**Analyzing Primary Sources on Boston History: Choose Your Own Adventure**

Your Name:

Your Professor and Course Number:

**Activity Description:** In this activity, you will analyze digital primary source items from the [University Archives and Special Collections department](https://openarchives.umb.edu/). You will first select one item that documents Boston history. You will observe, reflect upon, and question your item. You will draft a research question drawing from that item. You will then select two additional related items and explore the ways in which those items alter your research question and your understanding of Boston history.

**Part 1.** Select ***one item*** that documents some aspect of Boston history from any of the following digital collections:

[Boston Urban Gardeners Photographs](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll31)

[Documenting the UMass Boston Community’s Response to COVID-19](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/covid19)

[Massachusetts Hip-Hop Archive: Lecco’s Lemma Collection](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll30)

[Massachusetts Rock Against Racism Collection](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll41)

[Sumner Tunnel (Boston) Construction Photographs](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll13)

[Thompson Island Collection](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll3)

[UMass Boston Historic Documents](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll22)

[UMass Boston Memories – Oral History Collections](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll23)

[W. Arthur Garrity, Jr. Chambers Papers on the Boston Schools Desegregation Case](https://openarchives.umb.edu/digital/collection/p15774coll33)

Enter the title of the digital collection that you chose:

Enter the URL for your item:

**Part 2.** OBSERVE your item.

1. Describe your item in your own words.
2. What do you notice first?
3. What do you notice that you didn’t expect?

**Part 3.** REFLECT on your item.

1. Where do you think this item came from?
2. Why do you think someone created this item?
3. What do you think was happening when this item was created?
4. Who do you think was the audience for this item?
5. Why do you think this item is important?
6. What can you learn from examining this item?

**Part 4.** QUESTION your item. Ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What questions do you have about…

1. Who?

1. What?
2. When?
3. Where?
4. Why?
5. How?

 **Part 5.** Why did you choose this item? How does this item reflect the way that others will see the history of Boston?

 **Part 6.** Using your item as a starting point, draft a research question related to the history of Boston:

**Part 7.** Choose ***two additional items***from your digital collection that relate to your first item.

1. Enter the URL for your second item:
2. Enter the URL for your third item:

**Part 8.** COMPARE your three items.

1. How do your three items relate to each other?
2. How are your three items different from each other?
3. How do the additional items that you chose alter your research question (if at all)?

**Part 9.** How does your chosen set of three primary sources support or challenge your understanding of Boston history?