What are Primary Sources?

A primary source is a document or physical object which was written or created during the time under study.

Photos
When was the photo taken? Who is in the photo? What else is in the image?

Clothing
Functional 3-D items such as clothing and other everyday goods convey information about the lives of people of the past.

Voice Recordings
Oral histories can provide important information for historians.

Music
Sheet music, instruments, sound recordings, and music scores.

Newspapers
Newspapers can be used as both primary and secondary sources.

Diaries
Move beyond the textbook and help students relate their own experiences to those of the people of the past.

Drawings
Drawings can provide insight into how people see themselves and the world around them.

Maps
Maps, created in particular cultural contexts, may reveal misperceptions or misrepresentations.

Visit digital.utsa.edu for great primary sources!