

Primary Sources

PRIMARY SOURCE an original document or artifact that tells us about the past

TYPES OF PRIMARY RESOURCES

Personal papers	letters, diaries, journals, bills, receipts and legal documents such as birth, death and marriage certificates, everyday recipes, scrapbooks, homework, and report cards
Business records	account books, bills, ledgers, advertisements, labor records, salary or wage accounts, all business or industrial records
Local government records	information on public and private property, taxes, licenses, bonds, school records, wills, and court records
Maps	survey, county, city, town, insurance, township, topographical, and U.S. Geological survey maps
Photographs and Drawings: Architectural and Illustrations	photos and drawings of environment, physical or built, as well as those of people
Broadsides	advertisements and posters used to inform the public before advent of modern communication methods
Census records	provide information concerning people, agriculture, and industry. The federal population census began in 1790. By 1850 family names, ages, and places of birth were included. The 1850 and 1860 censuses listed slaves only by their ages; by 1870, as freedmen and women, African Americans were listed with names, ages, and places of birth. In 1880 family relationships were given.
Newspapers	publications, usually issued daily or weekly, containing current news, feature articles, and advertising
Artifacts	objects made or changed by humans; provide researchers with possible clues about how people lived, worked, spent leisure time; what they ate and drank; how they dressed

Adapted from and with permission of the Indiana Junior Historical Society

Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest

www.poplarforest.org