



INQUIRY FIELD GUIDE

*20+ PRACTICAL STRATEGIES AND
PROTOCOLS TO PROMPT QUESTIONS
AND FACILITATE INVESTIGATIONS*

Source Analysis: Younger Grades

The What

Source Analysis is a key component of an inquiry classroom, prompting students to take caution when using sources of information – and providing them with a set of questions to help evaluate the quality of a source.

The How

1. Preview the source with the class, groups, or individuals by conducting a [Think, Pair, Share](#) in response to the prompt: What is this source?
 - Confirm or share with students the ways that you might classify the source: work of art, artifact, recorded interview, primary/secondary, etc.
2. Ask: Who made this?
 - Walk through identifying the maker (author, artist, etc.) and the publisher, if relevant.
3. Ask: Why did they make it?
 - If appropriate, help students find clues about purpose. Share relevant information with students (e.g., the author's note about why they made the text, etc.).
 - Summarize information about the organization behind the text (e.g., ___ is a news organization, ___ is an entertainment company, etc.).
4. Ask: What can a source like this tell us?
 - Prompt thinking and clarify. For example, a nonfiction text may tell us what historians think happened, while an oral history can tell us what the event looked and felt like for one person.
5. Ask: What can a source like this NOT tell us?
 - Prompt thinking and clarify. For example, an oral history can't tell us what the event looked like or felt like for other people.
6. Ask: Do we want to continue exploring this source?
 - Connect this question to the topic you are learning about in your investigation.