**History is an Argument about the Past**

**1) Examine Source Information. Is it a primary or secondary source?**

**Primary sources** are materials created in the past by people living at the time, including photographs, paintings, documents, advertisements, music, films, and objects.

**Secondary sources** are writings by historians and others who use available sources to interpret the past. They provide analysis and summary. They place events, people, and evidence in historical context, and ask questions about their meaning and significance.

Who wrote or created the source? Why? What is their point of view?

When was it written and where did it appear?

How was it used?

Where was the source discovered?

Is the source believable?

**2) Analyze Primary Sources**

**Texts:** Consider the kind of source, tone, and word choice.

**Images:** Look at each section separately and as a whole.

**Music and Film:** Listen or watch several times. What do you see and hear?

**Objects:** What can you tell about how they were made? How were they used?

**Data:** Look for patterns and ask how the data was collected?

***How do we know what we know about the past?***

**5) Use Evidence to Support Your Claims**

When making a historical argument, always use evidence to support your claims!

**3) What is the Historical Context?**

When did the event happen?

Where did it take place?

What else was happening at the time?

What happened before and after the event?

What would it look like to see this event through the eyes of someone who lived during the time and events?

**4) Read and Compare Multiple Accounts and Perspectives**

Ask where you could look to learn about the topic or event.

Compare multiple sources. Check them against one another.

Where do the sources agree? Disagree?

If they tell different stories, why might that be?

Where else might you look to find more information?

**Ask Questions!** **Read, Analyze, Write!** **Think Historically!**

**Close Reading**

**When you read, you *must always* ask yourself the following questions:**

* What claims does the author make?
* What evidence does the author use to support those claims?
* How is this supposed to make me feel?
* What words or phrases does the author use to convince me that he/she is right?
* What information does the author *leave out*?