

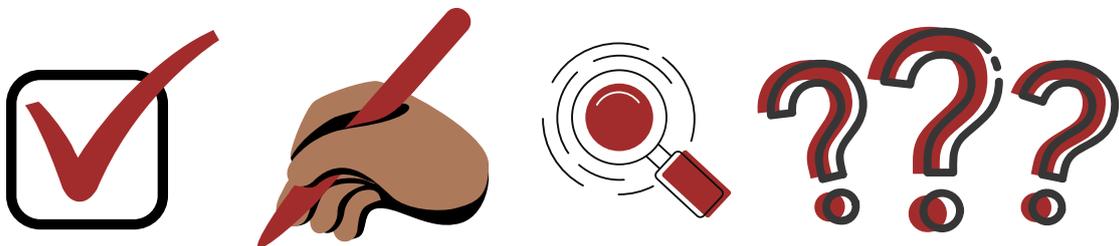


South African History Online
towards a people's history

History Skills Pack

Based on the CAPS curriculum

For an outline of the FET Curriculum Assessment Policy, click [here](#).



Source Analysis



All historians need to be critical of the sources they use. Rather than accepting sources at face value, they need to evaluate and analyse the sources to determine how reliable and useful the sources are. This skill is called **source criticism** and includes **analysis skills** and **evaluation skills**. Students apply these skills when they are able to ask and answer the following questions:

1. What is the source's **explicit** historical account?
2. What is the source **implying** about the past?
3. Does the source's information **corroborate** with other historical sources?
4. Does the source's information **contradict** other historical accounts?
5. Who **created** the source?
6. What is the **purpose** of the source?
7. Out of whose **perspective** is the source written?
8. Who was the **intended audience** of the source?
9. How **relevant** is the source to answer the question asked?
10. To what extent is the source **reliable** and **trustworthy**?



Tips:

*If a source contradicts another source use the two different sources to give a **balanced** view of the historical event.*

*If a source **corroborates** information in other historical sources, use this to emphasize the **reliability and usefulness** of the source.*

Source Analysis



In Section A, a variety of source-based questions are asked. These questions are mostly based on the sources as provided in the paper. This section will explain how to use and analyse the sources that are provided in the exam. For an in-depth explanation of how the exam set-up usually works, please visit our Mark Allocation article and our Source-based Questions article.

Types of Sources

Visual Sources

Cartoons, Photographs, Posters

Textual Sources

Newspaper articles, Newspaper headlines,
Speeches, Letters, Interviews

The difference between primary and secondary sources

Primary

A source directly from the event it refers to.

- Photographs
- Cartoons
- Newspaper article
- Speeches

Secondary

A source that is written/created after an event. Usually based on primary sources.

- Books
- Reviews



Source Analysis



How to do a source analysis

For any source, one should always try to determine origin, purpose, limitations and value.

1. *How to determine origin:*

Is the source **Primary** or **Secondary**?

*TIP: Look at the **date** of the source. A newspaper article could also be a secondary source if it is an article that is referring to an "old" event.*

2. *How to determine purpose:*

- Ask yourself why the source was created.
- What is the source saying?
- What is the source not saying?
- What is it showing or attempting to show its viewers?
- Who is the intended viewership?

3. *How to determine value:*

To determine the value of a source, one should attempt to compare the strengths and limitations of a source. The strengths and limitations of each source will tell you how reliable (can the source be trusted) and how valuable (can the source be used) each source is.



Source Analysis



Assessing how valuable a source is

Source	Strengths	Weaknesses
Newspaper Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A primary source and contains first-hand information of what occurred at an event.• A newspaper article usually contains a lot of information on an event, given one a better idea of what occurred (context).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Although newspaper articles generally give a lot of information on an event, it is important to note that they may <i>still</i> be one-sided based on their audience.
Speeches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A primary source and contains a first-hand account of what occurred at an event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speeches usually only portray one side of the story.
Cartoons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A primary source. It shows the viewer what the “feeling of the time” is. In other words, it shows one a general feeling of how <i>most</i> people view current events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cartoons are satirical. This means that they are usually over-exaggerated.• Cartoons are not usually accompanied by in-depth information. They may be misinterpreted.
Photographs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A primary source and <i>shows</i> the viewer a part of history. For example, you can determine what a group or area looked like at the time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Photographs do not always show the whole picture.• Photographs are not usually accompanied by in-depth information. They may be misinterpreted.

