

Primary Document Analysis

Introduction: The year of 1876 in America was a year steeped in history. It was not only the country's 100th birthday, but a year marked by social strife and change. Many events were occurring including the Presidential Election of 1876, the end of Reconstruction, the Panic of 1873, the women's rights movement, immigration issues, the beginning of industrialization, and Western expansion. When the nation celebrated its 100th birthday a large exhibit in Philadelphia was created to show the greatness of America.

Directions: Read the primary source [The Centennial Exposition Guide](#) from the Philadelphia Library. Make sure you zoom in on the map at the beginning of the source. As you are reading, categorize the buildings and monuments at the Centennial Exhibit. Look for names of states, people, statues/monuments, countries, and areas of interest (art, science, history, etc.) and place them under the correct column. If you come across a building that you think is important, but does not fit any category, place it in the 'Other' section. The first row is completed with examples from the primary document.

[illegible]

Directions: After completing the chart, answer the following question.

1) Primary Document Quick Analysis

- a) Who wrote/sponsored the booklet?
- b) Why was it created?
- c) Who was the intended audience?
- d) How would somebody have used the document?

2) Review your answer in the 'Interest' column. Why do you think the United States chose to include these interests? Refer back to the primary source and read the sections about the buildings to gain a better understanding.

3) Who/What was not represented at the Centennial Exhibition that you think should have been? List people, ethnic or racial groups, countries, interests, etc.

4) Did the names or descriptions of any of the exhibit buildings seem discriminatory, political, or just made you cringe? If so, list them below and explain why they are an issue or how they are political.