

Lesson 6 Examining Primary Sources

Big Idea

- Biographies and photographs provide case studies that help us understand the life experiences of individuals rather than the experiences of whole groups.

Key Concepts

- Primary source
- Case study

Digitized Artifacts

from the Collections of **The Henry Ford**

Lesson 6

Examining Primary Sources

- [Short Biography of Ford Motor Company Employee Byron Moore, circa 1943](#) (page 1 ID# THF68288) (page 2 ID# THF68289)
- [Byron Moore, Head of Ford Rouge Plant Aircraft Engine Inspection and Repair, 1943](#) ID# THF68290
- [Short Biography of Ford Motor Company Industrial Designer Joseph A. Galamb, circa 1943](#) (page 1 ID# THF68285) (page 2 ID# THF68286)
- [Ford Motor Company Designer Joseph Galamb Working at Drafting Table, 1943](#) ID# THF68287
- [Workers in Ford Rouge Plant Cyanide Foundry, 1931](#) ID# THF68318

Materials

- Computers with Internet and digital projector and screen; OR computers with Internet for student use (preferred); OR printed handouts of digital artifacts' images and descriptions
- Sign: What pushes and pulls people into new ways of life?
- Student Activity Sheet 6A: Questions on Primary Sources – Byron Moore
- Student Activity Sheet 6B: Questions on Primary Sources – Joseph Galamb
- Student Activity Sheet 6C: Additional Information on African-American Workers
- Student Activity Sheet 6D: Questions on Primary Sources – African Americans at the Rouge Plant

Duration 1 class period (45 minutes)

Instructional Sequence

1 Engagement

Ask students to define the word biography. They should come up with something to this effect: A **biography** is the story of a person's life.

Ask students if they prefer nonfiction that has pictures or nonfiction that does not have pictures. Ask if they have ever heard the saying, "A picture is worth a thousand words," and ask what it means.

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Lesson 6 Continued

2 What Are Primary And Secondary Sources?

Tell students that today they will use both biographies and photographs to learn about the past. Define the terms primary sources and secondary sources with students:

*A **primary source** is a document or object – a letter or piece of furniture, for example – that survives from the time period under study and that gives an insider’s perspective on that period.*

It may help here to compare primary and secondary sources.

Secondary sources explain primary sources; they are one or more steps removed from the event. Examples of secondary sources include textbooks and encyclopedias.

3 Examine Primary Source Documents

Examine the following primary source documents with the students. Or you might like to model examining just one primary source as a class and then allow students to examine the others in pairs. Or you may prefer to save time by using a jigsaw method.

Primary Source 1 Byron Moore Biography

Have students look at the document [Short Biography of Ford Motor Company Employee Byron Moore, circa 1943](#) (page 1 ID# THF68288) (page 2 ID# THF68289). Show the picture [Byron Moore, Head of Ford Rouge Plant Aircraft Engine Inspection and Repair, 1943](#) ID# THF68290 on the projection screen (or as a handout if a projection screen is not available).

As a class or in pairs, have students read the biography and complete the questions on Byron Moore in the Student Activity Sheet 6A: Questions on Primary Sources – Byron Moore.

Primary Source 2 Joseph Galamb Biography

Have students look at the document [Short Biography of Ford Motor Company Industrial Designer Joseph A. Galamb, circa 1943](#) (page 1 ID# THF68285) (page 2 ID# THF68286). Show the picture [Ford Motor Company Designer Joseph Galamb Working at Drafting Table, 1943](#) ID# THF68287 on the projection screen (or as a handout if a projection screen is not available).

As a class or in pairs, have students read the biography and complete the questions on Joseph Galamb in the Student Activity Sheet 6B: Questions on Primary Sources – Joseph Galamb.

Primary Source 3 African Americans at the Rouge Plant

As a class or in pairs, have students read Student Activity Sheet 6C: Additional Information on African-American Workers. Then have them look at the document [Workers in Ford Rouge Plant Cyanide Foundry, 1931](#) ID# THF68318. If possible, give students access to the document on classroom computers or in the lab so that they can zoom in wherever they would like in order to examine the photo more carefully.

Then have students complete the questions on African Americans at the Rouge Plant in Student Activity Sheet 6D: Questions on Primary Sources – African Americans at the Rouge Plant.

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Lesson 6 Continued

4 Thinking About and Analyzing Primary Sources:

Discuss the following questions as a class:

- Compare the jobs (past and current) of Byron Moore, Joseph Galamb and the African-American workers in the photograph. Which job do you think was the best? Why? Which job do you think was the worst? Why?

