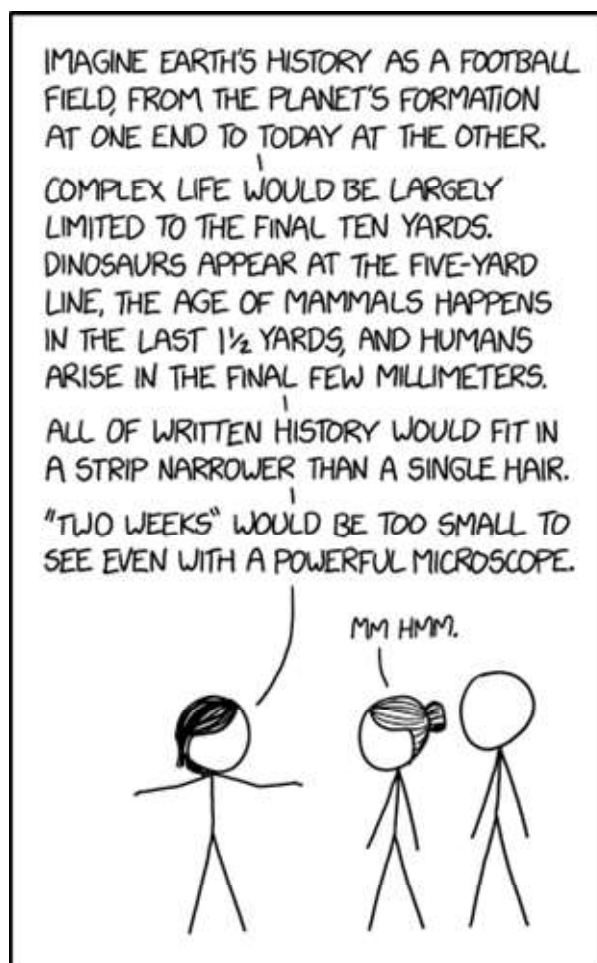


SOURCE-BASED SKILLS



HISTORIANS ALWAYS TRY THIS WHEN THEY'RE LATE TURNING SOMETHING IN.

MR S. CHAGAN

Evidence – Primary and Secondary Sources

WHY DO WE STUDY HISTORY?

- We study history because we want to know about ourselves. What has happened in the past has made us the sort of people we are today. The past of all human beings has helped to make us what we are.

HOW DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE PAST?

- We know about the past because people have left behind SOURCES which tell us about life in the past. They are called **PRIMARY** and **SECONDARY** sources. The historian uses sources to write and interpret history.
- A **PRIMARY SOURCE** is an account of an event written at the time or soon after the event. It gives you direct evidence about the people, events, or phenomena that you are researching. Primary evidence is first-hand information - **exact words of the writer or from the time the event happened.**
- A **SECONDARY SOURCE** is source material that has **already** been selected and interpreted. Secondary evidence is second-hand information. Secondary sources have drawn information from another source. They describe, interpret, evaluates, or analyse information from primary sources. This is written later by the historian looking back upon a period in the past.

N.B. The historian converts the primary source into the finished product, the secondary source. Both could be reliable, biased, open to differing interpretations or insufficient.

PRIMARY SOURCE

A **primary source** is the raw information produced by the original writer or speaker based on direct experience

(e.g., letters, speeches, interviews, autobiographies, etc.).



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SECONDARY SOURCE

Secondary sources are analyses or interpretations of information based on primary sources

(e.g., scholarly journal articles, reports, books, documentaries, etc.).



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PRIMARY SOURCES	SECONDARY SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A primary source is a work that gives original information. ✓ It is something that comes from a time being studied or from a person who was involved in the events being studied. ✓ It is first-hand information. ✓ Some primary sources supply factual information about a subject. ✓ Other primary sources express the views of people who experienced events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A secondary source does not give original information. ✓ It is not from the time the event happened. ✓ It interprets or summarizes information from primary sources.
<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye-witness accounts • Speeches • Letters • Diaries • Newspapers • Photographs • Paintings (made at the time of an event) • Videos (filmed at the time of an event) • Archives • Oral history (interviews) • Court records • Government documents • Interview transcripts • Social media posts • Empirical studies (studies that make use of information present to a time period) • Material evidence (e.g. an item made at the time of the event) 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbooks • Biographies • Encyclopedias • Reviews • Magazine articles • Biographies



A newspaper article is an example of a primary source because it is made at the time of an event.



