

# THE HISTORY OF MONEY:

## *Numismatics as a Reflection of Society*

### Creating Prepared Students in Social Studies (CO standards):

Understand the nature of historical knowledge as a process of inquiry that examines and analyzes how history is viewed, constructed, and interpreted

#### I Can Statements:

I can use primary sources to make predictions about the past

I can analyze primary sources to understand how past societies constructed knowledge and meaning

I can identify the origin, purpose, content, values, and limitations of a source

Grade Level: 7-10

#### Essential Question:

What evidence can historians gather from primary sources?

#### Materials and Resources:

Internet Access to visit embedded links:

[bit.ly/history-of-money-lesson](https://bit.ly/history-of-money-lesson)



## Learning Plan

### 1. ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:

In small groups, ask students to define primary sources and create a list of as many primary sources they can think of

- Consider giving students a specific ancient society, like Ancient Egypt or Ancient Rome to use as the basis for their list. For example, what primary sources might exist from Ancient Rome?

Briefly discuss how coins and other items used as money can serve as primary sources



Brought to you by the Education Department of the American Numismatic Association. Check out other lesson plans at

[MONEY.ORG/TEACHER-TOOLS](https://money.org/teacher-tools)

## 2. ACCESS NEW INFORMATION

Introduce and/or remind the students of the definition of primary sources

Introduce the source evaluation technique called OPCVL

- OPCVL asks students to consider the origin, purpose, content, values, and limitations of a source. [Click this link](#) to learn more about OPCVL

**Put students in groups** (*it is recommended that students are allowed to choose*). **Each group will focus on the different messages that can be deciphered from the coins of different societies.**

- **Group 1** [Lydia and the First Coins](#)
- **Group 2** [Greek Coinage](#)
- **Group 3** [Roman Coinage](#)
- **Group 4** [Indian Coinage](#)

**Using the links above, have each group explore the case, the Learn More section, and the Introduction panel for their related society. As they click through each item, have them discuss and write down the following** (*there are no right answers*):

- What images and/or words are on the coins (*content*)?
- How do the images and words visible on the coins represent the values of the society in which they were created (*purpose*)?
- What predictions can be made about the societies based on the coins as primary sources?

**Discuss the findings as a whole class, making a list of similarities and differences between societies**

## 3. ASSESS LEARNING

**Still in groups, have students pick one coin from their society. Have them write an OPCVL about that coin in particular. In other words, have them explore the origin, the purpose, the content, the values, and the limitations of that coin as a primary source. It is okay for students to make assumptions and predictions about the purpose**

**As individuals, have students examine the case of Modern US Coinage. Students should pick one coin that interests them. They should write a brief explanation answering the following questions:**

- How does the selected coin represent American society at the time it was minted?
- If someone were to find this coin hundreds of years from now, what could they learn about American society?



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