

# Introduction to Human Sciences (HS8.102)

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## Source Criticism

Historical sources typically fall under two categories: documents and artefacts. These are objects from the past which contain information about the period they were used in.

We need to criticise our sources as the process gives us the relevance and the usefulness of the information we obtain.

## Steps of Source Criticism

There are five steps of source criticism: comprehension, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and using the source for historical information.

Comprehension involves identifying explicitly the information present in the source, analysing the meanings of the words, and separating the facts from the opinions.

Analysing a source consists of identifying its origin, what kind of source it is, its point of view, its context, its audience, and its purpose, among other things.

To interpret a historical source, we need to identify the hidden or less obvious meanings, and find out what information is highlighted and which is less emphasised or unmentioned.

Evaluation of a source helps us identify its reliability and authenticity.

## Non-Textual Sources

There are many sources which are not in the form of text as well. These may be material sources (like household goods, clothes, buildings, and so on), or non-material sources (like oral traditions).