

# How to Use the Digital History Reader

## Evidence

The Evidence section is the key part of each module. Historians define "primary sources" as materials produced at the time of and/or by the people involved in a particular historical event. Primary sources enable you to think about history in terms of the images, sounds, words, and actions surrounding those engaged in the processes or events under investigation. While no set of primary sources can faithfully reconstruct a moment in the past, the materials provided in the Evidence section of each module should allow you to imagine what it was like to live in the period and to evaluate how the actions and intentions of the people involved shaped greater historical processes. The historical question or questions defined in the Introduction and the background knowledge gained from the Context should influence your interpretation of the materials presented in the Evidence section. Approach the materials in the order in which they are presented and let the document explanations and questions to consider guide your analysis.

## Types of Evidence

Click on the links provided within the evidence descriptions below to learn more about the evidence types and to gain useful strategies for reading and interpreting them.

Some of the evidence consists of written material, such as letters, diaries, or newspaper articles, and will be identified by the A symbol.



Some of the evidence will be images, such as photographs, charts or graphs, or political cartoons, and will be identified by the eye symbol.



Some of the evidence will contain media, such as Flash or QuickTime movies. Film evidence is represented by the filmstrip symbol at right.

