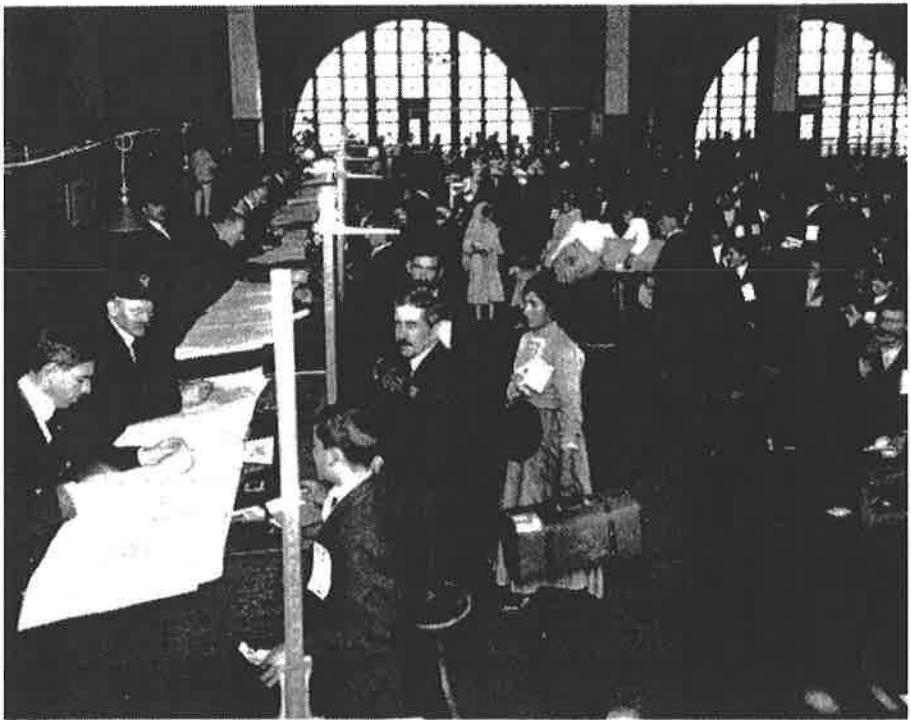


Social Studies 10

History Immigration Project



Source: http://www.fasttrackteaching.com/burns/Unit_4_Cities/U4_Ellis_Island_NYC.html

Stage 2: Understanding Bias, Reliability, and Validity in Historical Evidence

Mr. Meldrum

Included:

- Reliability, Validity, and Bias Definitions**
- Evaluating Information Sources**
- Checklist for Evaluating Print and Web Sources**
- Language Identification Chart**

Social Studies 10
History Project
Stage 2; Reliability, Validity and Bias
"Coming To Canada"

Name:

Objectives and P.L.O's

1. To outline the cultural and social factors facing new Canadians during the years 1815-1899
2. To continue to locate, categorize and document primary and secondary historical evidence
3. Evaluate and assess the accuracy of primary and secondary sources
4. Expand the portrait of your 'New Canadian'
5. Contribute to peer discussion on a wiki
6. Link your historical evidence to historical characters and events

The Goal

Students will research the social and cultural influences of your person would have been faced with after arriving in Canada. The evidence you collect will be the being to round out your Canadian's experience in Canada. Who did you associate with? What did you do for fun? Where did you work? How were you educated?

Evidence can include: newspapers, songs, art, books, poems and photographs

A Completed Stage 2 Will Include

- Two driving questions focused on the society and culture of the time
- 6 pieces of historical evidence roughly split 50/50 of primary and secondary sources
- Documentation for each of the 6 pieces of evidence (3-4 must be from print sources)
- A one page re-visitation of the Stage 2's Driving Questions
- A one page summary of your evidence linked to the Major Project Question. This may be presented in a form that best suites your learning style but should be concise and focused.
- Completed Research Package (see below)
- A three-ring binder that includes all of the above neatly labeled and organized
- With a new section dedicated to this stage
- An updated visual snapshot to be posted on the Wiki including a brief caption/comment. Please cite your source.

