

First Year Seminar
FALL 2023

MEETING 21

Sources

- Approaching primary sources
- Primary source case studies
- Tricks for summarizing content

1

Three things today

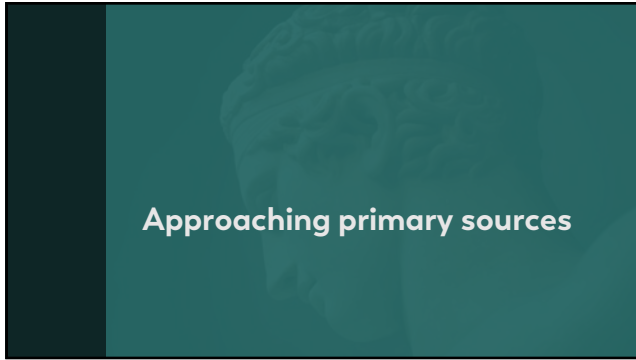
- 1 Approaching primary sources
- 2 Primary source case studies
- 3 Tricks for summarizing content

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Upcoming dates

- Monday, November 13 Choosing your document (Week 11 online response)
- Monday, November 20 Summary Write-Up
- Monday, December 4 Annotated Bibliography
- Monday, December 11 Analysis Write-Up

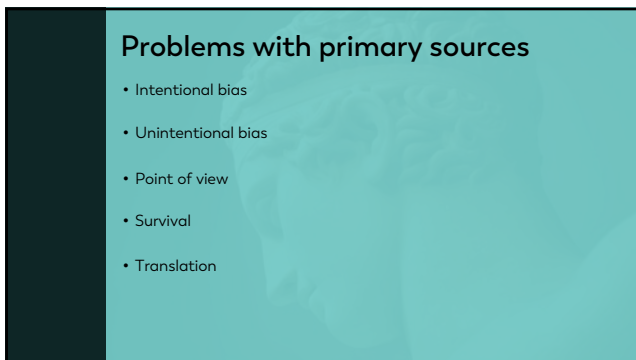
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Examining primary sources: Summary

1. Who wrote this document, when, and where?
2. What type of document is this?
3. Who is the intended audience of the document?
4. What are the main points of the document?

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Examining primary sources: Analysis

1. Why was this document written?
2. What does it reveal about the society and time period in which it was created?
3. What's missing?
4. What passage stands out the most?

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Example:

VENI · VIDI · VICI
I CAME · I SAW · I CONQUERED



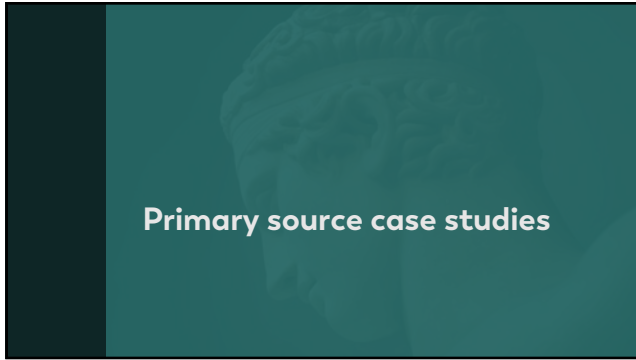
Summary

1. Who wrote this document, when, and where?
2. What type of document is this?
3. Who is the intended audience of the document?
4. What are the main points of the document?

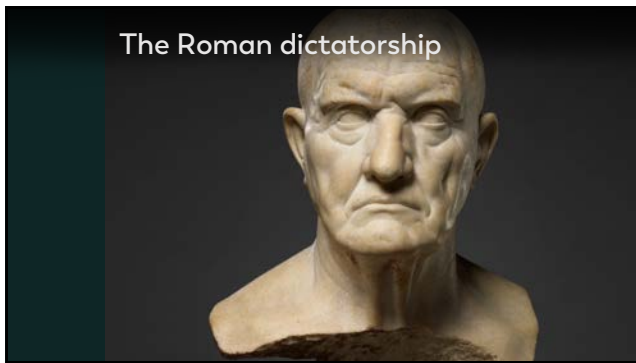
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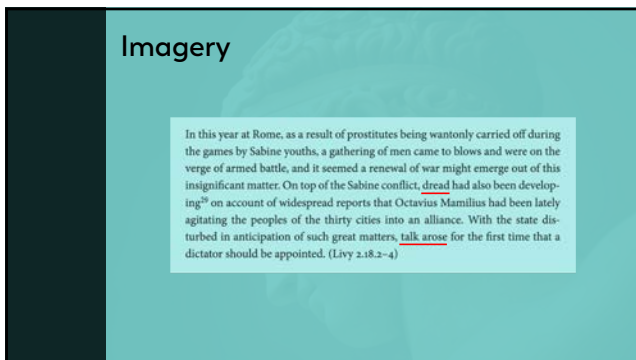
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Jargon vs. description

