

Name: _____

Date: _____

Unit 2: Assignment 2.2: Using the Evidence

Interpreting different sources of information is essential to understanding and interpreting history. Analyzing sources also allows students to practice important critical thinking skills. In History 10, 20 and 30, students explore the question of the reliability of primary and secondary sources. No single source tells the whole truth about what happened in the past. Sometimes a source is influenced by the creator's point of view presenting a distorted or limited picture of the past. This does not necessarily mean such a source is wrong or that it is not useful; it might tell you something that the author or creator did not intend. However, in order to arrive at a balanced view it's necessary to consult more than one source of information on a particular historical event or personality.

Compare and Contrast

Look at Figure 4-21 on page 111. This photograph was taken by the Department of National Defense that Prime Minister Bennett assigned to run the relief camps. Now read the following quotation describing the camps from page 104 of the *Think History* text book.

In addition to relief payments and soup kitchens, Bennett created a national network of relief camps for single men in an attempt to provide relief from the Depression. Work camps were usually located deep in the woods, so the men were completely isolated. Men worked on projects such as building roads, clearing land, and digging drainage ditches. They were paid \$0.20 a day and given room and board. The food was terrible, and the bunks were often bug-infested. More than 170,000 men spent time in these camps.

Look again at photograph. The photograph appears to paint the relief camps in a more favorable light than the *Think History* text. This suggests the photograph might have been staged by the Department of National Defense.

Investigation Questions

1. Why would the Department of National Defense misrepresent what life was actually like at the relief camps?
2. What conclusions can you make about the reliability of this photograph (Figure 4-21)?
3. How might the photograph be useful if you were trying to use it to answer questions about the relief camps?
4. Compare this photograph (Figure 4-21 on page 111) with the cover of the Relief Camp Workers' newsletter (Figure 4-12 on page 104). Which source would you consider the most trustworthy? Explain.