

KS3 AND GCSE HISTORY

How to make an Inference from Sources

***Master how to read, understand and
analyse sources!***



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This guide will help you master the skill of understanding and inferring from historical sources! This is a key skill for any student of history and needed for all History GCSEs.

I hope you find the guide useful!

You can contact me on any of my social media platforms listed below!

Have a wonderful day,

Lynn

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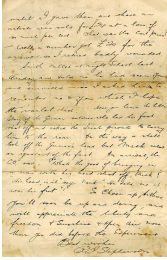
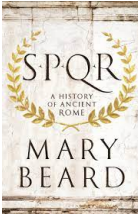
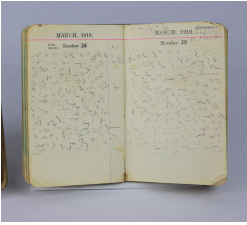




What are Sources?

A **source** is anything that tells us about the past. Sources can be written, visual, objects or buildings. Sources are often grouped into '**primary**' and '**secondary**' sources.

Primary sources are ones created during the time period you are studying. For example, if you were studying the Roman Empire, then a Roman coin or a text written by a Roman would be a primary source.

Secondary sources are ones that were created after the time period you are studying. Therefore, if you were studying the Roman Empire then the book '*SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*' by Professor Mary Beard published in 2016 is a secondary source.

Examples of different types of Sources

<p>Speeches</p> <p>"..we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender", Churchill June 1940</p>	<p>Letters</p> 	<p>Paintings</p> 
<p>Books</p> 	<p>Diaries</p> 	<p>Artefacts/Objects</p> 
<p>Oral histories</p> 	<p>Newspapers</p> 	<p>Cartoons</p>
<p>Photographs</p> 	<p>Government documents</p>  <p>Department for Education</p>	<p>Posters</p> 

How do I infer from a Source?

Historians use sources to find out about the past. They make inferences from the sources. What does that mean? What is an inference?

An inference is something you work out based on the evidence the source gives you.



What you **infer** from a source will depend on what question you are answering. So start with, **what is the focus of the question?**



Read the source and **highlight** 2 sentences or details that are relevant to **the focus of the question.**



Work out what you can **infer** from what you have **highlighted.**

An inference is:

- Something you can work out from the source
- What can you 'read between the lines' from the source
- What can you suggest based on what you see or read
- What is the message you get from the source
- What is the tone of the source - happy, sad, excited, sarcastic, angry, fearful?
 - For written sources, look at the language the author has used
 - For visual sources, look carefully at people's expressions or body language



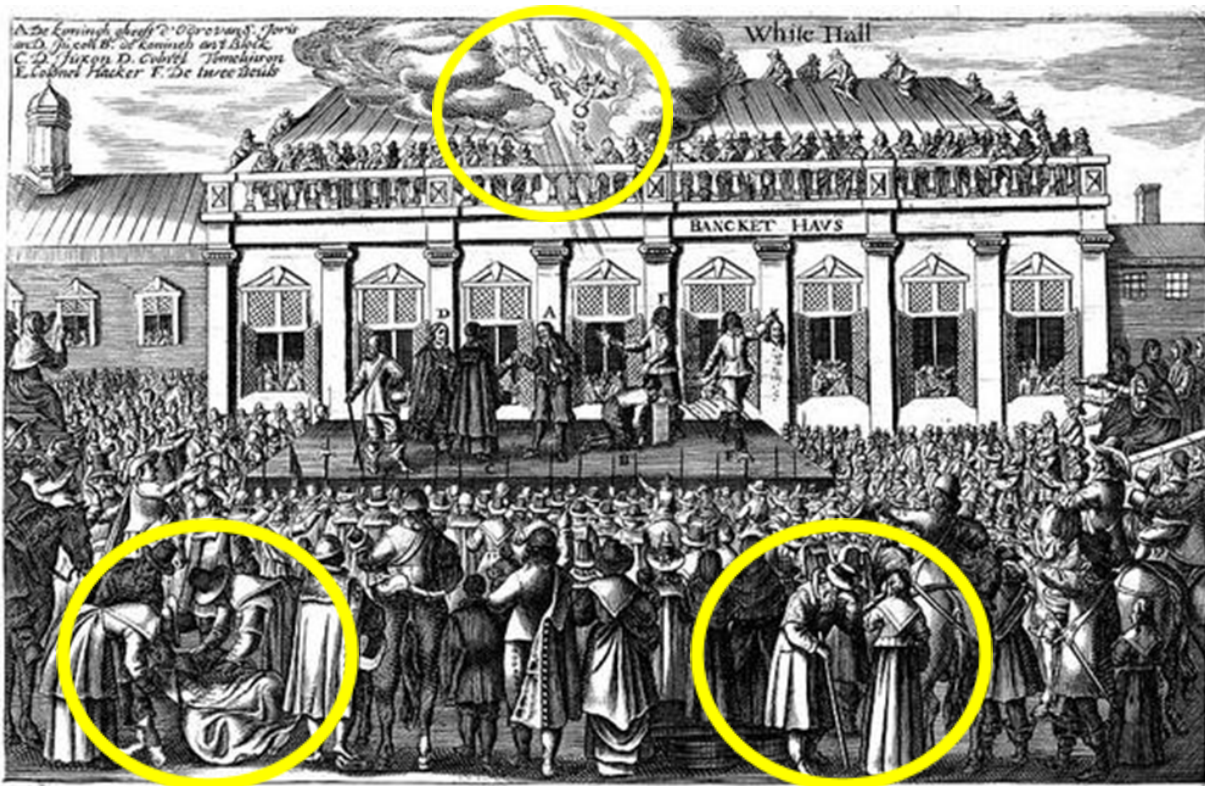
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Here's a KS3 (Years 7 to 9) example