Lex vetusta est, priscis litteris verbisque scripta, ut qui praetor maximus sit idibus Septembribus clavum pangat; fixa fuit dextro lateri aedis Iovis optimi maximi, qua parte Minervae templum est.

An ancient law, written in archaic words and letters and formerly affixed to the right side of the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, where Minerva's chapel is, required that the chief magistrate shall drive a nail on the ides of September.

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Anecdotes vs. assertions

As he was plowing his four-iugera property on the Vatican, the land now called the Quintian Meadows, and indeed (so it is said) stripped nude, a summoner brought Cincinnatus his commission as dictator; and after considerable hesitation the messenger said, "Clothe yourself, so that I may deliver the mandates of the senate and people of Rome." (Plin. HN 18.4.20)

I relate these particulars solely to emphasize what kind of men Rome's leaders were in those days. They capably worked their own lands; they led frugal lives; they endured honorable poverty with contentment. Far from aiming at royal power, it was refused when offered. The Romans of today do not bear the slightest resemblance to them, but do everything the opposite way—excepting a very few, by whom the dignity of the state is still maintained, and a resemblance to those men preserved. (Dion. Hal. 10.17.6)

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Sequence

atque his divinis humanisque rebus gestis dictatura se abdicavit.

and, having discharged his duties to gods and men, he resigned his dictatorship.

LIVY 5.23.7

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Signs of change

for my speech hastens to a singular accomplishment of M. Antonius: he utterly removed from the state the dictatorship, which lately had taken on the might of regal power. We [the senate] did not even discuss it. He brought, already drawn up, the resolution he wanted passed, and once it had been read we submitted to his authority with the greatest zeal and gave thanks to him in most fulsome words by another resolution. (Cic. *Phil.* 1.1.3)

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Tricks for summarizing content

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Summarizing



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Writing a Summary

- Divide the text into sections
- For each section,
 - Determine the main point of that section
 - Write a one- or two-sentence summary of the section, focusing on that point
- Write a one- or two-sentence summary of the entire piece
 - Check your high-level summary against the original text
- Combine your summary of the entire piece with your section summaries into a paragraph
 - Check what you have written against the original text

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Summary tips

- A summary condenses a text, so it is always shorter
- Summaries identify the main point of a text and provide information about the supporting points
- Be sure to refer to the author as you write your summary
- In general, don't quote in summaries

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A. Choosing your document

This is your Week 11 response and will be posted online. For this, you'll need to do two things.

- Choose one of the list of short documents from history that interests you.
 - Skim through the reading at a glance and see what jumps out at you as you look through it.
 - This will be your document for the rest of this project, so pick one that you want to explore or find out more about.
- For your Week 11 online response, write a post that includes all of the following:
 - Which reading did you pick?
 - Why did it interest you?
 - What passage or detail jumped out at you as you glanced through it?
 - What, specifically, would you like to find out more about?

Due date: Monday, November 13

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B. Summary Write-Up

Read through your document and summarize the story it tells in your own words.

- Answer the Summary Questions.
- Read through the document and describe what is happening in each scene. Use your own words.
 - Use just your document. You don't need to do any other research.
 - Just summarize, don't analyze.
- Formatting:
 - Double-spaced, with standard 1-inch margins and a standard font and font size
 - Have your name, the date, and a title (for example, "Summarizing XXXX", where XXXX is your document) at the top, or on a separate cover page
- Length: At least 1 page of writing, double-spaced.

Due date: Monday, November 20

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