Wiki Posting

You are required to post three comments on the wiki site not including your visual snapshot. The comment should focus on the main points of reliability, validity and bias, but may also explore the research process. Your profile should keep with your character.

-New for this stage: Must post clear example of three pieces of historical evidence that show bias, reliability and validity. A brief explanation of your claim should be included.

Stage Two Research Packages (complete one per New Canadian)

1. Language Identification Chart
2. Evaluating Sources (Web and Print)
3. Citation Sheets
4. Notes

Stage Processing Information – Checklist

Analyze/Evaluate

- Evaluate my information sources.
 - Have I examined the information for relevance, accuracy, bias, currency, and authority?
- Take notes related to my information needs.
 - Have I kept good point-form notes?
 - Have I included information from different viewpoints?
 - Have I recorded my own thoughts, ideas, and questions?
 - Do I have enough information?
- Use information honestly.
 - Have I carefully recorded all sources of information and page numbers?
 - Have I acknowledged my sources of quotations and ideas?
 - Have I avoided plagiarism?

Test Ideas

- Test ideas to adjust research and strategies.
 - Does my information relate to my topic and focus/thesis?
 - Do I need to adjust my focus or research plan?
 - Have I checked my ideas with others?

Synthesize Findings

- Make connections.
 - Did I find relationships among the data?
 - Did I discover trends and patterns in information I found?
 - Can I make generalizations?
- Formulate conclusions.
 - Have I been able to form my own opinion about the information?
 - Can I justify my perspective with supporting evidence?
 - Have I formulated an arguable thesis?
 - Have I developed convincing arguments to support my thesis?
 - Have I developed an outline to organize my information?

Sort Information

- Use organizers and subtopics to classify and record.
 - Have I made use of visual organizers to organize my information and look for patterns and relationships?
 - Have I used visual organizers to analyze my gathered data?
 - Have I used graphic applications, such as a spreadsheet, chart, or database, to organize and analyze my information?

Reliability, Validity and Bias

In order to convincingly defend your thesis you must address the reliability of the person(s) who produced your document, as well as the validity of what they have said or suggested.

- **Reliability**

Reliability is about who produced your document, or where it came from. The writer/publisher/photographer etc. is the issue here. Largely, reliability is determined by reputation. The more historical research you do, the better you will become at assessing this reputation. It is important to remember that when determining reliability, you are not judging the truthfulness of the information (although that may be implied); rather, you are assessing the person(s) or institution that produced it.

- **Validity**

Now you do get to examine how truthful the information is. What you already know about history, or at least the event in question, will be relevant here. If what a document suggests about an event is contrary to what you have already learned, then you should take this into careful consideration when determining its validity. You should also be aware that reliability and validity can affect one another – if a document has an unreliable source, this should be a factor in determining its validity. Evidence from a person/institution that is untrustworthy or incapable of providing accurate information for your investigation cannot strengthen your argument.

Although the reliability and the validity of a document may be related in certain instances, you should, nevertheless, give each notion its own space in your thinking, weighing each separately, as well as against each other. Rarely is a document 100% unreliable, or 100% invalid. A reasoned and sophisticated assessment of a document will address the questions: "For what theses is this source reliable?" and "For what theses is this information valid?"

- **Bias**

Bias happens when a person/group has a particular opinion or agenda, and portrays an event in a way that supports that position. Bias can be obvious; it can also be very subtle. Nearly everything except simple facts has bias. For example, to say that "a nuclear bomb was dropped on Hiroshima" is a fact that has no bias. On the contrary, to say that "a nuclear bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and that it was necessary" is a judgement and therefore does contain bias. Because a source has bias does not, however, make the information useless. Indeed, most historical documents are not simply lists of indisputable facts. The historian's job is first to determine the bias and then factor it into his/her judgement.

