Bellringer

Answer “Evaluating Sources” worksheet on your own paper.

Be sure to explain WHY you would choose each source. Do not ignore the “Historical Question”!
Learning Objective

SWBAT **discuss** the ongoing controversies and debates in the study of **pre-Columbian America** and **examine** the research methodologies used by historians.
Evaluating Sources

#1?
Evaluating Sources

#1 – Source 2

Historians base their accounts on multiple primary and secondary documents & extensive research
Evaluating Sources

#2 ?
Evaluating Sources

#2 – Source 1

Audience shapes the stories we tell.
How accurate are oral histories?
How valuable are oral histories?
Evaluating Sources

#3 ?
Evaluating Sources

#3 – Source 2

Human memory is notoriously unreliable. A map is technically an “objective” source.
Evaluating Sources

#4 ?
Evaluating Sources

#4 – Source 2

Any government film created in 1942 to explain internment would be propaganda.
Evaluating Sources

#5 ?
Evaluating Sources

#5 – Source 1

Sworn testimony is strong evidence, although it can be corrupted by lying, coercion, and the shakiness of human memory.
Evaluating Sources

#6 ?
Evaluating Sources

#6 – *Neither!*

Textbooks from the 1980s overlooked or neglected American Indian experiences. A newspaper from 1876 does not have the hindsight of later sources or would likely be biased in favor of the federal government.
Historical Methodology
What is history?

History is a dynamic, contested, evidence-based discipline that involves an exciting engagement with the past.

...It is also an interpretive discipline, allowing opportunity for engagement with multiple perspectives and a plurality of opinions.

Studying history develops an understanding of the past, which leads to a deeper understanding of the nature of humans and of the world today.

(Adapted from IB History Guide)
Historical Methodology

– Ways by which historians use primary sources and other evidence to research and write about the past
Historical Research

Includes:
1. Gathering evidence regarding the past
2. Evaluating that evidence within the scope of the period under study
3. Examining how that evidence contributes to our understanding of that period
Historical Interpretation

– Historians use various approaches in their writing (historiography)
– "History" is not "What happened in the past" or even "The surviving evidence of what happened in the past". It means "What historians choose to interpret from the surviving evidence of the past"
– This means we should critically examine each secondary source we use in our research
Scientific Method
1. Question
2. Hypothesize
3. Experiment
4. Observe and Record
5. Analyze
6. Share Results

Historical Method
1. Question
2. Hypothesize
3. Gather Evidence
4. Evaluate Sources
5. Analyze
6. Share Results/
Defend an Argument
What is source evaluation?

Consideration of a source’s
- **Origin** (Who? Where? When? What?)
- **Purpose** (Why was it created?)
- **Value** (Usefulness to answering the research question)
- and **Limitations** (Where does that usefulness end?)
- **Relevance** to the research question
  (OPVL)
Texts MUST be critically examined

– What if two sources disagree?
  – Can the information be **corroborated** by other sources?
– Which source has the most “authority”?
  – Expert, eyewitness, etc.
– How **reliable** is this information?
Key concepts

- Change
- Continuity
- Causation
- Consequence
- Significance
- Perspectives
History is a dynamic, contested, evidence-based discipline
Example: Many unanswered questions remain in the study of pre-Columbian American societies.
How were the Americas first settled?

What kind of evidence is used to support each theory?

Is there any contradictory evidence?

What theory do you think is most likely based on this chart? Why?
Who were the first explorers of the Americas?

- What types of evidence are considered high quality? Why?
- What types of evidence are considered low quality? Why?
- Which of the explorations on the chart do you think are the most likely to have occurred?
- Which of the explorations on the chart do you think are the least likely to have occurred?
- What other types of evidence can you look for to corroborate the evidence on the chart?