Material evidence, i.e., objects that come from the time of an event, are also considered primary sources. They provide us with information by allowing us to **infer** information about an event, a person or what life may have been like at the time.

Primary source	Secondary source
Novel	Article analyzing the novel
Painting	Exhibition catalog explaining the painting
Letters and diaries written by a historical figure	Biography of the historical figure
Essay by a philosopher	Textbook summarizing the philosopher's ideas
Photographs of a historical event	Documentary about the historical event
Government documents about a new policy	Newspaper article about the new policy
Music recordings	Academic book about the musical style
Results of an opinion poll	Blog post interpreting the results of the poll
Empirical study	Literature review that cites the study

How to tell if a source is primary or secondary

To determine if something can be used as a primary or secondary source in your research, there are some simple questions you can ask yourself:

- Does this source come from someone directly involved in the events I'm studying (primary) or from another researcher (secondary)?
- Am I interested in evaluating the source itself (primary) or only using it for background information (secondary)?
- Does the source provide original information (primary) or does it comment upon information from other sources (secondary)?

How should we evaluate and interpret a source?

Who – Who made the source? Do they have an opinion or bias? Was the person who made the source involved?

What – What information does the source give? Is it the full story? Is it accurate?

Why – Why was the source made? Was it made to persuade people of a particular opinion? Was it to bring attention to a particular issue?

When – Was it made at the time? Or years later? Was the person there?

Where – Where was the source made? Was the person involved in the event?

Furthermore, we should keep these ideas in mind when analysing a source:

Origin of the source: where does it come from? E.g. name of author, book, magazine, cartoonist
Intention (purpose of the source): why was this source produced e.g. for propaganda purposes, to inform the public etc.
Limitations of the source: problems with source/evidence e.g. bias, missing evidence
Value of the source (usefulness): does it provide information on the topic studied? Can an historian use this in their investigation into an event? (provide examples)
Reliability (trustworthiness) of the source: is it a dependable piece of historical evidence? Can the source be trusted / is it accurate? In these answers you must make reference to origin, intention, limitations, bias of source + quote words to back up your answer.

Identify the source. Is it primary or secondary? Who wrote it? When was it written? What kind of document is it? Where was it published? How widely was it circulated? What is it about?

Put it in its context. What events had happened or were happening when this was written? Specifically, what was happening where this was written? Who was the intended audience and what bias might they have had?

Consider the author and their purpose. Who was the author? Consider their race, gender, religion, nationality, heritage, party affiliation, socio-economic class, and their job. Is there bias? Is the author trying to persuade, incite, enlighten, explain or deceive their audience? Why was it written and for whom? Was the author paid to write this? Or bribed or threatened? Where did it first appear: a newspaper, a diary, a letter or a propaganda flyer?

Evaluate the information. Read the information, summarize it, and identify keywords, examples of bias and intention. Are there footnotes or citations? Does it reference other documents or events? What is the document about and how does that help you understand the period? What is the overall theme? How similar is it to other documents from the same period? How does the author claim to have their information? What assumptions does the author make? Is the author expecting any resulting action, sentiment or opinion from the audience?

Read the **question** first – this guides you as to what you need to look for when reading a source.

Then **read** the source relating to the question. Start by using these two steps:

Analyse the source **externally**

- **Look at the context**
- Who wrote the source
- When the source was written
- Where the source originated from
- Authenticity of the document
- Who the intended audience was
- Usually, this information is included above the source.

Analyse the source **internally**

- Look at what message the source is trying to convey overall.
- What the author / creator is trying to argue.
- What the purpose of the source is.