Source Analysis

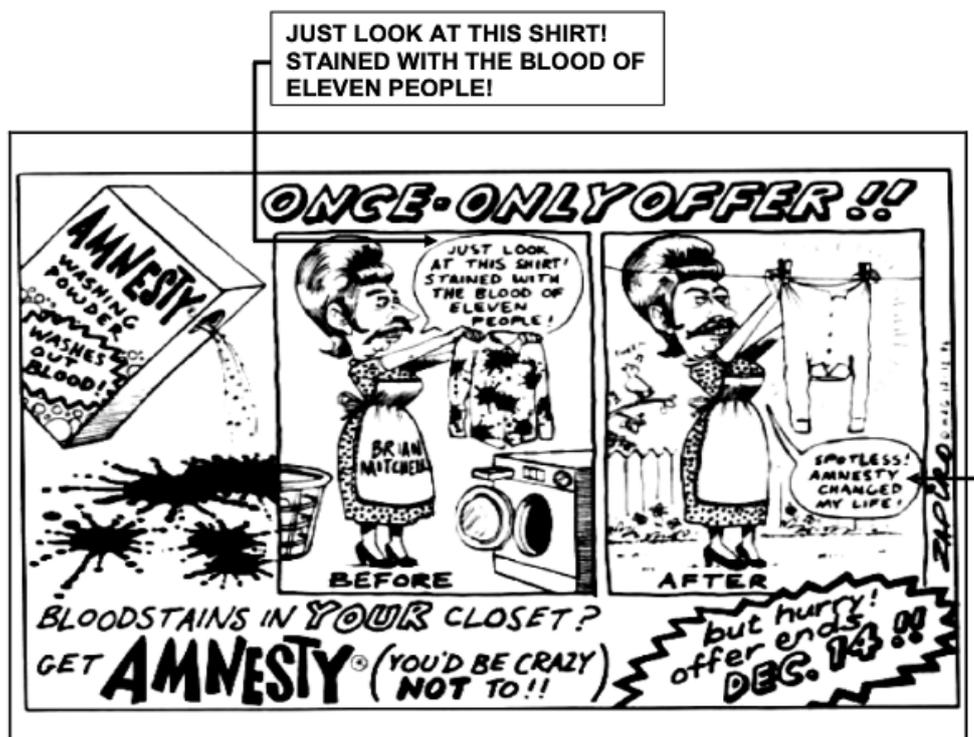


How to analyse the different visual sources

1. A Cartoon (this example is from the 2019 May/June National Senior Certificate History paper 2 examination):

SOURCE 2C

The cartoon below, by Zapiro, depicts Brian Mitchell accepting the TRC's 'ONCE-ONLY OFFER!!' of amnesty. It was published in the *Mail and Guardian* on 12 November 1996.



[From https://www.zapiro.com/cache/com_zoo/images/m_961212mg_6e19e617dc4891b33abe9e607c4159cb.jpg. Accessed on 6 August 2018.]

Source for cartoon and memorandum answers: The Department of Basic Education South Africa, "National Senior Certificate Examinations: History Paper 2 Addendum," (May/June 2019), (Accessed: 23 May 2020), Available at <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/CD/2019%20June%20Exams/Non-Languages%20May-June%202019%20PDF/History/History%20P2%20May-June%202019%20Addendum%20Eng.pdf?ver=2019-06-04-075918-000>

Source Analysis



- What does the exam description say?
- When was the cartoon published?
- What is the cartoon saying/ who is being mentioned?
 - Who is Brian Mitchell?
 - What does amnesty mean?
 - What do the bloodstains represent?
 - What does 14 December mean in the context of this cartoon?

