Primary Source Analysis Worksheet
Photograph

This worksheet may be used to analyze photographs and to understand their meaning. Every photograph is unique. Fill out the sections that are relevant to the photograph you are analyzing.

Stage 1 – First Impressions

What type of photo is it?

☐ Family portrait
☐ Group photo
☐ Personal portrait
☐ Landscapes/Nature

☐ Urban photograph
☐ Photograph of an event
☐ Aerial photograph
☐ Other _____

What is your initial impression?
Describe your initial impression of the photograph. What do you see in the photo? From what period is it? What attracted your attention?

_____
_____

Describe the general characteristics of the photograph.
Refer to paper type, size, colours, borders, where it was taken? etc...

_____
_____

Stage 2 – Exploring the Details

List of items in the photograph
Create a list containing all of the items in the photograph.

Characters	Events	Background	Objects and buildings	Additional items

Main items in the photograph
Take a look at the photograph and choose the three most important items in your opinion. Describe these three items in detail.

1. _____
_____
2. _____
_____

1

3. _____
_____

Does the photograph contain texts in or around it?

Describe the texts, for example: title of the photograph, writing on the photograph, date, dedication, and more.
Pay attention to texts located on the rear of the photograph.

Stage 3 – Understanding the Meanings

What conclusions can be made from examining the details of the photograph?

Write down three conclusions that can be made from the details of the photograph.

1. _____
_____
2. _____
_____
3. _____
_____

What can be learned about the location and time period of the photograph?

_____
_____
_____

Give the photograph a Title_____

2

Stage 4 – Reflecting and Evaluating

What don't we know?

Write down three questions that come to mind while contemplating the photograph.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How do we receive a complete picture of reality?

What is lacking in order to receive answers to your questions, and a more complete picture of the reality
portrayed by the photograph? (information? documentation? other points of view? Maybe you have other ideas?

_____
_____
_____