Start by **annotating** the source. This means that you underline / highlight / circle information in the source that **relates** to the question that is being asked.

If it is a cartoon, make notes about the visual clues you see in the source.

Let's look at an example:

Question:

Explain the meaning of the caption of the cartoon regarding conditions in early industrial towns. Use visual clues in the cartoon to support your answer. (3x1) (3)

SOURCE 1B

'Court for King Cholera', a cartoon by John Leech which appeared in Punch magazine in 1852 offers a satirical look at the urban impact of the industrial revolution.

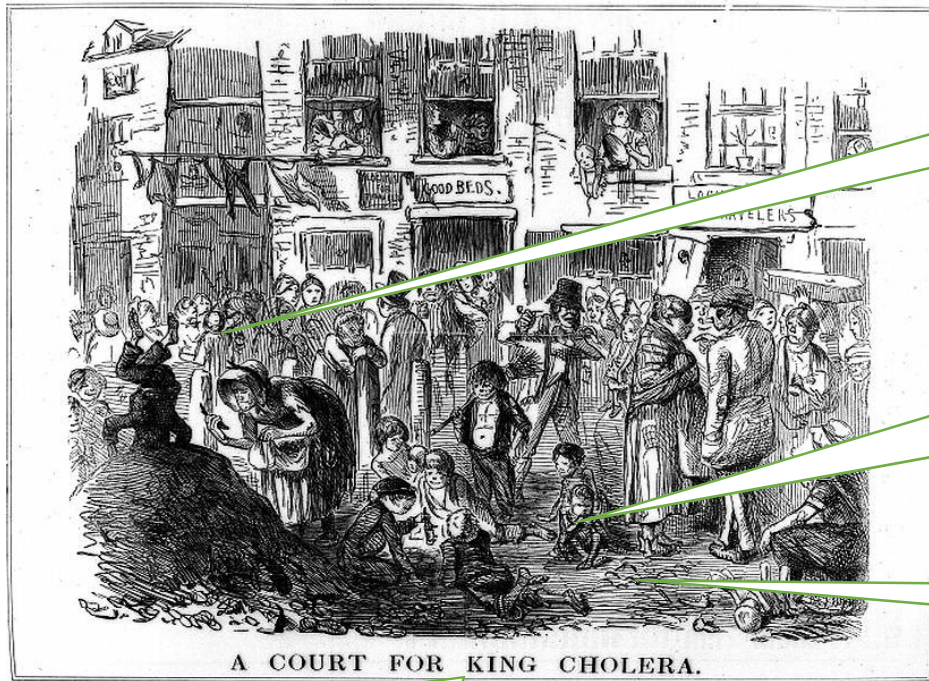
Context is provided here:

Who: John Leech

Where / origin: Punch Magazine

When: 1852

Intention: Satire on impact of urbanization in cities



Overcrowded streets

Poor, sickly looking children

Filthy streets, dead bodies

Interpretation of this caption – the caption is satirical. The large gathering of people is similar to a King's court with his subjects. Cholera was understood to be spread by the overcrowding of people.

Answer:

The caption refers to the spread of diseases such as cholera in early industrial towns. The cartoon shows us this by illustrating a number of things that contributed to the rapid spread of such diseases, such as overcrowded and dirty streets, inadequate sanitation, inadequate housing, poor and sickly children and dead bodies lying in the street.

Notice how by breaking down each element of the cartoon, you are able to understand its message better than if you just gave it a glance.

Usefulness of Sources

- Usefulness of a source is generally determined by answering the question **What valuable information does this source provide ABOUT THE TOPIC ?**
- Sources are **generally useful in some way or another.**
- Even if the source is biased (unreliable) – it is useful! **It shows us the attitudes, beliefs or feelings of the writer.**
- Eye-witness accounts are useful as they provide historians with a first-hand account of the historical event (a primary source).
- Eye-witness accounts and speeches also provide the historians with an understanding of the feelings and attitudes of a person/group of people in response to the historical event.
- A source is **not useful** if it does not provide information that relates to the question being asked.

