**What is 'source criticism'?** (historyskills.com)

Source criticism is a set of skills that allows you to think carefully about the nature of historical sources.

Rather than simply accepting what sources say, these skills help you to develop a healthy skepticism about the reasons a source was made and whether you can trust it.

There are two types of source criticism skills you can use: [analysis skills](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/) and [evaluation skills](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/).

In order to help you understand how each of these skills relate to each other, they are organised in a table below.

To learn more about each of the skills, click on the hyperlinks in the tables to see more detailed explanations and examples.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| [**Analysis**](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/) | Information | What is the [explicit meaning](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/comprehension/) of the source? ([Comprehension](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/comprehension/))  What is the [implicit meaning](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/interpretation/) of the source? ([Interpretation](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/interpretation/))  How does this source [corroborate](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/corroboration/) the information from another source?  How does this source [contradict](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/contradiction/) the information from another source? |
| Origin | [Who created](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/source-creator/) the source?  What [kind and type of source](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/source-kind-and-type/) is it? |
| [Perspective](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/perspective/) | From what [point of view](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/perspective/) is the source created? |
| [Context](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/context/) | [When](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/time-of-creation/) was the source created?  What historical events [happened at this time](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/context/) that are important to the creation of this source? |
| [Audience](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/audience/) | Who was the [intended audience](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/audience/) of the source? |
| [Motive](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/purpose/) | For what [purpose](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/analysis/purpose/) was this source made? |
| [**Evaluation**](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/) | [Usefulness](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/usefulness/) | How [relevant](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/usefulness/) is this source to the topic you are studying? |
| [Accurac](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/accuracy/)y | How [correct](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/accuracy/) is the information provided by the source? |
| [Reliability](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/reliability/) | How [trustworthy](https://www.historyskills.com/source-criticism/evaluation/reliability/) is the source? |