Example questions for this cartoon

1. Explain the message that is conveyed in the cartoon. Use the visual clues in the source to support your answer. (1x2)
2. What do you think is implied by the words, 'ONCE-ONLY OFFER!' in the context of the amnesty process of the TRC? (1x2)

Answers

1. The cartoonist is showing that Brian Mitchell is being cleared of any crime that he has committed.
 - Reasoning: The word **Amnesty** refers to being excused for any crimes committed.

TIP: Remember to always look at the mark allocation as it tells you how long your answer needs to be. Please refer to the Mark allocation section on the [Source-Based Questions page](#).

2. The period of amnesty was only offered until 14 December.

Source Analysis



1. A Photograph (this example is from the 2019 May/June National Senior Certificate History paper 2 examination):

SOURCE 1C

The photograph below shows members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) confronting students with dogs in Soweto on 16 June 1976. The photographer is unknown.



[From https://risingsunoverport.co.za/wp-content/uploads/sites/108/2016/06/u1_ch4_Soweto_1976-520x400.jpg. Accessed on 3 September 2018.]

SADF soldier

Students

Source for photograph and memorandum answers: The Department of Basic Education South Africa, "National Senior Certificate Examinations: History Paper 2 Memorandum," (May/June 2019), (Accessed: 23 May 2020), Available at <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/CD/2019%20June%20Exams/Non-Languages%20May-June%202019%20Memos%20PDF/History/History%20P2%20May-June%202019%20Memo%20Eng.pdf?ver=2019-09-29-111637-000>

Source Analysis



When looking at the image above, try to ask yourself the following questions:

- What does the source description say?
- When was the photograph taken?
- What are the students doing?
- What are the soldiers doing?

Example questions for this cartoon

1. Explain the messages that are conveyed in the photograph with reference to the following: (1x2)
 - a) Members of the South African Defence Force (SADF)
 - b) Students
2. Comment on the usefulness of the evidence in the source for a historian researching the events that unfolded in Soweto on 16 June 1976. (1x2)

Answers

1.
 - a) The photograph shows the South African Defense Force (SADF) using methods of intimidation by showing the presence of police dogs and weapons.
 - b) The photographs show that the students are participating in a peaceful protest as they are not carrying any weapons and have their arms the air.
2.
 - The source is useful as it could show a historian what happened on 16 June 1976.
 - The photograph shows the historian that peaceful protestors were met by displays of intimidation.

***TIP:** Use the information that you can see. Try not to overthink the photograph – do not use information that you cannot see on the photograph (unless asked to use your own knowledge or other sources).*

For more example questions and answers, please refer to the South African Department of Basic Education [website](#) where you can find several past papers and memorandums of all NSC subjects.

References

1. Michael James, "Critical Use of Sources, (Uploaded: Unknown), (Accessed: 29 June 2020), Available at: <https://www.historyskills.com/>
2. The Department of Basic Education South Africa, "National Senior Certificate Examinations: History Paper 1," (May/June 2019), (Accessed: 22 May 2020), Available at <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/CD/2019%20June%20Exams/Non-Languages%20May-June%202019%20PDF/History/History%20P1%20May-June%202019%20Eng.pdf?ver=2019-05-31-150513-000>
3. The Department of Basic Education South Africa, "National Senior Certificate Examinations: History Paper 2," (May/June 2019), (Accessed: 23 May 2020), Available at <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/CD/2019%20June%20Exams/Non-Languages%20May-June%202019%20PDF/History/History%20P2%20May-June%202019%20Eng.pdf?ver=2019-06-04-080033-000>
4. The Department of Basic Education, "National Senior Certificate Examinations: History Paper 2 Addendum," (May/June 2019), (Accessed: 23 May 2020), Available at <https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/CD/2019%20June%20Exams/Non-Languages%20May-June%202019%20PDF/History/History%20P2%20May-June%202019%20Addendum%20Eng.pdf?ver=2019-06-04-075918-0>