When you see a question on usefulness, you will be asked in one of these ways:

Comment on the usefulness of the source.	<p>The source is useful because it tells/shows..</p> <p>The source is not useful because it does not tell/show...</p>	<p>You need to indicate whether the source is useful OR not useful!</p> <p>Always give 2</p>
Explain the usefulness of the source	<p>The source is useful because it tells/shows.....</p>	<p>Question is expecting you to explain how the source is USEFUL to explain how it is USEFUL</p> <p>Always give 2</p>
Is the source useful....	<p>The source is useful because it tells/shows..</p> <p>The source is not useful because it does not tell/show...</p>	<p>You need to indicate whether the source is useful OR not useful!</p> <p>Always give 2</p>

How to answer a question on usefulness:

Question: Comment on the usefulness of this source in telling us about how the British justified colonisation.

Lord Curzon, a British politician, wrote in 1907:

“Wherever the British Empire has extended its borders ... there misery and cruelty, lawlessness and hardship ... have tended to disappear, and have been replaced by peace, justice, wealth, humanity, and freedom of thought, speech, and action”

Answer: The source is useful because:

- It gives us the viewpoint and attitude of a British politician at the time of British colonization.
- It shows us that British leaders justified colonization because they saw it as being a positive thing.

Note: Even though the source is **biased**, it still contains valuable information!

However, the source would **not be considered useful** if it did not relate to the question being asked.

For example, if the question was:

Comment on the usefulness of this source in telling us how European countries were able to colonise many countries.

It is **not useful** because:

- The source does not contain any information about the way in which Europeans were able to colonise many countries, only what they felt they brought.
- The source only gives the viewpoint of a British lord – it does not give us the viewpoint from any other European country.

Note how with each of these answers, you have to give **two reasons** explaining whether it is useful or not useful.

The **only time** you do not take a stance – that is, when you don't explain whether it is or isn't useful – is if the question asks you to **explain the usefulness** of the source, as it already assumes the source is useful.

However, as with any source, the usefulness of a source has its **limitations**.

- Lack of information – what does it not show?
- Biased (if it favours one side)
- Missing information
- Does not provide context for image

There are many ways in which we can determine the limitations of the usefulness of a source, depending on the type of source.

When you answer a question relating to the usefulness of a source, be aware of the limitations that each type of source may have.

Private letters, diaries, memoirs	
Value	Limitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides the effects of historical events and the lives of individuals experiencing them first-hand.• Gives us feelings / views / attitudes of people first-hand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They present only one viewpoint, one interpretation of what happened.• Biased- molded by the opinions, prejudices, and cultural standpoint of the author (must be read critically)• If the document is a result of recollections many years after the period described, the details might have become blurred with the passing of time, certain aspects forgotten

Drawings, paintings, cartoons	
Value	Limitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can effectively capture the spirit of a time, and the opinions and sentiments generally characterizing that time. • Contain evidence about a culture at specific moments in history- its customs, styles, preferences, atmosphere, architecture, manner of dress, appearance. • Provide a visually stimulating piece of historical evidence • Comment on features of regime. • Can show how people viewed a time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced by an artist with a definite point of view, and therefore inevitably biased, being influenced by the opinions and prejudices of its creator. • Limited scope - generally highlights one specific aspect of a period of history. • Artist not generally concerned with providing a factual account of a historical event or circumstance, but rather with producing a creative piece of work or expressing own opinions and emotional reactions.

Newspapers	
Value	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First hand information from the time of the event • Can provide a record of events occurring in history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a dictatorship, certain details might be suppressed to preserve the authority of the government in power- censorship. • A newspaper might be primarily an instrument of propaganda. • Commercial motives • All have political agendas

Photographs	
Value	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First-hand information showing a visual representation of an event. • Examples of propaganda • Can show aspects of the culture - i.e. dress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photographs can be easily altered or manipulated. • They are only a snapshot in time and do not contain information of what has happened just before the scene was captured or what happens afterwards; • Bias can be achieved by the selection of the photographer of what is contained or not contained in the photograph. • Evidence in the photograph can be interpreted in more than one way • Behind every photograph of film is a creator with own personal biases and prejudices, which may be reflected in a work, either consciously or subconsciously. • Can be manipulated by the creator to convey a certain point or impress upon the viewer his/her own conceptions: e.g. parts can be edited, parts could be cut out, certain details can be excluded or downplayed, certain details can be accentuated or focused on.

