

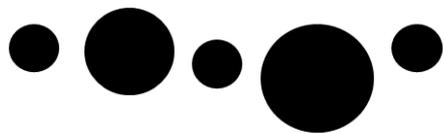
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
**TEACHING** WITH **PRIMARY SOURCES**

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Analyzing Primary Sources from the Library of Congress

Cheryl Lederle [cled@loc.gov](mailto:cled@loc.gov)  
Mike Apfeldorf [mapf@loc.gov](mailto:mapf@loc.gov)





# Library of Congress

Welcome. We're glad you're here! Use the chat box to introduce yourselves. Let us know:

- Your first name**
- Where you're joining us from**
- Why you're here**





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# Agenda

Together, we will:

- Analyze primary sources
- Develop instructional strategies to help students examine and analyze primary sources



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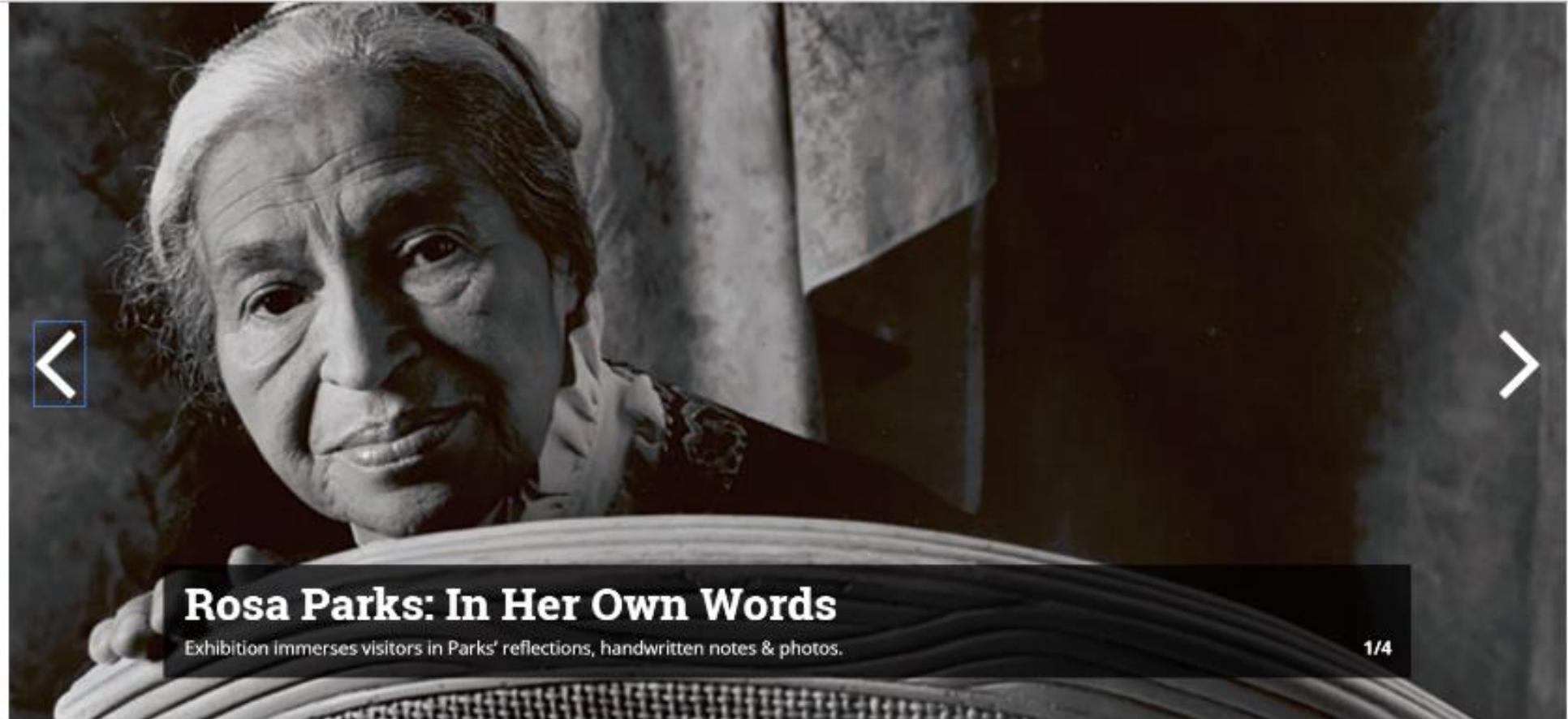
Use the chat to share what you noticed, but please don't hit "return" until you finish your thoughts

What did  
colleagues  
notice that you  
didn't?

