

SOURCING: AN IMPERIAL EDICT RESTRAINING OFFICIALS FROM EVIL

Purpose

Continue to develop your sourcing skills by analyzing a primary source document written by the Ming emperor Hongwu, in which the author attempts to influence the behavior of his subjects and officials. Assessing the point of view and intended audience of a source is essential to understanding how to evaluate the credibility of that source and the motives of its author. In your analysis, focus on the Audience and Point of View rows of the Sourcing Tool.

Process

1. Open and analyze [Sourcing Excerpts: An Imperial Edict Restraining Officials from Evil](#). As you read the documents, focus on completing the Audience and Point of View sections of the Sourcing Tool on the next page. Your teacher might have you work in a group, with each member of the group reading just one excerpt.

Note: Make sure you complete step 2, which follows the Sourcing Tool.

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Sourcing Tool

Process: Answer each of the questions below. If you are sourcing more than one document, provide responses for each.

Name of document and/or source:	
Author's name:	
Location and date source was written:	
H istorical context	What about the author's location may have influenced the source's location (for example, the location's geography, demography, or the region's political situation, religious influences, or industry)?
	What events might have influenced the source's creation?
	What other information helps you understand this source?
A udience	Who was the source created for (that is, was this written for anyone to read or was it private, for one specific person or group)?
	What were the readers of this source supposed to do or think once they read it?

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POV (Point of View)	Can you identify anything about the author that might explain why they wrote this? For example, does their economic class, occupation, religion, nationality, political group, ethnic group, or gender help explain why they wrote this?
Why (importance)	What is the main idea of the source?
	What parts of this document are most valuable and why?
	What are the limitations of this document? In other words, where does it fall short?

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2. Once you've completed the Audience and Point of View sections, respond to the following question in two to four sentences: *How did the Ming emperor attempt to maintain order and control of his empire?* Use information from your Sourcing Tool in your response.