# Source Evaluation Questions and Process for Social Studies

Crosswalk with College Board’s Advanced Placement SOAPSTONE Document Analysis Method

## When examining a single source:

1. **Consider:**
   - **Type**
   - **Origin**
   - **Authority**
   - **Context**

2. **Read the document closely**

3. **Identify information from the source that helps answer the inquiry question**

4. **Assess the credibility of the source**

## SOAPSTONE* vs. MSDE Skill

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| No Parallel to MSDE Skill | Type | Analyzing a source to understand its layout and the type of evidence being analyzed. | o What type of document is this (graph/political cartoon/news article, etc.)?  
   o Is it a primary or secondary source? |
| Speaker | Origin | Analyzing a source to determine basic information about its creation. | o When was this source created?  
   o Where was this source created?  
   o Who created this source? |
| Speaker | Authority | Analyzing a source to understand who created it, why it was created, and how those factors may impact the credibility of the information provided. | o What do we know about the author’s perspective and how might it impact the information provided by the source?  
   o What was the intended audience for this source (public, private, political, etc.) and how might it impact the information provided by the source?  
   o Why the source was created (to inform, to persuade, etc.) and how might this impact the information the source provides? |
| Occasion | Context | Contextualizing a source places it in the time period it was created to determine how events during that time may have influenced the information provided. | o What else was going on at the time the source was created?  
   o How might the events of this time period impact the information provided by the source? |
| No parallel to MSDE skill | Credibility | Determining if the source is relevant to the question being researched and if the information provided should be trusted or believed. | o Have you reviewed the authority, origin, type, context, and corroborative value of the source? If so, do any of these raise questions about the credibility of the source?  
   o Is the information contained in the source relevant to the question being researched? |

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*Note: SOAPSTONE is a mnemonic for analyzing a document: S = Speaker, O = Origin, A = Authority, P = Purpose, C = Context, E = Event*
When comparing multiple sources, consider:

- Type
- Origin
- Authority
- Context

Read the document closely. Identify information from the source that helps answer the inquiry question. Assess the credibility of the source.

**Corroboration**

Consider:

- Type
- Origin
- Authority
- Context

Read the document closely. Identify information from the source that helps answer the inquiry question. Assess the credibility of the source.

### SOAPSTONE* and MSDE Skill

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| No Parallel to MSDE Skill | Corroboration | Comparing the information provided by the original source with a variety of other sources to determine if the sources contradict or support one another. | o What do other pieces of evidence say when compared to the first source?  
 o Am I finding the same information everywhere? If yes, why might that be and if no, why not?  
 o Am I finding different versions of the story? If yes, why might that be and if no, why not?  
 o Can I build an argument in response to my claim that is supported by multiple pieces of evidence? |

* Adapted from Advanced Placement SOAPSTONE. Found at: [https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/soapstone-strategy-reading-and-writing](https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/soapstone-strategy-reading-and-writing)