Answers will vary. The jobs that are dangerous (Joseph Galamb's job in the box factory, the jobs in the foundry) will be considered by most people as undesirable. The jobs that people enjoyed (Joseph's job working for Henry Ford, for instance) would be considered by most as desirable.

- Do you think it is fair to say that all immigrants had experiences like Joseph Galamb's, or that all migrants had experiences like Byron Moore's, or that all African Americans had experiences like those of the foundry workers?

No, each person has different experiences. People's experiences may vary greatly. To know the average experience, a person would have to read many biographies and look at many photographs and probably also study other types of primary sources.

- If you wanted to learn about an average day at Ford Motor Company, would you consult the biographies or the photographs?

Both might be helpful. The stories and images about work really make history come to life. Both might also be problematic. These biographies were not written at the same time as the work was occurring, so it's possible that a writer might remember a job inaccurately. The photographs also could be staged shots rather than candid ones.

- If you wanted to learn what a worker thought and felt, would you consult the biographies or the photographs?

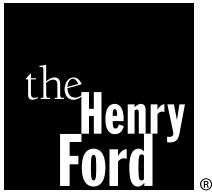
Thoughts and feelings are probably best expressed in words, so the biographies would likely be a better source.

- Do you have a preference for either biographies or photographs?

Answers will vary.

- What have you found to be different about using the biographies versus using the photographs?

Answers will vary.



Name _____



questions on primary sources - Byron Moore

Instructions Write down what you learn from Byron's biography to answer the following questions.

1. Where did Byron Moore live when he was young?

2. What were his parents' jobs?

3. Where did he move?

4. What was Byron Moore's first job?

5. What was Byron Moore's job at Ford when his biography was written?

6. Why did he move? What pushed or pulled him?

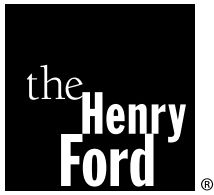
7. Circle the concept(s) that best describe Byron Moore's experience:

Immigration

Urbanization

Assimilation

Migration



Name _____



questions on primary sources - Joseph Galamb

Instructions Write down what you learn from Joseph's biography to answer the following questions.

1. Where did Joseph Galamb live when he was young?

2. What education did he have?

3. Where did he move?

4. What was Joseph Galamb's first job?

5. What was Joseph Galamb's job at Ford when his biography was written?

6. Why did he move? What pushed or pulled him?

7. Circle the concept(s) that best describe Joseph Galamb's experience:

Immigration

Urbanization

Assimilation

Migration

Name _____

additional information on African-American Workers

The Great Migration

The movement of African Americans from the South to the Northeast, Midwest and West is known as the Great Migration. In addition to being pushed from the rural South by a lack of jobs, African Americans were also pushed by racism and a lack of educational opportunities for their children. A 1920 survey by Forrester Washington of African-American Detroiters from the South found that over 83% came primarily for these social reasons rather than for purely economic reasons.



Work Opportunities for African Americans in Detroit

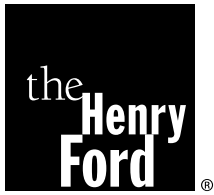
African Americans encountered discrimination and prejudice in the workplace but did find employment in Detroit's factories and foundries in the early 20th century. Foundries – factories that make steel – employed many African Americans. Working in a foundry was a difficult, dirty and dangerous job. In 1919, the workforce at Monarch Foundry was 48% African American and at Bellevue Foundry was 38% African American.

In 1919, Ford Motor Company was the largest employer in Detroit of African Americans. The company employed 1,700 African-American workers, which was 3% of its total workforce.

Companies often limited African Americans to janitorial and the most unskilled jobs. Other aspects of work life could be unfair as well. Some companies segregated their facilities and did not allow African Americans to join their recreational or social clubs, such as company sports teams.

[Workers in Ford Rouge Plant Cyanide Foundry, 1931](#)

ID# THF68318



Name _____



questions on primary sources - African Americans at the Rouge Plant

Instructions Write down everything you can observe in the photograph that provides answers to the following questions.

1. Where was this photograph taken?

2. When was this photograph taken?

3. Who are the people in this photograph?

4. What are the people in this photograph doing?

5. What are the people in this photograph wearing?

6. What words would you use to describe the jobs being done in this photo?

7. Circle the concept(s) that best describe these workers' experience:

- Immigration
- Urbanization
- Assimilation
- Migration