

Origin, Purpose, Value, and Limitation of Historical Sources

OPVL – questions to consider	Your Answers
Origin	
<p>Who is the creator? What type of source is it? When was it created? When was it published? Where was it published? Who is publishing it? Is there anything you know about the creator that is relevant to your evaluation? <i>The answer to this last question is very important as the more you know about the creator of the source the easier it is to answer the following questions.</i></p>	
Purpose	
<p>Why does this source exist? Why did the creator create this piece of work? What is the intent? Why did the creator choose this particular format? Who is the intended audience? Who was the creator thinking would receive this? What does the source 'say'? Can you tell more than what is on the surface?</p>	
Value	
<p>What can we tell about the creator from the source? What can we tell about the time period from the source? Under what circumstances was the source created and how does the source reflect those circumstances? What can we tell about any controversies from the source? Does the creator represent a particular 'side' of a controversy or event? What can we tell about the creator's perspectives from the source? What was going on in history at the time the source was created and how does this piece accurately reflect it? (Put the source into historical context)</p>	
Limitations	
<p>What part of the story can we NOT tell from this source? How could we verify the content of the source? Does this source inaccurately reflect anything about the time period? What does the creator leave out and why do they leave it out (if you know)? What is purposely not addressed?</p> <p>Being biased does not necessarily limit the value of a source! If you are going to comment on the bias of a document, you must go into detail. Who is it biased towards? Who is it biased against? What part of a story does it leave out? What part of the story is <u>missing</u> because of parts left out?</p>	