

Documenting My Experiences #1: Creating a Primary Source

A primary source is a document, given through a first-hand narrative, that offers information about an event. Primary sources are a beneficial learning device because they offer raw information. Since these sources are original, provided by someone who experienced the event, they possess many emotions and can often be more intriguing.

I chose to present my primary source as a video because I feel that it further taps into those emotions that make primary sources so relevant. For my documentation purposes, a piece of text could not have portrayed the information as well as a video did. Throughout the course of the pandemic, much of the news I saw often highlighted stories from people of my generation. Although I too suffered losses such as my senior sports, prom, graduation ceremony and more, I wanted to highlight a different generation that was just as greatly impacted. My grandparents are the foundation of our family, and each loss that their children and grandchildren felt, was a huge loss to them as well. My grandparents often describe that the large majority of their purpose and happiness comes from their family. I tried to craft my questions and discussion chronologically to show the progression of the Covid-19 pandemic. My grandparents and I were able to dive into some information that was applicable to almost anyone during this time, but also some personal accounts of things our family experienced.

By seeing my grandparents faces, hearing the tone of their voice, and reading their body language, I hope that viewers are able to take a step into their shoes. There are a number of things that future researchers could learn from the document I created; one of which being the enormous mental toll the global pandemic has taken on

individuals everywhere. Our society has been faced with a moral dilemma. We must decide what sacrifices to make in our personal life to benefit the greater good. One positive thing that can be seen in my document is that, despite all the division and sorrow, people all over the world have made a commitment to protect others. It is with only good intentions that my grandparents (and many others) have made decisions such as continuing to wear masks, practice social distancing, communicate mostly by phone, and limit their time in public areas where others are at a higher risk. Another big takeaway from my primary source is the idea of faith. No matter what an individual chooses to believe in during this time, we all believe in something. My grandparents highlighted how their spiritual faith, and also their faith in humanity, keep them hopeful and somewhat sane during these difficult times. The same can be said about harboring faith in a vaccine in the (hopefully) near future. Through all of the trials the last nine months have brought, everyone is simply doing the best they can.

Sorrow, faith, and perseverance are common ideas between my primary source and primary sources we have analyzed during this class. The sources shown to us in class were displayed in a number of unique ways such as images, written documents, and other narrative devices. Sources that I dove into during this course provided a sense of balance between education and emotion, and I strove to exemplify this same balance during my interview. I hope that my video primary source will help future historians piece together the happenings of this event, just as I have learned to do.