

**Student Validation of Primary Source Documents**

California  
History-  
Social Science  
Project



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**"World Population Movements: Past and Present"**  
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*Miss D. McCoy*

# *MIGRATION*

走

*Tseo: to walk... to travel... to go...*

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# BASIC STUDY SKILLS

*The most basic skills of the history - social science fields involve obtaining information and judging its value, reaching reasoned conclusions based on evidence, and developing sound judgment.*

Basic study skills are the skills that students must have in order to acquire knowledge; they are skills that make formal education possible. Most basic skills are not learned primarily through history-social science curriculum, but some are special to this area of study. The most basic skills of the history-social science fields involve obtaining information and judging its value, reaching reasoned conclusions based on evidence, and developing sound judgment. The skills also include the ability to discuss and debate and the ability to write a well-constructed program, and they take time and practice to develop. Examples of practice include sustained reading and sustained writing.

The basic skills of history-social science include the ability to:

1. Acquire information by listening, observing, using community resources, and reading various forms of literature and primary and secondary source materials.
2. Locate, select, and organize information from written sources, such as books, periodicals, government documents, encyclopedias, and bibliographies.
3. Retrieve and analyze information by using computers, microfilm, and other electronic media.
4. Read and interpret maps, globes, models, diagrams, graphs, charts, tables, pictures, and political cartoons.
5. Understand the specialized language used in historical research and social science disciplines.
6. Organize and express ideas clearly in writing and in speaking.

## I. TITLE

### "Student Validation of Primary Source Documents"

## II. RATIONAL

Student ability to select and integrate primary source documents for use in the daily learning process has become a vital part of the California State History - Social Sciences Framework. Students and teachers alike must first be comfortable with the identification of valid primary sources and their application. In this five (5) day lesson, students will analyze primary sources and documents that support validity. It will be necessary to guide and monitor student progress. The lesson is designed in a barebone form with optional vocabulary, geography and class discussions provided. Teachers are encouraged to use as many strategies as possible. The barebones five (5) day lesson is presented in a manner that allows maximum flexibility. Students participating in the validation of primary source documents will gain confidence in research, oral and writing skills.

It is important that our students realize they each are a primary source; too often it is felt one must be "important" to be part of history. Nothing could be further from the truth. Each child is a player in history, as are their friends, family and recorded events that occur daily in their lives. Who will dare write a history of the millions of Americans that obey the law, pay taxes and cherish their families? No one, unless we, the classroom teachers working in the trenches, take up the challenge.

## III. HISTORICAL CONTENT

The historical text of this five day lesson is written by a "common" woman in an uncommon period of time. She, a young lady, leaves Port Arthur, Texas and journeys to Japan to marry. She writes of her experience as she travels to her first home in Hankow, China and finds herself an observer of Japan's invasion of China in August of 1937.



*World Population Movements: Past and Present*  
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*Resident Faculty*  
*Dr. Ronald Dolkart*  
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*Dr. Charles Litzinger*  
*Dr. Philip Silverman*

## Historical Context: *Another Perspective*

In 1932, while most Americans were struggling to survive the desolation of the Great Depression, the young woman stepped aboard the waiting ship; leaving behind her family and her country, embracing the inception of an extraordinary quest that would take her across the great expanse of the Pacific Ocean. The twenty-four year old Texan travelled unescorted, which at that time was highly unusual. In the documents that follow, we, as silent spectators, are able to share in her incredible journey in a strange land through her beautifully written letters to her parents back home in Texas. We begin with the reunion of her fiance, their marriage, life as the wife of a wealthy Texas Oil Company (Texaco) superintendent, the onset of World War II, and the subsequent evacuation from a volatile country. The young woman writes with fact-based honesty, mingled with humor and inspiration. An ordinary woman in an unordinary time and place. A historian in her own right. A mother. A grandmother. I would take this opportunity to invite you to share with me, my grandmother, Mildred Saxon McCoy, and her historic eyewitness account of her life and her observations in a time out of her own time. China.

7-94  
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# Student Validation of Primary Source Documents

John A. McCoy

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## *Objectives:*

- 1: To define primary source.
- 2: To compile a glossary of material considered primary source.
- 3: To acquire the skills necessary to validate primary sources as accurate, inaccurate, slanted, etc.
- 4: To acquire the skills necessary to use primary sources in written work, essays, research, research papers, class discussions, group interaction, oral presentations and debates.