What do you  
notice now that  
you didn't see  
earlier?

What skills did  
you use?





## Rosa Parks: In Her Own Words

Exhibition immerses visitors in Parks' reflections, handwritten notes & photos.

1/4

“Hide” in the picture and leave clues in the chat box: what do you see? Smell? Hear?



Read the clues from one other participant:  
where do you think that person is hiding?



Copyright 1900  
BY DETROIT PHOTOGRAPH

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# Reflect on practice

We already discussed the skills you used in the 30-Second Look.

What skills were added with Hide and Seek?



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# Hide and Seek On Mulberry Street with the Library of Congress

September 20, 2013 by [Cheryl Lederle](#)

Kids of any age enjoy playing Hide and Seek. It all starts with the very young playing “peekaboo,” discovering their own view of the world and their place in it.

Vary the game with any visually rich primary source, such as [Mulberry Street](#), for a quick but worthwhile classroom activity. A quick scan of this print reveals a crowd on a busy street. But a closer look draws in the viewer to see specific people. The setting includes items that suggest a feast for the senses—horses, wagon wheels, a cigar, a baby, fresh vegetables, and more.

Pair up students to play one of these two variations on Hide and Seek:

- One student in each pair should choose a hiding place and imagine hiding there. The student gives a series of sensory clues to help the other student “find” him. *I feel warm pavement under my body. It's dark, but I see some shadows. I see men's shoes. Where am I?*
- One student identifies a particular person in the image, and then gives a series of sensory clues that will zero the partner in to identify the selected person: *I feel the weight of a baby as big as me. I hear my friends goofing off. I put my face in a serious expression for the photographer. Who am I?*



Mulberry Street, New York City

In both versions, the partner guesses based on the clues. Students can revise and work on hitting the right amount of detail in their clues to keep the game going. Students practice many skills. When composing clues, students can engage purposefully with the “text,” use content-specific vocabulary, draw on background knowledge, and identify key details. To guess, partners must practice good listening comprehension, determine point of view and make inferences. The activity could be done at any point in a unit of study, to engage or assess students, apply skills, or build content knowledge.

## Learning Activity — Elementary Grades K-2

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### 30-Second Look: Classrooms Then and Now

#### Overview

Students practice their observation skills by participating in a timed 30-second look at a historic photograph of a classroom. Students may then work together as a class to record and compare their observations, ideas and questions about the photograph, or they may record their observations individually and pair and share with a partner first. Students conclude by re-examining the photograph to identify similarities and differences between this classroom from the past and their classroom today.

#### Objectives

After completing this learning activity, students will be able to:

- observe details in a historic photograph;
- express ideas and questions about the photograph based on observations and prior knowledge; and,
- identify similarities and differences between the historic photograph and their own classroom.

#### Time Required

One 45-minute class period or less, depending on grade level

#### Recommended Grade Range

K-2

#### Topic/s

Culture, Folklife

#### Subject

History

#### Standards

[Standards & Benchmarks](#)

