

Searching for material

You've decided on the subject of your research project. Now you must find the material that will provide the basis for your research. Historians call such material "sources." In the study of history, anything that can be consulted about the past counts as a "source." As long as it helps you answer the questions that you pose of the past, almost anything can be an objective source. So you decide what a source is for you. The following list of possible sources is therefore only a suggestion and makes no claim to be complete.

What are some sources?

- Books and literature
- Lexicons
- Letters
- Diaries
- Statistics
- Documents
- Newspapers
- Films
- Photographs
- Caricatures
- Television shows
- Conversations with eyewitnesses
- Radio programs
- Objects

Sources



Where does one find sources?

Sources can be found in different places:

- **Libraries** collect books and periodicals (see Work Sheet “Libraries”).
- In **archives** one finds unpublished textual sources (e.g., documents, letters, etc.), pictures (family trees, maps, drawings, photos, posters, postcards) or films and other data (see Work Sheet “Searching for sources in archives”).
- **Museums** collect and safeguard objects, especially from the past.
- The **Internet** also contains possible sources. The variety is great: from scientific texts to pictures to manuscripts (see Work Sheet “Internet”).
- On **sightseeing** or **city tours**, one can discover original object sources. Personal documents like letters, diaries or photos can be found in your own **family**.
- **Interviews** with eyewitnesses are an example of how you as a researcher can create a source yourself – namely, the conversation with your interview partner (see Work Sheet “Interviews with eyewitnesses”).

**Where to find
sources**