When determining *reliability*, it is important to ask ourselves what it is we are trying to learn. While the following example here may be a bit extreme, it does make this point. If we read a document from Hitler's book Mein Kampf, and it makes derogatory comments about

Jewish people, how reliable is it? That depends on the question you are investigating. If the question is "What are Jewish people like?" Hitler's infamous bias against these people makes it unreliable. If, however, the question is "What did the Nazis think of the Jewish people?" then Adolf Hitler is a very reliable source because Hitler in fact defined that unsavoury policy for the Nazis. Again, remember when assessing reliability you are not asking "How true is this?" but something closer to "For what questions/issues does this person have authority?"

When determining **validity**, bias is trickier. Most often, we must know a good deal about the event to effectively evaluate the validity. We must consider all the circumstances in which the event occurred. Then we must compare this information to what we have learned elsewhere. Again, we must consider what it is we are trying to evaluate. Stalin's comment about the kulaks is a good example. He said, "I will eliminate them as a class." If we are trying to understand Stalin's plans to collectivize agriculture in the Soviet Union, his actions aimed at eliminating the kulaks are a well-known part of the process: therefore, in this context the statement is valid.

Evaluating Information Sources

Information comes in different formats – print, electronic, and media. However, you can use similar criteria to evaluate any source for quality and usefulness.

Format	- BOOK - PERIODICAL -ARTICLE – SOFTWARE – AUDIOTAPE –FILM/VIDEO
Author	
Title	
Publication Date	Overall rating: Excellent/good/fair/poor

Criteria	Consider These Key Questions
Authority	Can you trust the author? What are his or her credentials to create this particular work?
Objectivity	Is the author's purpose and intended audience clearly stated? Does the work provide factual information, opinion, or propaganda? Does the author have a biased point of view? Does the author stereotype some people?
Accuracy	Are the author's facts correct? Are the opinions supported with data? Is there evidence of good research and documentation?
Completeness	How completely and deeply does the work cover the topic? Does the work answer the question completely?
Currency	Is the date of publication given? Is the information current enough for your topic or task?
Relevancy	Does the source contain the information you need? Does it provide information that is relevant to your topic?
Format	Does the format of the source present the information in an attractive and clear way? Are there special features to aid understanding and pleasure?

LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION CHART

Use this chart to help identify and categorize the language used in the historical artifacts you have uncovered.

Checklist for Evaluating a Website

Checklist for Evaluating a Website

Title	URL	Overall Rating: <input type="radio"/> Excellent <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Poor	Date Accessed	Details/Comments	
AUTHORITY	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The author of the site is clearly identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The author has appropriate credentials. <input type="checkbox"/> The publisher of the site is identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The site contains contact information. <input type="checkbox"/> A reputable group has rated the site.					
OBJECTIVITY	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The purpose of the site is clearly stated. <input type="checkbox"/> The sponsors of the site are clearly identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The intended audience of the site is clear. <input type="checkbox"/> The site is free of bias and stereotyping. <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising does not influence the information.					
ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains accurate information. <input type="checkbox"/> The site is well researched and documented. <input type="checkbox"/> The site's information can be verified. <input type="checkbox"/> The site's links are reputable and working. <input type="checkbox"/> The site's information is deep and well written.					
CURRENCY	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The date that the site was created is given. <input type="checkbox"/> The date that the site was updated is given. <input type="checkbox"/> Key information has been revised recently.					
TECHNICALITIES	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The site is easy to navigate. <input type="checkbox"/> The site's graphics and layout add to its value. <input type="checkbox"/> Looks can be deceiving. Check that animations, frames, colours, and special effects actually inform.					