#### Historical Understanding

Standard 2. Understands the historical perspective

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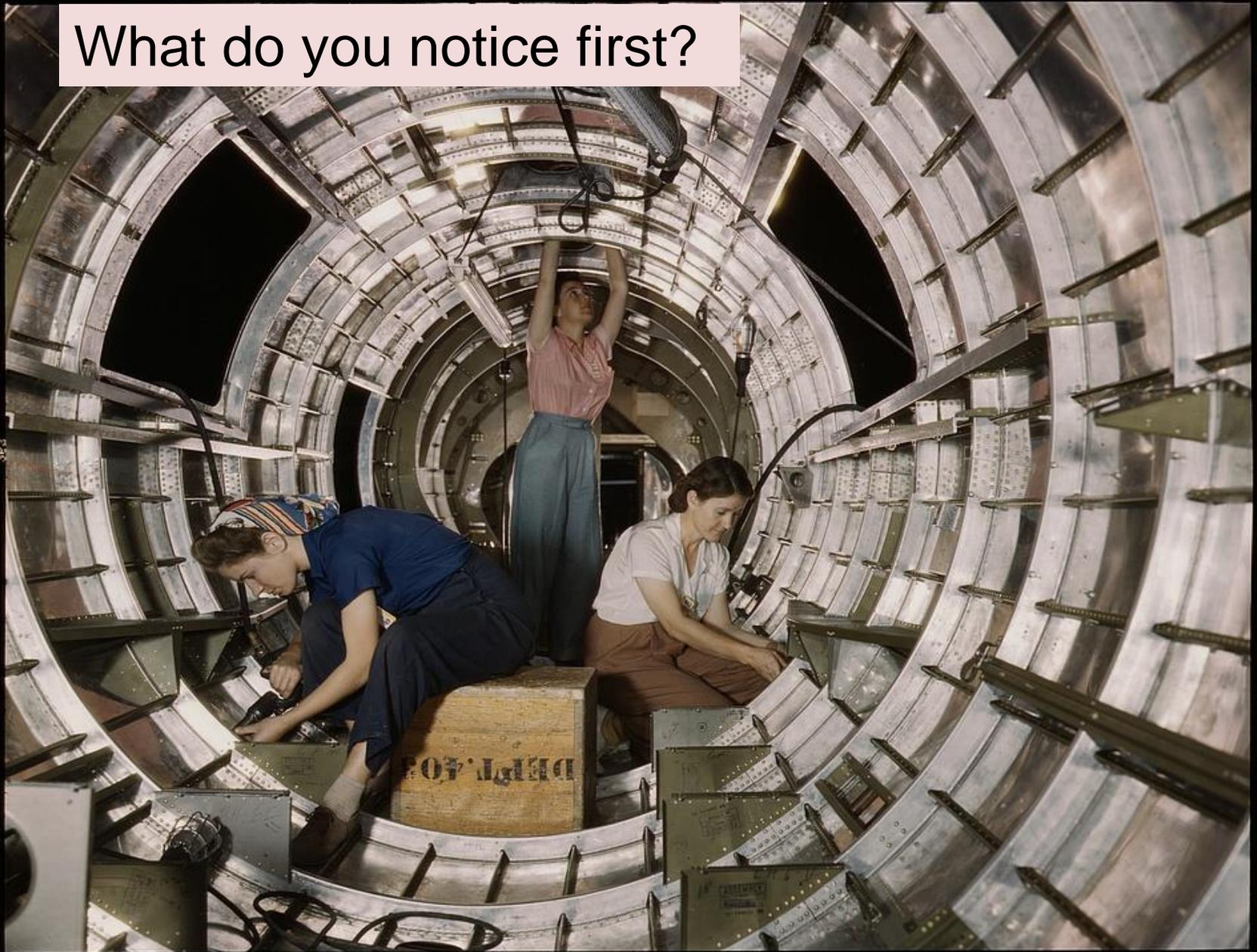
#### Related Resources at the Library

