

• History is an Argument About the Past •



Examine Source Information

- » Who wrote or created it? For whom? Why?
- » When and where did it appear?
- » How was it used?
- » Where was the source discovered?

Analyze Primary Sources

- » **Texts:** Consider the kind of source, tone, and word choice.
- » **Images:** Look at each section separately and as a whole.
- » **Music & Film:** Listen or watch several times. What do you see & hear?
- » **Objects:** What can you tell about how they were made? How they were used?
- » **Data:** Look for patterns and ask how the data was collected.

How do we know what we know about the past?

Read Multiple Accounts & Perspectives

After examining one source, ask where else you could look to learn about this topic or event. Then compare multiple sources. Where do the sources agree? Disagree? If they tell different stories, why might that be?

Use Evidence to Support Claims

When making a historical argument, always use evidence to support your claims.

Understand Historical Context

Consider the historical time and events, paying close attention to when something happened and where it took place. What else was happening at this time? What happened before and after this moment? Why does it matter where it happened?

Primary sources are materials created in the past by people living at the time, including photographs, paintings, documents, advertisements, music, films, and objects.

Secondary sources are writings by historians and others who use available sources to interpret the past. They provide analysis and summary, placing events, people, and evidence in historical context and asking questions about their meaning and significance.

Ask Questions!
Read, Analyze, Write!
Think Historically!

FOR MORE RESOURCES, VISIT teachinghistory.org

Doing History is Like Solving a Mystery!

. What did kids do in the 1850s? .

What did kids do all day? Go to school? Work on farms? Work in factories?

What kinds of toys did kids play with in 1850?

What did they wear?

How would a child's life have been different if he or she was a young slave? An immigrant? A child in a city? On the Oregon Trail?

Use these clues to ask and answer good questions...

Examine your primary sources carefully!
Ask questions and take notes.

Person ▶

Who are you?
What do you do all day?

Object ▶

When were you created?
Why were you created?
Who created you? Who used you?
How?

Text ▶

Who wrote you? Why?
Who read you? Where were you discovered?

Image ▶

Who or what do you show?
Who created you? Who saw you?

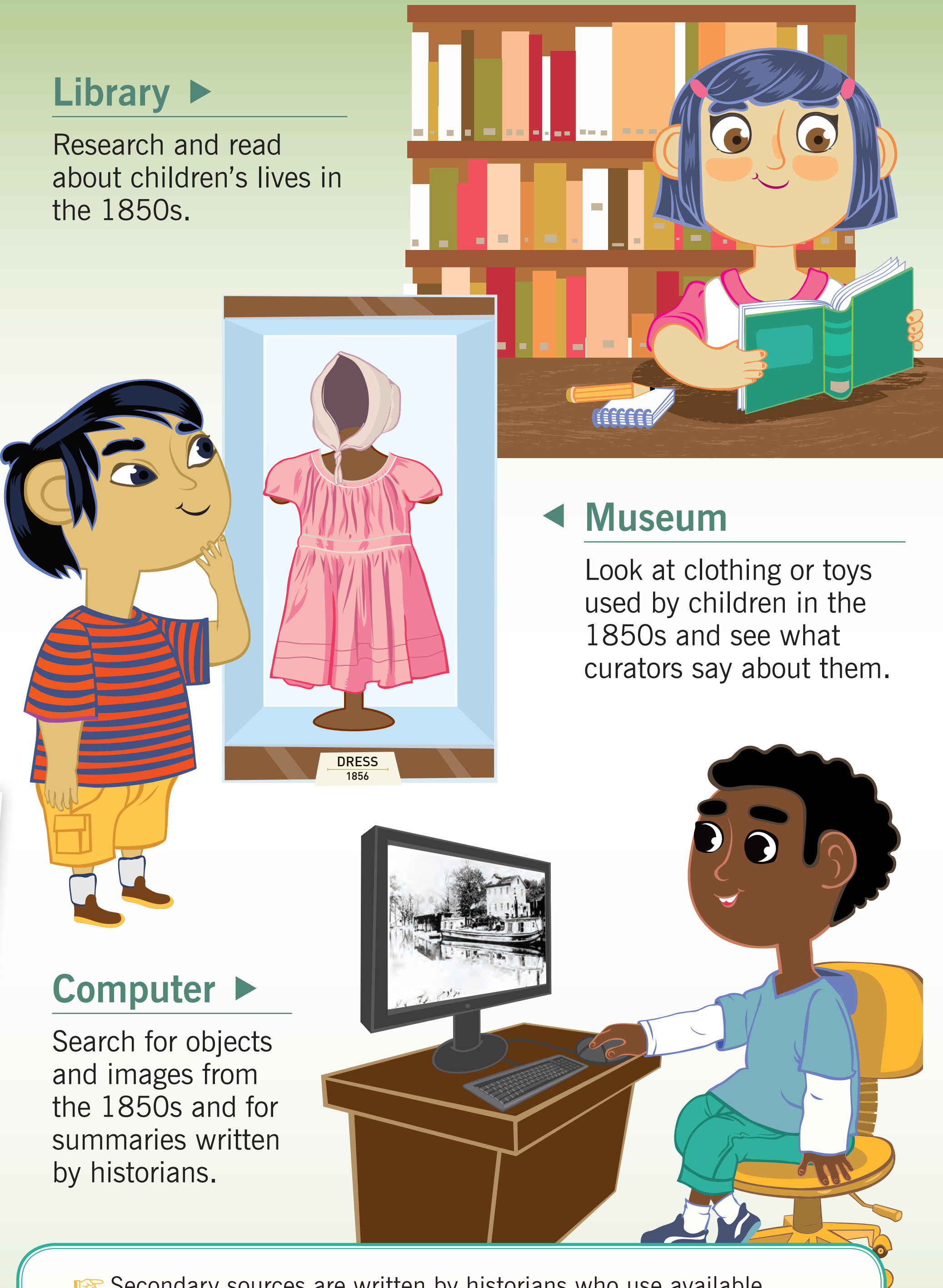


Primary sources give us many clues about the past. They are the evidence—such as letters, newspapers, drawings, photographs, tools, or clothes—from the time you are investigating.

Keep looking for more clues!
Ask questions of all of your sources.

Library ▶

Research and read about children's lives in the 1850s.



◀ Museum

Look at clothing or toys used by children in the 1850s and see what curators say about them.

Computer ▶

Search for objects and images from the 1850s and for summaries written by historians.

Secondary sources are written by historians who use available materials, such as primary sources and other secondary sources, to interpret the past. They provide analysis, summary of historic moments, and change over time.

Now put your clues together. Use the evidence you gathered from your primary and secondary sources to solve the mystery!