Statistics	
Value	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide raw, factual evidence of historical trends (provided they are reliable and have not been manipulated). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be manipulated, for example by government's wishing to corroborate claims or present themselves in a favorable light, and their accuracy must therefore be questioned. • Might represent only a limited sampling, not representative of the general population. • Always produced for a specific purpose.
Oral history (interviews with participants in historical events, storytelling)	
Value	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a means of learning about the past from individual with first-hand knowledge of historical events. • A means of preserving details of historical legacies that might not have been included in written accounts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the person being interviewed has aged significantly in the period of time between the actual experience and the interview, the physical and mental deterioration of the subjects must be taken into account- e.g. memory loss, emotional trauma. • If the story is being recounted a significant time after the period of history under scrutiny, details might have become confused over the passage of time or faded entirely from memory, and traumatic experiences might have been deliberately forgotten. Thus, accuracy must be questioned. • Experiences in the present might influence accounts of the past, and a person with the benefit of hindsight might be compelled to reassess events and reconstruct their memories accordingly.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal opinions, cultural backgrounds, must be taken into account in interpreting the information conveyed, as well as his / her motives in sharing memories - the individual might feel more compelled to justify own actions / inactions and perspectives than to paint an entirely balanced and accurate account of events and circumstances.• Highly subjective
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Reliability of sources

Reliability is a test of how trustworthy a source is.

Can we trust the source? Is it the truth? To check for reliability, look at:

- What is the origin of the source? Who wrote the source and why?
- Is it by a trustworthy author or institution?
- What is the intention of the source/author?
- What is the bias in the source?
- Does it contain exaggerated comments?
- Does it contain contradictions? (where one piece of information doesn't match other information in that source)
- Primary sources such as eye-witness accounts, speeches, letters, newspapers, photographs are **first-hand information** and therefore reliable – **exact words of the writer or from the time the event happened.**
- **HOWEVER**, they **can also be biased** as they may only present one viewpoint of the event. In this case you can argue that it is unreliable.
- SECONDARY SOURCES SUCH AS A TEXTBOOK normally consults various sources. THEY CAN BE RELIABLE **OR** UNRELIABLE.

A source is reliable if:	A source is unreliable if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writer had a good knowledge of the event.• The writer had a good understanding of what happened.• The writer gave both sides of the story.• The writer used many sources and checked the evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writer did not have clear knowledge.• The writer lacked understanding.• The writer was biased and supported one side of the story.• The writer used only one source and did not check the sources.

When you see a question on usefulness, you will be asked in one of these ways:

Comment on the reliability of the source.	The source is reliable because it The source is not reliable because.....	You need to indicate whether the source is reliable or unreliable. (NOT BOTH) Always give 2 explanations
Explain the reliability of the source.	The source is reliable because....	Question is expecting you to explain how the source is RELIABLE Always give 2 explanations
Is the source reliable....	The source is reliable because it The source is not reliable because.....	You need to indicate whether the source is reliable or unreliable. (NOT BOTH) Always give 2 explanations

How to answer a question on reliability:

Question: Comment on the reliability of this source with regards to the effects of colonisation on the people of Africa.

Lord Curzon, a British politician, wrote in 1907:

"Wherever the British Empire has extended its borders ... there misery and cruelty, lawlessness and hardship ... have tended to disappear, and have been replaced by peace, justice, wealth, humanity, and freedom of thought, speech, and action"

Answer: The source is **not reliable** / unreliable because it is a one-sided / biased view of imperialism.

Lord Curzon, is a British politician and therefore only giving a positive view of imperialism. He is being biased and sees imperialism as a positive thing.

