

How Historians Qualify Claims

Qualify a historical claim by naming what the source's purpose and perspective allow it to establish.

5 min preparation | Science, Maths and Humanities

Before the lesson

Choose a source with known creator, audience, date and purpose.

Teach it in four steps

1. Qualify a historical claim by naming what the source's purpose and perspective allow it to establish.
2. Separate what the source states from what the reader infers.
3. Use a specific detail to support an interpretation.
4. Name a limit and identify what another source could clarify.

Worked example: How Historians Qualify Claims

A recruiting poster provides evidence of the message promoted by its creators. Qualify the interpretation: "The poster promotes support, but this source alone cannot show how widely the message was accepted."

Teacher prompt: "What can this source establish, and what needs another source?"

Check understanding

Ask for one supported claim and one claim requiring additional evidence.

Fade the support

Remove the context grid once learners can ask the source questions independently.

Adapt it across subjects

Science: evaluate what a measurement can establish. English: distinguish a narrator's account from an author's intention.

Adjust the language support

A1-A2 access: keep the subject goal; use visuals, a small word bank, pointing or drawing and partner rehearsal. Use a home language to establish meaning where helpful.

B1-B2 extension: ask for fuller explanations, precise subject vocabulary and qualifications. Reduce sentence openings when learners can organise the response independently.

These are starting points, not placement rules. Judge support from the learner's response to this task; proficiency can differ across skills.