Title	URL	Overall Rating: <input type="radio"/> Excellent <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Poor	Date Accessed	Details/Comments	
AUTHORITY	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The author of the site is clearly identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The author has appropriate credentials. <input type="checkbox"/> The publisher of the site is identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The site contains contact information. <input type="checkbox"/> A reputable group has rated the site.					
OBJECTIVITY	Details/Comments				
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ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains accurate information. <input type="checkbox"/> The site is well researched and documented. <input type="checkbox"/> The site's information can be verified. <input type="checkbox"/> The site's links are reputable and working. <input type="checkbox"/> The site's information is deep and well written.					
CURRENCY	Details/Comments				
<input type="checkbox"/> The date that the site was created is given. <input type="checkbox"/> The date that the site was updated is given. <input type="checkbox"/> Key information has been revised recently.					
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AUTHORITY		OBJECTIVITY		ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS		TECHNICALITIES			
Title	URL	Date Accessed	Overall Rating: <input type="radio"/> Excellent <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Poor	Details/Comments	Details/Comments	Currency	Details/Comments		
<i>Tip:</i> Information experts choose wisely. Check up on authors and sites in online library catalogues and databases.				<i>Tip:</i> There are always people behind websites. Determine if these people wish to advocate, inform, or entertain.		<i>Tip:</i> Start with quality information. Use the School Library Website for sites that model accuracy and depth.			
<input type="checkbox"/> The author of the site is clearly identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The purpose of the site is clearly stated.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains accurate information.	<input type="checkbox"/> The date that the site was created is given.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site is easy to navigate.					
<input type="checkbox"/> The author has appropriate credentials.	<input type="checkbox"/> The sponsors of the site are clearly identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site is well researched and documented.	<input type="checkbox"/> The date that the site was updated is given.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site's graphics and layout add to its value.					
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<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains contact information.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site is free of bias and stereotyping.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site's information is deep and well written.	<input type="checkbox"/> Currency affects accuracy. Check dates on the site to see if the information is current enough for the task.						
<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains a rating.	<input type="checkbox"/> Advertising does not influence the information.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site's information is accurate and depth.	<i>Tip:</i> Currency affects accuracy. Check dates on the site to see if the information is current enough for the task.						
<i>Tip:</i> Information experts choose wisely. Check up on authors and sites in online library catalogues and databases.									

Title	URL	Date Accessed	Overall Rating: <input type="radio"/> Excellent <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Poor	Details/Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> The author of the site is clearly identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The author of the site is clearly identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The author of the site is clearly identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The author of the site is clearly identified.	<i>Tip:</i> Information experts choose wisely. Check up on authors and sites in online library catalogues and databases.
<input type="checkbox"/> The author has appropriate credentials.	<input type="checkbox"/> The author has appropriate credentials.	<input type="checkbox"/> The author has appropriate credentials.	<input type="checkbox"/> The author has appropriate credentials.	
<input type="checkbox"/> The publisher of the site is identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The publisher of the site is identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The publisher of the site is identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> The publisher of the site is identified.	
<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains contact information.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains contact information.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains contact information.	<input type="checkbox"/> The site contains contact information.	
<input type="checkbox"/> A reputable group has rated the site.	<input type="checkbox"/> A reputable group has rated the site.	<input type="checkbox"/> A reputable group has rated the site.	<input type="checkbox"/> A reputable group has rated the site.	
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Checklist for Evaluating a Website

Checklist for Evaluating a Website

Title	URL	Overall Rating:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Date Accessed	Details/Comments					
AUTHORITY	Details/Comments					
<i>Tip: Information experts choose wisely. Check up on authors' and sites in online library catalogues and databases.</i>						
OBJECTIVITY	Details/Comments					
<i>Tip: There are always people behind websites. Determine if these people wish to advocate, inform, or entertain.</i>						
ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS	Details/Comments					
<i>Tip: Start with quality information. Use the School Library Website for sites that model accuracy and depth.</i>						
CURRENCY	Details/Comments					
<i>Tip: Currency affects accuracy. Check dates on the site to see if the information is current enough for the task.</i>						
TECHNICALITIES	Details/Comments					
<i>Tip: Look for deceiving. Check the animations, frames, colours, and special effects actually inform.</i>						