However, if the question was: **Comment on the reliability of this source in telling a historian about the attitudes of British politicians regarding colonialism.**

The **answer** would be that it is **reliable** because:

The source is a quote from a British politician and provides his view on colonialism.

When you are asked to identify bias in a source:

- First state who is the source is in favour of OR who the source is biased against.
- Then give 2 reasons

Example

The cartoonist is biased against the Berlin Wall / Ulbricht / Communist East / East Germany or biased in favour of the West

- He is showing the East German government to be preventing its citizens from leaving the country
- He portrays East Germany as a police state
- He is ridiculing the East by showing the citizens are unhappy to live under a communist regime



Comparison of sources

When you are asked to compare information from different sources, whether it be similarities or differences, you are expected to gather information from BOTH sources which either correspond or differ from each other.

Start by providing the information presented in one source, then provide information from the other source that either confirms or denies

You need to give **2** comparisons!

For example, you will say:

- Your **first** statement from one source:
 - According to Source 1A / Source 1A claims / Source 1A says / In Source 1A...
- Then your statement from the second source that confirms / supports / complements / denies the source about the same piece of information
 - According to Source 1B (OR Source 1A says...and Source 1B confirms this by saying.....)
- And then again
- According to Source 1A...and According to Source 1B (OR Source 1A says....and Source 1B confirms this by saying.....)

You will therefore have TWO different statements comparing TWO DIFFERENT pieces of information.

Example of comparing two sources:

Compare sources 1A and 1B. How does the visual source support the description of a closed compound in the written source?

Source 1A: Written Source

This source describes the dormitory inside a closed compound where miners slept.

The compounds were badly built, often with no windows or lights. Cracks in walls were stuffed with rags to keep out the wind and cold. The only heating came from an “imbandla” – a big tin of hot coal giving off highly-dangerous smoke fumes.

SOURCE 1B: Visual Source

This photograph shows the living conditions in a typical mineworkers’ dormitory.



Answer: Source 1A describes the mineworkers’ living conditions as poor, by stating that they were badly built and had no windows or natural light. Source 1B supports this by depicting the poor living conditions in the compound, showing us that there are no windows or natural light.

Source 1A also claims that the only source of heating in the compounds came from a coal tin called an imbandla. Source 1B supports this by showing a person putting what appears to be coal in a large metal tin.

How **not** to compare two sources:

- Source 1A supports Source 1B by showing that the wall was built to stop the flow of immigrants from East Berlin and east Germany to West Berlin and West Germany
- Both sources highlight that the wall was built to stop the flow of immigrants from East Berlin and east Germany to West Berlin and West Germany.

This form of comparison is **incorrect** because it:

- Only give you the information of **one** source.
 - **Repeats** the same information in the second sentence. It is **redundant**.
-

Another example of how to **correctly** compare two sources:

- Source 1A mentions that the freedom of movement between the sectors had resulted in a mass exodus from the eastern side and 1C supports this by stating that the main aim of the wall was to stem mass defections from East to West. Thus, both sources indicate the reason for the building of the wall was because East Germany was losing masses of people (workers).
- Source 1A states that Krushchev was unwilling to face a potential nuclear escalation over the city and was prepared to take his own form of action and 1C states that a wall was better than a war. Thus, both sources show that the Wall was built to prevent war.

This form of answer is correct, because:

- It provides the information from **each** source and indicates what information in Source 1C supports the information in Source 1A.
 - It compares TWO DIFFERENT pieces of information.
-

8 Mark Paragraph

At the end of the source-based section of every paper, you will have a question that will ask you to write a paragraph using the **relevant sources** from your question paper and **your own knowledge**. This paragraph is always related to the **key question** that is asked at the beginning of your paper.

The key question:

- Will appear at the beginning of every section in the exam paper. This question tells you what the OVERALL content to be tested will be.
- Remember to answer all questions in FULL SENTENCES, as bullet points are not acceptable in an exam situation.
- If asked to quote: use quotation marks
- If asked to explain – use your own words.
- Make sure you summarise each source next to the source as this information you need in your paragraph.
- Do not count the words – IT IS not AN English essay!
- Write 1 paragraph – no spaces!
- No bullet points.

