How to Analyze Primary Sources

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Subject\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_

Why do we need to learn this skill?

* People who study history examine pieces of evidence to reconstruct events.
* Some types of evidence are written, visual, or physical artifacts.

They are called **primary sources**.

* Analyzing primary sources can increase your understanding of historical people,

events, or places.

**How do we learn the skill?**

* First, identify the author or creator of the source.
* Next, determine when and where the source was written, illustrated, or created.
* Then, read the document or study the illustration or artifact. As you are reading try to answer the following questions:
  + **What is the primary source?**
  + **Who created it?**
  + **Where is it from?**
  + **When was it created?**
  + **What information does the source reveal?**

Read and examine the source below:

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you-ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

- President John F. Kennedy

Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961

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- President John F. Kennedy

**Inaugural Address, January 20,** **1961**

**What is this primary**

**Source?**

An Inaugural Address is another name for a speech given by the president after he takes the oath of office.

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**Who is the author of**

**the source?**

In this source, the author is identified at the end of the excerpt.

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**When was the source**

**created?**

In this source, the date is also cited.

**What can you**

**learn from the**

**source? Use your**

To whom is President Kennedy speaking?

**skills at making**

**Inferences to help**

**you.**

What is he asking American to do?

What is Kennedy asking of his “fellow citizens of the world”?

And so, **my fellow Americ**ans: ask not what your country can do for you-**ask what you can do for your country.**

My **fellow citizens of the w**orld: ask not what America will do for you, but **what together we can do for the freedom of man**.

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