- [Teacher's Page](#)
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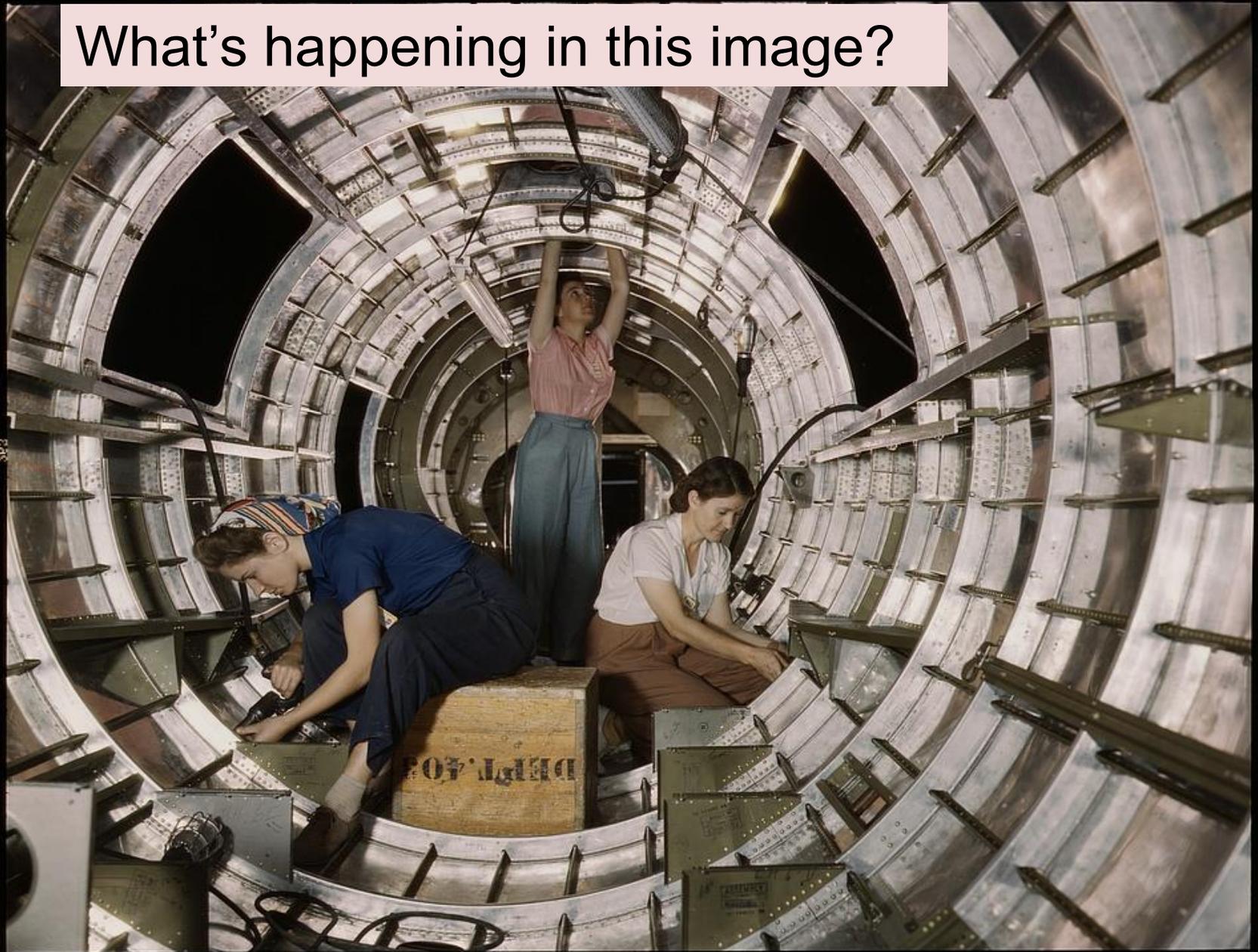


[Classroom scenes in Washington, D.C. public schools: studying live dog](#)

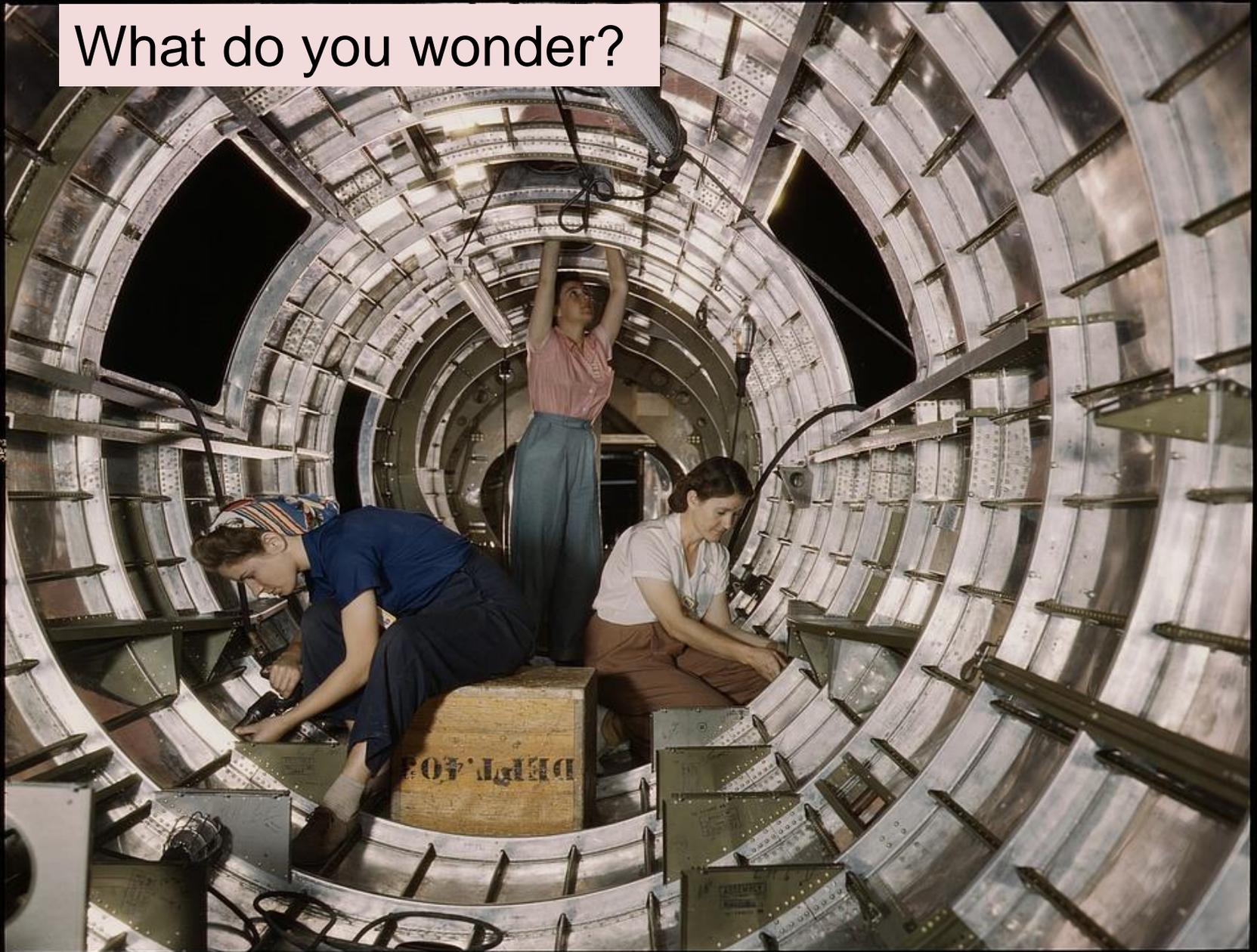
What do you notice first?



