Ask students to identify and note details.
Sample Questions:
- What do you notice first?
- Find something small but interesting.
- What do you notice that you didn’t expect?
- What do you notice that you can’t explain?
- What do you notice that you didn’t earlier?

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.
Sample Question:
- Why do you think somebody made this?
- What do you think was happening when this was made?
- Who do you think was the audience for this item?
- What tool was used to create this?
- Why do you think this item is so important?
- If somebody made this today, what would be different?
- What can you learn from examining this?

Invite students to ask questions that lead to more observations and reflections.
Sample Question:
- What do you wonder about...
  - who?
  - what?
  - when?
  - where?
  - why?
  - how?

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.
Sample Question:
- What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:
- **Beginning**: Have students compare two related primary source items.
- **Intermediate**: Have students expand or alter textbook explanations of history based on primary sources they study.
- **Advanced**: Ask students to consider how a series of primary sources support or challenge information and understanding on a particular topic. Have students refine or revise conclusions based on their study of each subsequent primary source.

For more tips on using primary sources, go to [http://www.loc.gov/teachers](http://www.loc.gov/teachers)