A primary source is a first-hand original account, record, or evidence made by people who witnessed or took part in a specific historical period. It can be a written document, photograph, object, poster, or artwork.

**QUICK QUIZ: Which of these objects is a primary source from the Revolutionary War (1775-1783)?**
_Hint: Look at the dates._

**ANSWER:** The Declaration of Independence. The book and painting are related to the Revolutionary War but were created long after the war. They are secondary sources. The Declaration of Independence was created by people who took part in the events related to the Revolutionary War.

The Museum is full of primary sources. See if you can find a primary source that is a poster, a photograph, an object, and a document. Select sources from different sections of the Museum. What can you learn about the lives of past Kansans by studying these primary sources?

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**Can you find a primary source that is a photograph?**

**Title:** ____________________________

Study the photograph for a few minutes. List the people, objects, and activities you observe in the photograph.

**People** | **Objects** | **Activities**
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Based on these observations, what can you conclude about the subject of the photograph? _______________

What other questions do you have about this photograph or the time period? ________________________

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**Can you find a primary source that is a poster?**

**Title:** ____________________________

Study the poster for a few minutes. Look closely at the details and read the text.

Describe how it looks. (Text, images, symbols, colors) __________________________________________

Who do you think was the intended audience for the poster? ______________________________________

What did the creator of the poster want the audience to do or feel? __________________________________

Do you think this poster would have been successful in achieving the creator’s goal? _______________

What did you learn about this time period and its people? __________________________________________

What other questions about this poster do you have? _____________________________________________

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**Book by Patrick Catel, ©2011**

**Document: Declaration of Independence (1776)**

**Painting: Washington Crossing the Delaware (1851)**
Can you find a primary source that is an object?

Title: ___________________________________________

Study the object for a few minutes. Does it remind you of any objects we use today? ________________________

Describe the object. (Size, materials, colors, moving parts, labels, etc.) ________________________

Who might have used it? ________________________

For what might it have been used? ________________________

Where do you think it was used? ________________________

When do you think it was made or used? ________________________

How do you think it was made? ________________________

What can you infer about the life and times of the people who made and used it? ________________________

What other questions do you have about the object? ________________________

Can you find a primary source that is a written document?

Title: ___________________________________________

Study the document for a few minutes.

What kind of document is it? (Newspaper, letter, land deed, etc.) ________________________

Describe the appearance of the document. (Handwritten or printed, signed, on letterhead, etc.) ________________________

Who created the document? For whom was the document created? ________________________

Why do you think the document was created? ________________________

What can you tell about life in the time the document was created? ________________________

What other questions do you have about this document or its author? ________________________

After you leave...

Find a primary source in your home. Study your primary source and answer the same questions for it as you did for a similar item in the Museum.

Expand your knowledge:
• Ask your family for more information about the primary source.
• Look for more information online or at a library or museum.