The format for the paragraph is as follows:

- 1 sentence introduction
- 5-7 sentences elaborating your answer
- 1 sentence conclusion
- The paragraph links to the key question at the beginning of a paper.
- The questions that are asked before the paragraph question normally help you to write the paragraph.
- You must **reference your sources** when writing the 8 mark paragraph. This means you must indicate the source next to the point relevant to a source by **writing the name of the source in brackets – e.g. (1A)**
- You need to give at least **6 points related to the sources** and **2 points relating to your own knowledge (OK)**.

Example of how to reference sources in your paragraph:

Using the **relevant sources** and **your own knowledge**, write a paragraph of around 8 lines (80 – 100 words) about how child labour was used during the Industrial Revolution.

Children were negatively affected by the Industrial Revolution because they were forced to work in areas such as factories and mines **(1A)**. They were dangerous conditions because they would get into accidents which led them to lose limbs **(1B)**. Many children also got diseases from the poor working conditions **(1B and 1C)**. Children were preferred because they could be paid low wages, they were small to fit into tight spaces, for example behind machines **(1C)**. Children were also often used as child labour because employers could pay them less than adults **(1D)**. Mine owners would use children because they could fit into narrow mine shafts (OK). Some children developed lung diseases because they worked as chimney sweeps. (OK)

You must always ensure that your information is actually from the source you are referencing. If you are going to write a statement from your **own knowledge** (that is, information you have learned in class but isn't in the sources in the test), you can write (OK) as the reference.

An example for Grade 10-12 questions:

Using the information in the relevant sources and your own knowledge, write a paragraph of about EIGHT lines (about 80 words) **explaining how Kathleen Cleaver contributed to the Black Power Movement in the United States of America.**

Kathleen Cleaver made a significant contribution to the Black Power Movement in the United States of America. (opening statement) Cleaver experienced living in deeply segregated areas in the south **(Source 3A)** She offered a perspective of activism that was influenced by living abroad **(Source 3A)**. Cleaver was passionate about fighting against injustice – “wanted to throw herself into action” **(Source 3A)**. Cleaver was the first female on the central committee of the Black Panther Party. She joined the SNCC **(Source 3A and 3B)**. Cleaver joined the Black Panther Party **(Source 3A and 3B)**. She took on numerous roles to facilitate activism within the Black Panther Party **(Source 3B)**. She created connections with minority groups both within and beyond the United States **(Source 3C)**. Cleaver was imprisoned for her political activism **(Source 3D)**. She created awareness around issues of racial injustice in the United States. Cleaver

Action verbs and how to answer questions

ACTION VERBS	MEANING
SOURCE-BASED QUESTIONS	
List, mention, ... according to the source... Quote evidence from the source Definition the concept ... What do you understand by the concept in the context of...	The answers are in the source <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 'quotation marks...' when extracting the answer from the source • The concept is defined in the source • The concept as it is understood and used in the content
Explain in your own words...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the information and explain it how you understand it. Do not rewrite the information in the source
Compare similarities / differences Compare how the sources support each other regarding...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the similarities/differences between two sources in response to the question. • Please note the mark allocation (2x2) means two similarities must be given. Your response should be: • Source A indicates... and Source B ...) ✓✓ • Both sources indicate that...) ✓✓ (2x2)
Comment on Comment on the usefulness/ reliability/ limitations/bias of the source regarding...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your opinion, reinforcing your point of view using logic and reference to relevant information in the source and your own knowledge (2 x 2) • The source is useful/ reliable/ limited/ bias because... (2 x 2)
PARAGRAPH WRITING	
Using the information in the relevant sources and your own knowledge, write a paragraph...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You need to identify all the relevant sources. Use the information in the source that would answer the question. Refer to the sources you obtained your information from. E.g. According to Source 1A ... (6)