What's happening in this image?



What do you wonder?



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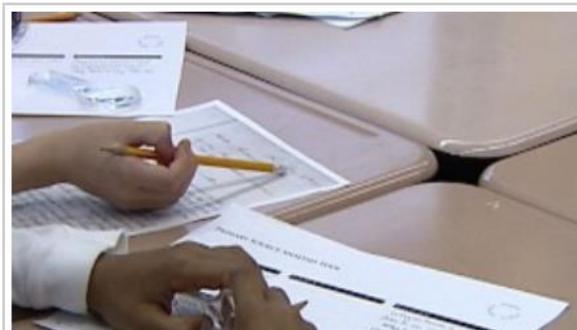
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Fine and Performing Arts

# Core Strategies for Working with Primary Sources: Primary Source Analysis

April 2, 2020 by [Cheryl Lederle](#)

Millions of powerful teaching and learning tools are available to everyone for free online, wherever they may be: primary sources from the [digital collections of the Library of Congress](#). By their very nature, primary sources, these raw materials of history, encourage exploration and stimulate critical thinking and analysis. (By the way, if you're just getting started with primary sources, the Library's [Free to Use and Reuse](#) area is a great place to find some amazing items.)

This post will focus on strategies and tools for analyzing primary sources, using highlights from past blog posts. (Stop by our previous blog post in this series, [Core Strategies for Working with Primary Sources: The Basics](#) for a quick introduction.)



The Library's set of [Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tools](#) was designed to support teachers and learners as they investigate primary sources. A commenter on [a previous post](#) notes that "the analysis tool helps focus their [students] observation skills, enhances their analysis, and promotes their inquiry."

In analyzing primary sources, students move between four distinct phases. The process isn't linear—students can go back and forth between concrete observations and facts to questioning and

Who are these women?

