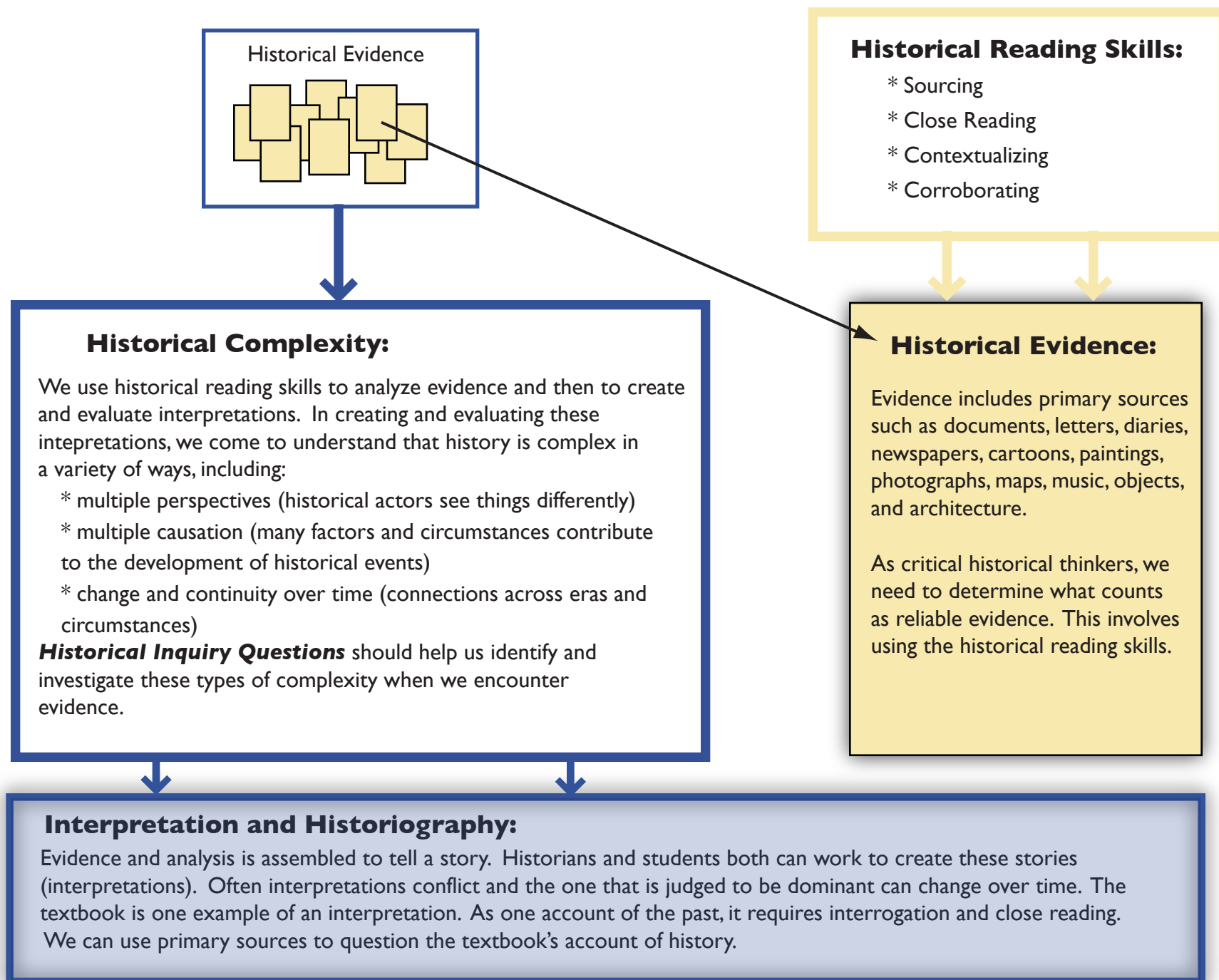


# A Model of Historical Thinking



# Historical Reading Skills

Reading historical documents requires students to use different skills than those they might use when simply reading a textbook for information. In reading primary sources, students need to interact with the text, ask questions, and consider the context in which the source was written. While these skills listed below are frequently used simultaneously during reading, encouraging students to focus on each skill individually facilitates learning.

Historical Reading Skill	Explanation	Examples of Questions that Facilitate this Skill
<b>Sourcing</b>	Think about who produced this document and use that to understand the viewpoint and reliability of the document. Direct students to think about the author, the author's intentions, and the genre/purpose of the text.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who is the author? What judgments can we make about him/her?</li> <li>2. What kind of source is it and where did it appear?</li> <li>3. What can we learn about the author's point of view, motives or intentions?</li> <li>4. Is the author in a position to be a good reporter about the event? Why or why not?</li> <li>5. Is the account believable? Why or Why not?</li> </ol>
<b>Close Reading</b>	Determine what the text says and how it says it. This reading requires students to slow down and pay attention to the details of what they are reading. Students should acquire a basic understanding of the text and what kind of language is being used.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What does the text say? What topics are included?</li> <li>2. Who are the people in the document?</li> <li>3. What words do you notice?</li> <li>4. What is the overall tone or message of the document?</li> <li>5. If an image: what symbols, colors, etc. are used?</li> </ol>
<b>Contextualizing</b>	Focus on when and where the historical events took place. Readers use contextual information to understand the behavior or decisions of historical actors, the setting in which events took place, the reliability of a document, and the causes of historical events.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When was the document written?</li> <li>2. When did the events discussed in the document take place?</li> <li>3. What relevant or significant events came before or after?</li> <li>4. Why did the author write this? For what occasion?</li> <li>5. Who was the audience? How did the audience regard the author?</li> <li>6. What was the climate of opinion at the time of this writing?</li> </ol>
<b>Corroborating</b>	Ask questions about important details across multiple sources to determine points of agreement and disagreement. Prompt students to go back and forth between documents and read carefully. Direct students to look for consistency and discrepancy in documents to develop an understanding of the past.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where do the texts agree with each other? Where do they disagree?</li> <li>2. What viewpoints does each document reflect?</li> <li>3. How are the texts similar and different in style (word choice, language, audience?)</li> <li>4. What documents seem more reliable or trustworthy? Why?</li> <li>5. What can you know about the topic, given these various accounts?</li> </ol>