is important because there are many points of view. In order to claim something as fact, there needs to be enough evidence and that evidence should fit together.



DURING and **AFTER**

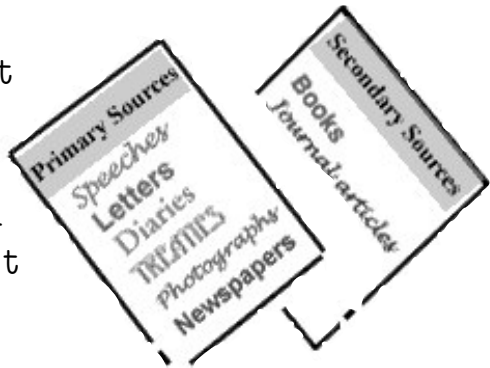
reading, ask yourself:

- What do other documents say?
- Do the documents agree? If not, why?
- What are other possible documents?
- What documents are most reliable?

Sourcing:

Sourcing just means finding the source, or where the document came from.

This is important because WHO wrote the document has an effect on WHAT it says.



BEFORE reading,
ask yourself:

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- Who wrote this?
- What is the author's point of view?
- Why was it written?
- When was it written?
- Where was it written?
- Is the source believable?
Why or why not?.