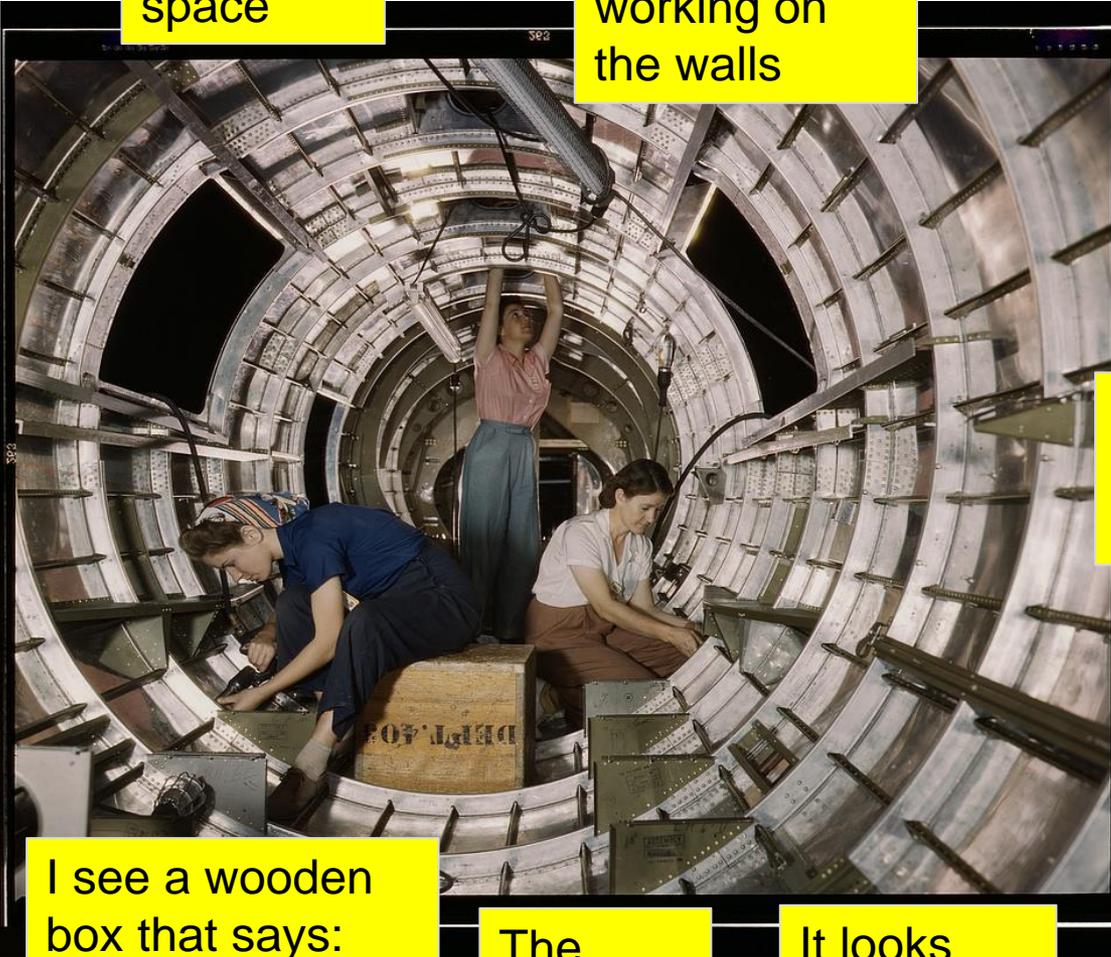
They're in a round space

The women appear to be working on the walls

I see 3 women

Rosie the Riveter?

What are they doing?



The women are wearing pants and shirts

It looks very clean. I think this was staged.

When was this made?

Where are they?

I see a wooden box that says: Dept. 40 (missing a digit?)

The walls are shiny

It looks like boxes built into the walls

Why was this made?

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## Observation in Primary Source Analysis: The Sticky Notes Solution

August 21, 2012 by [Cheryl Lederle](#)

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Teachers add their observations to a printed map from the Library's online collections using sticky notes

Begin by selecting a visual item – a map, photograph, or print. Ready-made [primary source sets](#) offer many quick options. Prepare to print or display the item. Allow time to let students notice and build on each others' observations: "Wow! I didn't notice that!"

The teachers came up with many ideas to use with this technique:

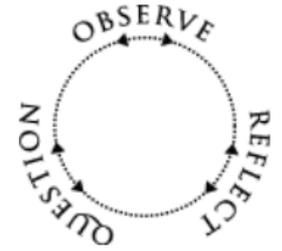
- Use the wall space in your classroom to develop an ongoing display.

Close observation is crucial to working with primary sources, but fortunately better observation skills can be just a few sticky notes away.

During this year's Library of Congress summer teacher institutes, teachers of all grade and ability levels discussed ways to engage students in close observation of primary sources.

One easy technique emerged: sticky notes. Students can press them directly onto a primary source to mark which details they're looking at and responding to. They can easily annotate the primary source. Over time, students can add to—or respond to—the observations that they or others have made.





# PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL

Use this tool to record your responses to a primary source.