Checklist for Evaluating Print Sources

Your Name _____	Student No. _____	Source # _____	Thesis/Main Idea Summary	Types of Information Source Offers	Proper MLA Citations	Reliability of Resource
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Your Name _____	Student No. _____	Source # _____	Thesis/Main Idea Summary	Types of Information Source Offers	Proper MLA Citations	Reliability of Resource
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Checklist for Evaluating Print Sources

Your Name _____	Student No. _____
Source # _____	Source # _____
Thesis/Main Idea Summary	Thesis/Main Idea Summary
Types of Information Source Offers	Types of Information Source Offers
Proper MLA Citations	Proper MLA Citations
Reliability of Resource	Reliability of Resource

Your Name _____	Student No. _____
Source # _____	Source # _____
Thesis/Main Idea Summary	Thesis/Main Idea Summary
Types of Information Source Offers	Types of Information Source Offers
Proper MLA Citations	Proper MLA Citations
Reliability of Resource	Reliability of Resource

Checklist for Evaluating Print Sources

Source #	Student No.	Your Name
Thesis/Main Idea Summary		
Types of Information Source Offers		
Proper MLA Citations		
Reliability of Resource		
Source #	Student No.	Your Name
Thesis/Main Idea Summary		
Types of Information Source Offers		
Proper MLA Citations		
Reliability of Resource		

Source #	Student No.	Your Name
Thesis/Main Idea Summary		
Types of Information Source Offers		
Proper MLA Citations		
Reliability of Resource		
Source #	Student No.	Your Name
Thesis/Main Idea Summary		
Types of Information Source Offers		
Proper MLA Citations		
Reliability of Resource		

Be Honest: Don't Plagiarize

What does the word "plagiarism" mean?

Plagiarism comes from the Latin word for "kidnapper." It is the act of intentionally, or unintentionally, using or passing off someone else's words, ideas, or images as your own. With the Internet, it is easy just to cut and paste another's work. Unless you give proper credit, you are stealing and it is wrong. Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty and is a serious and punishable offence.

Why do people plagiarize?

People often plagiarize because they do not:

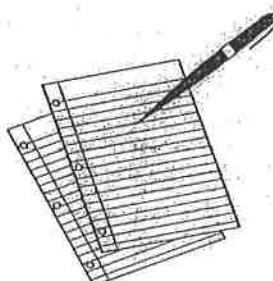
- record, paraphrase, or summarize information effectively
- know how to cite sources properly
- handle stress and perceptions of competition well
- manage time and plan work well
- understand what plagiarism is

What are other forms of academic dishonesty?

- buying an essay
- reusing an assignment without the teacher's approval
- borrowing a friend's essay

What are the results of plagiarism?

Plagiarism undervalues the work of all those who do research. Students who plagiarize may expect a mark of zero and may face other serious consequences.



How can I avoid plagiarism?

- Take careful notes throughout the research process.
- Respond to the notes with your own thoughts and ideas.
- Accurately record quotations, paraphrased information, and page numbers.
- Put quotation marks around short quotations and indent lengthy quotations.
- Use parenthetical citations where needed.
- Give yourself enough time to complete the research project.

Acknowledge:

- directly quoted information
- paraphrased information
- statistics

In doubt?

Ask your teacher or teacher-librarian, or cite the source just in case.

Do not acknowledge:

- dates (e.g., World War II began in 1939)
- simple definitions (e.g., diabetes)
- commonly known observations and facts (e.g., Ottawa is the capital of Canada)



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Title of Article	Title of Article
Title of Reference Source	Title of Reference Source
Edition No.	Copyright date
Volume no.	Pages used
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Page	Record main ideas in quotations and point-form notes	Record your own response to these ideas

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