

Name: _____ Date: _____

Studying a Primary Source & a Secondary Source

Definitions:

- “Primary Source”: the raw materials of history—original documents and objects that were created at the time under study (Library of Congress)
- “Secondary Source”: second-hand information written or created after an event. Secondary sources may summarize, interpret, review, or criticize existing events or works. Secondary sources were written or created after an event by people who were not at the original event. (Library of Congress)

Directions:

- Decide which letter/document you are going to study:
 - a. 1785: "Congress have kept the Vessel from sinking"
 - b. 1786: "The Causes Are Too Many and Too Various"
 - c. 1786: Address of the Annapolis Convention
 - d. 1787: "The Tumults in My Native State"
 - e. 1787: "Delegates to Meet at Philadelphia the Second Monday in May Next"
- Read the letter and fill out Part 1 of this worksheet.
- Select a Secondary Source related to challenges described in the primary source; read the Secondary Source and fill out Part 2 of this worksheet.
- Then complete Part 3 to draw your conclusions.

Part 1: Primary Source Analysis

1. Primary Source Title:
2. Who is the author? Who is the recipient?
3. What difficulties facing the United States in the 1780s are described in this primary source?

4. Does the author offer hopes or solutions for solving/ending the difficulties?

5. What are three adjectives that you would use to describe the tone of this author in this primary source?

Part 2: Secondary Source Analysis

1. Title of Article

2. Key Historical Facts (take notes with bullet points of facts that relate to the challenge/difficulty identified in the primary source)



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Part 3: Conclusions

1. Synthesizing Information:

Combine the information from the primary source and secondary source. What conclusions can you draw about the historical event or period?



2. Critical Thinking:

Reflect on the importance of using both secondary and primary sources in historical research. How do they complement each other, and what unique perspectives do they offer?

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