What can you **infer** from Source A about **reactions to the execution of King Charles I**?

Source A: Dutch engraving made in 1649 of the execution of King Charles I.



Step 1 Look at the focus of the question - **reactions to the execution of King Charles I**.



Step 2 Look for people's **reactions** - **highlight** them.



Step 3 What can you **infer** about **reactions to the execution** from what you **highlighted**?



- The person fainting = **horrified, scared, feeling ill, upset**
- The man turning away = **can't watch, upset**
- The light coming down from heaven = **Charles is ascending to heaven, he must be a good person, the artist believes he is not guilty.**

Horror and were upset = what has been **inferred**

I can infer from Source A that some **people reacted** with **horror and were upset** by the **execution of King Charles** because **I can see a woman fainting at seeing the execution.**

This is the **evidence** from the source to support the **inference**

Here's a KS4 (Years 10 to 11) example

What can you **infer** from Source A about the **events in Eastern Europe after the Second World War**?

Source A: Speech by Winston Churchill in Fulton, US, in March 1946.

“From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence and increasing measures of control from Moscow. The Communist parties are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. .. there is no true democracy.”

Step 1 Look for the focus of the question - **about events in Eastern Europe.**



Step 2 Look for consequences of events in Eastern Europe - **highlight them.**



Step 3 What can you **infer about events in Eastern Europe** from what you **highlighted**?



- an iron curtain has descended = **Eastern and Western Europe are divided and Eastern Europe has been cut off from the West.**
- all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence = **the USSR is now dominating Eastern Europe**
- to obtain totalitarian control. .. there is no true democracy = **the USSR has established communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe.**

A possible answer:

I can infer from Source A that events in Eastern Europe **resulted in Eastern and Western Europe being divided**, with Eastern Europe cut off from the West because Source A states, **“an iron curtain has descended.”**

I can infer from Source A that events in Eastern Europe **resulted in the creation of communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe** by the USSR because Source A states, **“obtain totalitarian control. .. there is no true democracy.”**



Here's one to practise!

What can you **infer** from Source A about the Battle of Hastings?

Source A: An English account of the Battle of Hastings taken from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

William took Harold by surprise before his men were ready for battle. The English army had a very small space; and many soldiers, seeing the difficult position, deserted King Harold. Even so, he fought bravely from dawn to dusk, until, after a great slaughter on both sides, the King fell.

Step 1 Look for the focus of the question. Write that here - **about**



Step 2 Look for details about this topic and **highlight them**.



Step 3 What can you **infer about** from what you **highlighted**?



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Now write the answer:

I can infer because Source A states “”

I can infer because Source A states “”



Need help with KS3 or GCSE History?

I'm Lynn - a highly successful, fully qualified History teacher with over twenty-five years of teaching experience in secondary schools.

I provide 1:1 online tailor made tuition for KS3, GCSE and A level students (years 7 to 13).

Every session is created to meet the needs of the child. I provide students with individual learning resources for every session, which they have access to at any time.

Each GCSE session lasts 60 minutes and costs £40. This includes all of their learning materials, the full one hour session and all marking/feedback of the students' work.

I tutor students for the Edexcel, AQA and CIE GCSE and Edexcel, AQA and OCR A level History.

If you'd like to chat to me about any of the services I can offer, please do call.

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