

Name:

Date:

Contextualizing a Source- Practice

Directions:

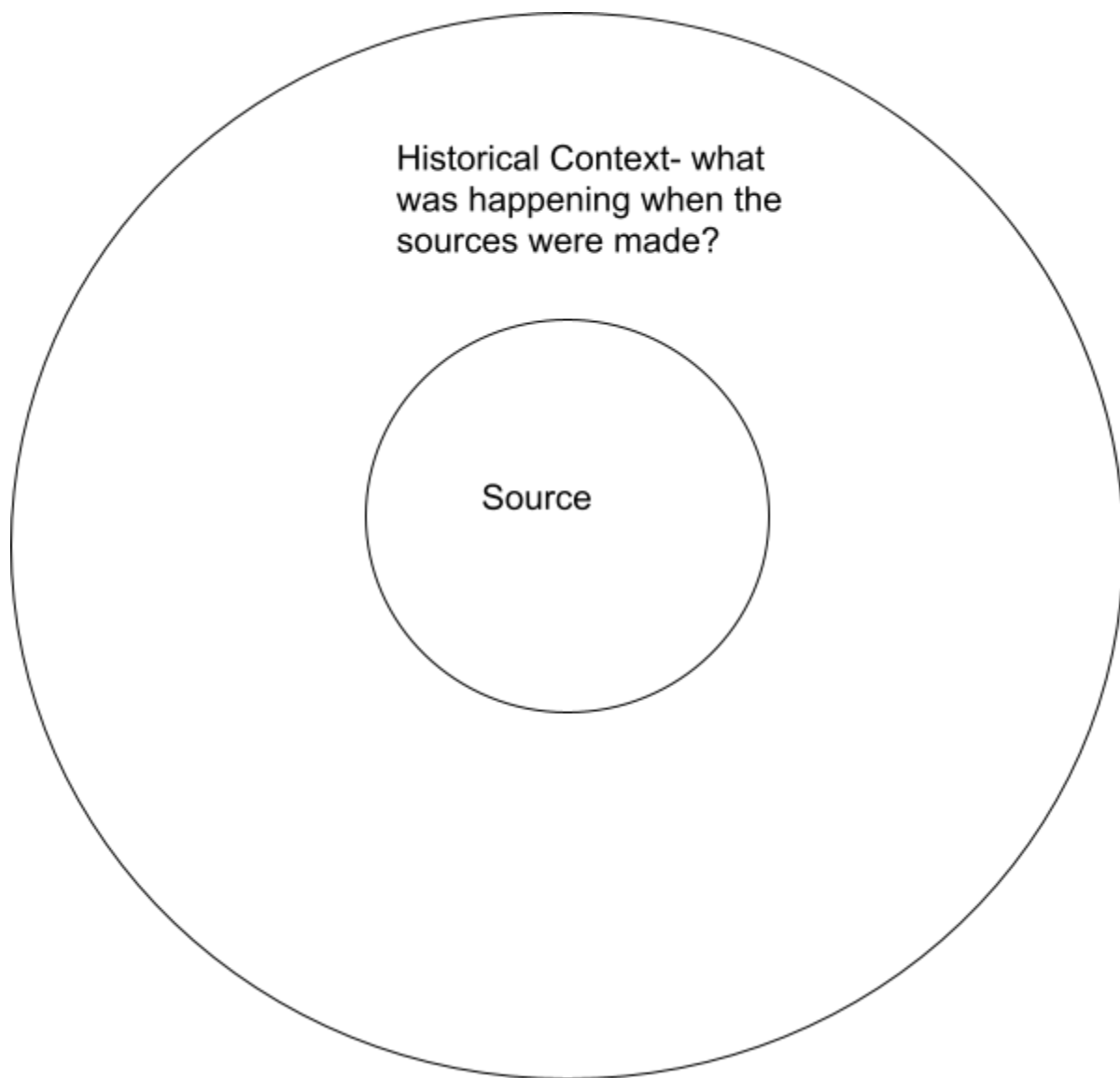
Read (or re-read) the source below. Use the information labelled “historical context” to fill in the graphic on the following page and explain why the source was made.

Source 3: “Nathaniel Mulliken’s Deposition”

Background: On April 25, 1775 Nathaniel Mulliken and 33 minutemen swore an oath and testified before three justices of the peace. These justices were colonists. This statement was made under oath- it was illegal to lie under oath. Additionally, each of the 34 minutemen is saying that they agree with the statement given below by Nathaniel Mulliken. The account was published and distributed all over Massachusetts by the pro-independence colonists.

Historical Context: Within four days of the aftermath of the battle, the pro-independence colonists had formed a group called the “Massachusetts Provincial Congress” and collected scores of sworn testimonies from militiamen and from British prisoners. When word leaked out a week after the battle that the British governor of Massachusetts was sending his official description of the battle to London, the Provincial Congress sent a packet of these detailed depositions, signed by over 100 participants in the events, on a faster ship. The documents were presented to a sympathetic official and printed by the London newspapers two weeks before Gage’s report arrived. Additionally, though more and more colonists began to favor independence, there was still a sizeable number of colonists who still feared separation from Great Britain, even after the battle.

We Nathaniel Mulliken, Philip Russell, (Followed by the names of 32 other men present on Lexington Green on April 19, 1775) . . . all of lawful age, and inhabitants of Lexington . . . do testify and declare, that on the nineteenth of April, about five o’clock in the morning, we proceeded towards the Green, and saw a large body of troops marching towards us. Some of our men were coming to the Green, and others had reached it, at which time, they began to disperse. While our backs were turned on the British troops, they fired on us, and a number of our men were instantly killed and wounded, not a gun was fired by any person in our company on the British soldiers to our knowledge before they fired on us, and continued firing until we had all made our escape.



Given what was happening at the time and place when the source was made, the author made this source because:
