

What Can Sources Teach Us?

Dear Caregiver or Educator,

We are delighted to share standards-based lessons featuring bridge-builder Mervyn M. Dymally with you and your students. We invite you to use lessons like *What Can Sources Teach Us?* for learning in the classroom or at home.

What Can Sources Teach Us? was inspired by an Autry Classroom Curators (ACC) partnership with California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA). Created by the Autry's Education department, ACC is a project-based learning program for kindergarten through college educators and students. *What Can Sources Teach Us?* is about public educator, politician, and Cal State LA alumnus Mervyn M. Dymally (1926-2012). This lesson was based on an online exhibition called *Mervyn M. Dymally: The Bridge-Builder of Los Angeles*. Cal State LA students and staff including Dr. Dawn A. Dennis (Faculty, the Department of History), Azalea Camacho (Head of Special Collections and Archives), and Kendall Faulkner (Arts & Humanities Librarian) created the online exhibition. Dr. Dennis shared her inspiration for the online exhibition as follows:

"It all started with a brick... In early 2019, I met with Azalea Camacho and noticed this brick encased in glass sitting on top of an archival box. What is THIS piece of history, I asked. Azalea confirmed that the brick (from 1965) and the collection of materials (nearly 300 boxes of correspondence, photos, and ephemera called the Dymally papers) were donated by Mervyn M. Dymally. That same day, Azalea and I began designing a collaborative project that would engage undergraduate students in several history courses. We developed a year-long, project-based, active-learning experience that moved beyond the lectern and out of the classroom through teaching history, archival practice, and primary source analysis to first-generation undergraduate students. We introduced students to the college archives early in their academic career to foster inquiry and growth, develop research and informational literacy skills, and to build community. Azalea and I taught the students how to process correspondence and photographs from the Dymally papers. A total of 63 boxes were processed by students. Students also contributed to the building of the online exhibition which opened on March 17, 2021. The online exhibition opening featured a keynote speech by Congresswoman Judy Chu and historical reflections from Dr. Lynn V. Dymally (Dymally's daughter). The online exhibition focuses on the power of story by amplifying the work of Dymally and his collaboration with various communities to strengthen our relationship to underserved communities that are not adequately represented in educational curriculum and institutional archives. To learn more about Mervyn M. Dymally, please visit the online exhibition at <https://calstatela-exhibits.libraryhost.com/exhibits/show/mervyn-m--dymally-bridgebuilde>."

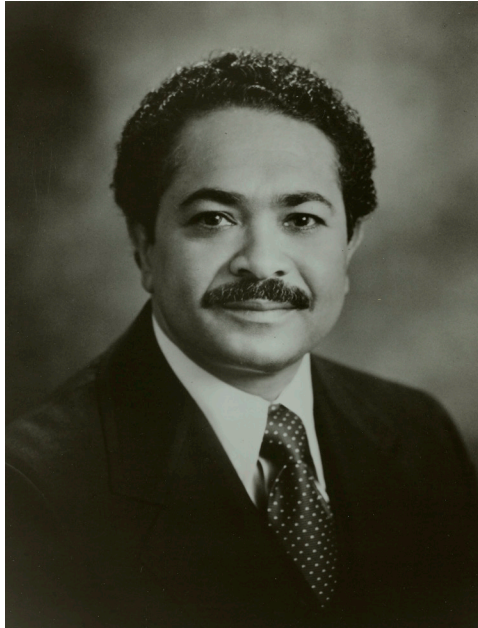
The Autry's Education department provided support for the *Mervyn M. Dymally: The Bridge-Builder of Los Angeles* online exhibition by co-creating several K-12 standards-based lessons featuring Mervyn M. Dymally with Dr. Dennis, Ms. Camacho, and Ms. Faulkner. We encourage you to share *What Can Sources Teach Us?* with students in third through fifth grades. For the most recent educational resources on Mervyn M. Dymally, please check out the Autry Museum's Education webpage at <https://theautry.org/education/collaborative-projects/project-mervyn-m-dymally> or the online exhibition webpage at <https://calstatela-exhibits.libraryhost.com/exhibits/show/mervyn-m--dymally-bridgebuilde>.

Sincerely,

Sarah S. Wilson
Senior Director of Education and Museum Learning



What Can Sources Teach Us?



Mervyn M. Dymally

INTRODUCTION - Who was Mervyn M. Dymally (Die muh lee)? Mervyn was a very important person. He was born in 1926 on an island country in the Caribbean Sea called Trinidad and Tobago. When Mervyn was 19 years old, he moved to the United States of America. After moving, Mervyn lived and worked in the state of California for many years. Being an **activist**, a **politician**, and a teacher were some of the jobs that Mervyn had. Mervyn was one of the most important Black activists and politicians of his time. He helped all kinds of people through the work that he did during his lifetime. Mervyn lived to be 86 years old.

You can learn about different people such as Mervyn by looking at sources. One type of source is called a primary source. A primary source is a source that was made during the **time period** being studied. The photograph of Mervyn is an example of a primary source. Another type of source is a secondary source. A secondary source explains information about the past. The first paragraph that you read underneath the photograph of Mervyn is an example of a secondary source.

During this lesson, you will look at multiple sources. The sources in this lesson tell a story. After looking at the sources, you will answer the question: *What can sources teach us?*

Glossary

Activist: someone who takes part in activities to help change something

Politician: someone who is elected to work in government

Time period: the length of time (usually in days, weeks, months, or years) that includes a starting time and an ending time

What Can Sources Teach Us?

PART 1 - This photograph is a primary source. Learn more about the primary source below by looking closely at it. Then answer the questions about this primary source on the next page.



What Can Sources Teach Us?

PART 1 CONTINUED - After looking at the primary source (photograph) on the previous page, answer the questions in the chart below. Write your answers in the space provided or on a separate document.

PRIMARY SOURCE: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
A) What types of different people do you see in this photograph?
B) What do you see the people doing in this photograph?
C) What words do you see in this photograph?
D) What else do you see in this photograph?
E) When do you think this photograph was taken? Explain why you think this.
F) Photographs tell stories. What does this photograph tell a story about? Make a hypothesis about what story you think the photographer is trying to tell others through this photograph.
G) What questions do you have about this photograph?

Glossary

Hypothesis: educated guess

What Can Sources Teach Us?

PART 2 - Learn more about the primary source (photograph) in PART 1 by reading the secondary source below. Then answer the questions about the secondary source on the next page.

Secondary Source

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement was a **movement** in the United States for equal **rights** for African American people and other people of color. For a long time, Jim Crow Laws **denied** Black people equal rights. These **laws** were **racist** and **discriminated** against Black people. Jim Crow Laws were laws made by cities and states to **segregate** Black people from white people. These laws also limited Black people's rights including the right to vote.

Voting is an important right that people fight for. Voting gives people the opportunity to make choices. Voting also gives people the opportunity to have their voices heard. One of the ways that people fight for equal rights is by participating in marches. A march is an event in which people walk together to fight for or to **support** something.

An example of marches that took place during the Civil Rights Movement was the Selma to Montgomery Marches. Many people participated in these marches because they wanted African American people to be able to vote without anyone or anything trying to stop them. In March 1965, people started marching in Selma, Alabama. Even though some of the marchers were attacked, they never gave up. After several tries, thousands of marchers made it to Montgomery, Alabama on March 25, 1965.

Mervyn M. Dymally was a part of the Selma to Montgomery Marches. Mervyn participated in these marches because he believed that all people should be represented **accurately** and treated equally. The photograph that you looked at in PART 1 shows Mervyn with other people in Selma, Alabama in 1965. They were fighting for African Americans' right to vote.

Soon after the Selma to Montgomery Marches, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law on August 6, 1965. This law made it **illegal** to stop people from voting because of their **race**. People continue to fight for their voting rights today.

Glossary

Accurately: correctly

Denied: refused

Discriminated: to unfairly treat a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people

Illegal: something that is against the law

Laws: rules that a community creates for members to follow

Movement: when a group of people take action to change something

Race: one of the many groups that people are divided into based on their physical traits or ancestry

Racist: when someone or something discriminates based on race

Rights: power or privileges that people are supposed to have

Segregate: to separate a group of people from another group of people based on race

Support: stand up for someone or something

What Can Sources Teach Us?

PART 2 CONTINUED - After reading the secondary source on the previous page, answer the questions in the chart below. Write your answers in the space provided or on a separate document.

SECONDARY SOURCE: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	
A) What was the Civil Rights Movement? (Hint: You can find the answer in the first paragraph of the secondary source on the previous page.)	
B) What were the marches that took place during the Civil Rights Movement called? (Hint: You can find the answer in the third paragraph of the secondary source on the previous page.)	
C) Why did people participate in the marches from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery, Alabama? (Hint: You can find the answer in the third paragraph of the secondary source on the previous page.)	
D) Who is in the photograph? (Hint: You can find the answer in the fourth paragraph of the secondary source on the previous page.)	
E) Which city and state were these people in when the photograph was taken? (Hint: You can find the answer in the fourth paragraph of the secondary source on the previous page.)	
F) What year was the photograph of these people taken? (Hint: You can find the answer in the fourth paragraph of the secondary source on the previous page.)	
G) What story is the photographer telling others through this photograph? What are the people in the photograph doing? (Hint: You can find the answer in the fourth paragraph of the secondary source on the previous page.)	

What Can Sources Teach Us?

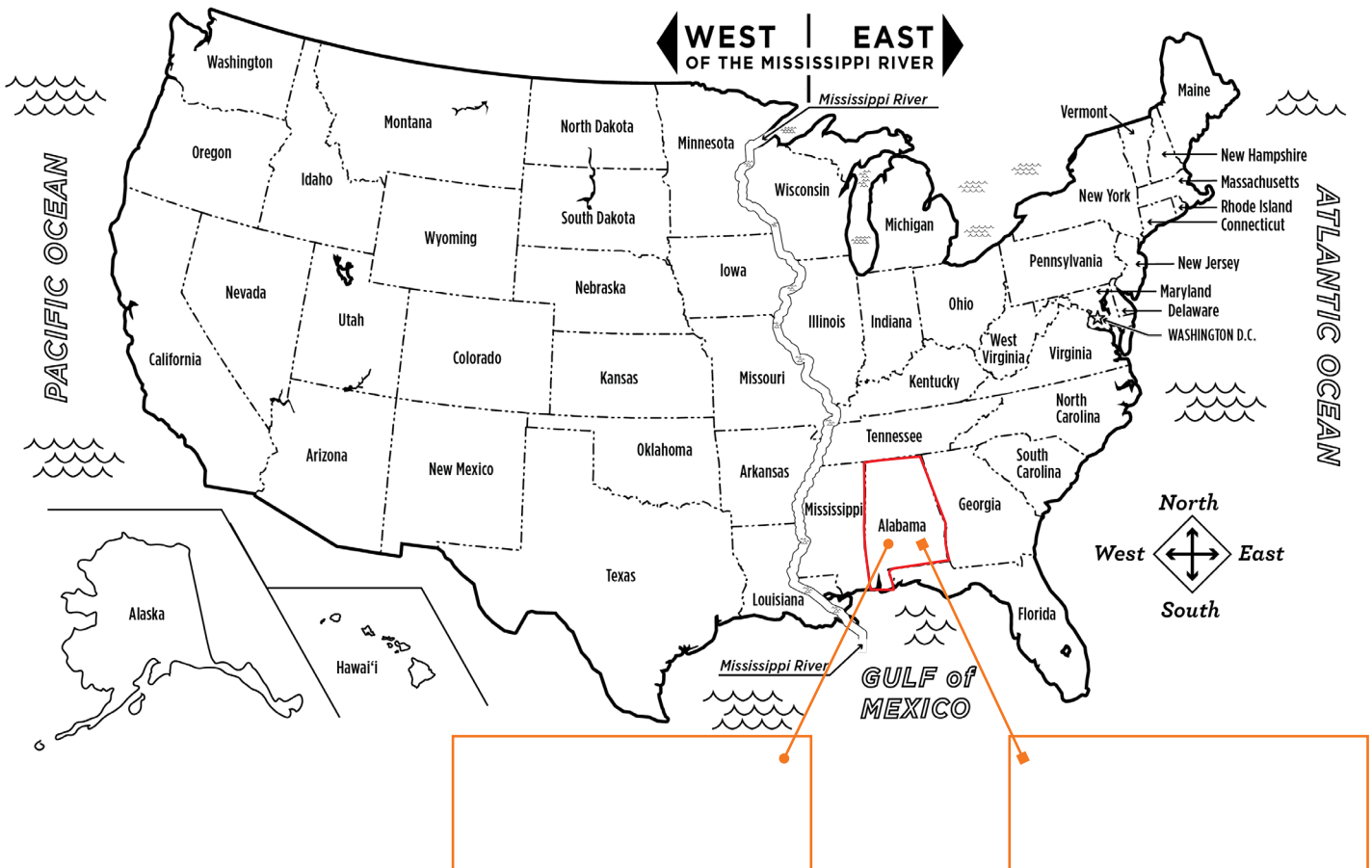
PART 3 - A map is another type of source. This map is a secondary source because it was created in the 2000s to show information from the 1900s. The map below shows the United States of America. Learn more about the location of the Selma to Montgomery Marches by completing the mapping activity below.

A) The Selma to Montgomery Marches took place in a state called Alabama. Find Alabama by looking for the state that is **outlined in red** on the map.

B) The Selma to Montgomery Marches started in a city called Selma. Selma is in Alabama. Find Selma by looking for the **orange circle** in Alabama. Then write Selma in the **blank box** that has an **orange circle** in it.

C) The Selma to Montgomery Marches ended in a city called Montgomery. Montgomery is the state **capital** of Alabama. Find Montgomery by looking for the **orange square** in Alabama. Then write Montgomery in the **blank box** that has an **orange square** in it.

D) Now show the 54-mile **route** that people marched during the Selma to Montgomery Marches on the map. Draw a line on the map between Selma (**orange circle**) and Montgomery (**orange square**) in the state of Alabama (**outlined in red**).



Glossary

Capital: a city that has the state government located in it

Route: the way that a person or a group of people go between different places

*Please note that the locations of Selma and Montgomery on this map are approximations.

What Can Sources Teach Us?

PART 4 - Think about what you have learned from the different sources you looked at during this lesson. Then answer the question: *What can sources teach us?* Write your answer in the space provided or on a separate document.

Sources can teach us about _____

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

What Can Sources Teach Us?

PART 5 - Sources tell stories about events, people, places, and time periods. Looking at multiple sources helps you learn about events, people, places, and time periods from different **perspectives**. Now it is your turn to share a primary source (photograph) and a secondary source that tells a story. First, find or take a photograph of a person that is (or of people that are) important to you.

PART 6 - After selecting a photograph, plan your secondary source before writing it by answering the questions in the chart below. Write detailed answers in the space provided or on a separate document.

SECONDARY SOURCE PLAN: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A) Who is in the photograph?

B) What is happening in the photograph?

C) Where was the photograph taken?

D) When was the photograph taken?

E) What else would you like people to know about this photograph?

F) Why is this person (or group of people) important to you?

Glossary

Perspectives: points of view

What Can Sources Teach Us?

PART 6 CONTINUED - Write a secondary source explaining information about the photograph you chose to share. Include the who, what, where, when, what else, and why from the previous page in your secondary source. Write your secondary source in the space provided or on a separate document. Please include a title.

Title: _____

This photograph is of (include who from the previous page) _____

This photograph shows (include what from the previous page) _____

This photograph was taken at (include where from the previous page) _____

This photograph was taken (include when from the previous page) _____

Something else that I would like people to know about this photograph is (include what else from the previous page) _____

This person (or group of people) is important to me because (include why from the previous page)

PART 7 - Share your primary source and your secondary source with a classmate, family member, friend, teacher, or someone else.

Resources

“Civil Rights Movement.” Anti-Defamation League, <https://www.adl.org/resources/background/civil-rights-movement>. Accessed August 21, 2023.

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