What is a Secondary Source?

**Video Transcript**

In this video, I want to look at the definition and value of secondary source materials.

So, what are secondary sources?

Secondary sources are analyses that comment on, interpret, or discuss primary sources. They are documents written after an event has occurred and offer different perspectives, analysis, and conclusions of first-hand accounts.

Types of Secondary Sources

There are many different types of secondary sources and these can include:

- Books
- Journal articles
- Encyclopedias
- Biographies
- Textbooks
- Magazine articles
- Commentaries and
- Literary Criticism

What is the Value of Secondary Sources?

So, I've defined secondary sources and listed some examples. But what is the value of using secondary sources?

Secondary sources can provide you with background information and offer analysis of the event by those removed one or more steps from the event itself. Secondary sources look beyond a particular event or artifact and can broaden your perspective and research. They can also provide historical perspective based on other events that have taken place since the original event.

When do you use Secondary Sources?

- Maybe you need a starting point for your research.
- Maybe you need to find additional resources and you can use the citations and bibliography.
- Maybe you are looking for authority and credibility on your particular topic.

These are all examples of when you might need to use secondary sources. Don't forget to critically evaluate every source you find for accuracy and credibility.

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