If you need guidance, use the sample questions. Feel free to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

Select format of your primary source

Any Format ▾

**OBSERVE**

Record responses here

**REFLECT**

Record responses here

**QUESTION**

Record responses here

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Record responses here

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# PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL

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If you need guidance, use the sample questions. Feel free to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.



Select format of your primary source

Any Format ▼

OBSERVE	REFLECT	QUESTION
<p>They're in a round space</p> <p>The women appear to be working on the walls</p> <p>I see 3 women</p> <p>The women are wearing pants and shirts</p> <p>The walls are shiny</p> <p>I see a wooden box that says: Dept. 40 (missing a digit?)</p> <p>It looks very clean.</p>	<p>This reminds me of Rosie the Riveter</p> <p>I think this was staged.</p> <p>It looks like boxes built into the walls</p>	<p>Who are these women?</p> <p>What are they doing?</p> <p>Where are they?</p> <p>When was this made?</p> <p>Why was this made?</p>

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Record responses here

## About this Item

### Title

Women workers install fixtures and assemblies to a tail fuselage section of a B-17F bomber at the Douglas Aircraft Company, Long Beach, Calif. Better known as the "Flying Fortress," the B-17F is a later model of the B-17 which distinguished itself in action in the South Pacific, over Germany and elsewhere. It is a long range, high altitude heavy bomber, with a crew of seven to nine men, and with armament sufficient to defend itself on daylight missions

### Contributor Names

Palmer, Alfred T., photographer

### Created / Published

1942 Oct.

### Subject Headings

- Douglas Aircraft Company
- Airplane industry
- Women--Employment
- World War, 1939-1945
- Bombers
- Assembly-line methods
- United States--California--Long Beach

### Headings

Transparencies--Color.

### Genre

Transparencies--Color

### Notes

- 12002-39.
- Transfer from U.S. Office of War Information, 1944.
- Published in: American women : a Library of Congress guide ... Washington : Library of Congress, 2001, p. 388.
- General information about the FSA/OWI Color Photographs is available at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.fsac>

### Part of

American Women: A Gateway to Library of Congress Resources for the Study of Women's History and Culture in the United States (273)

Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Color Photographs (1,623)

Prints and Photographs Division (877,431)

Library of Congress Online Catalog (1,104,849)

### Format

Photo, Print, Drawing

### Contributors

Palmer, Alfred T.

### Dates

1939

### Location

California  
Long Beach  
United States

### City

Long Beach

### Country

United States

### State

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# Reflect on practice

How will you decide when to provide students with the item record?

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## ANALYZING PHOTOGRAPHS & PRINTS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

### OBSERVE

#### Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:

- Describe what you see. · What do you notice first?
- What people and objects are shown? · How are they arranged? · What is the physical setting?
- What, if any, words do you see? · What other details can you see?

### REFLECT

#### Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the image.

- Why do you think this image was made? · What's happening in the image? · When do you think it was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this image? · What tools were used to create this?
- What can you learn from examining this image? · What's missing from this image? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What would be the same?

### QUESTION

#### Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

- What do you wonder about... who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

### FURTHER INVESTIGATION

#### 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*  
Write a caption for the image.

*Intermediate*  
Select an image. Predict what will happen one minute after the scene shown in the image. One hour after? Explain the reasoning behind your predictions.

*Advanced*  
Have students expand or alter textbook or other printed explanations of history based on images they study.

For more tips on using primary sources, go to  
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers>

# PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL

Use this tool to record your responses to a primary source.

If you need guidance, use the sample questions. Feel free to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.



Select format of your primary source

Any Format ▼

OBSERVE 	REFLECT 	QUESTION 
<p>They're in a round space The women appear to be working on the walls I see 3 women The women are wearing pants and shirts</p> <p>The walls are shiny I see a wooden box that says: Dept. 40 (missing a digit?) It looks very clean.</p>	<p>This reminds me of Rosie the Riveter I think this was staged. It looks like boxes built into the walls</p>	<p>Who are these women? What are they doing? Where are they? When was this made? Why was this made?</p>

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Record responses here

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# Investigate

- Select 1 or 2 significant questions generated by the analysis – or add another.
- How would you develop the questions to be productive for further research?
- Where would you look for more information?

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## Reflect on practice

How can you apply these strategies in your face to face or remote instruction?

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## Questions?

- Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov>
- Ask a librarian: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/askalib/>
- Teacher resources: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/>
- Teacher blog: <http://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/>
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- Mike Apfeldorf: [mapf@loc.gov](mailto:mapf@loc.gov)

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