



NAME _____

Read each source. Think about the questions below as you read and try to answer them.

Source 1: Document by Eunice Lyons Prescott

I live in [West Chesterfield], a small area . . . an hour ride from the heart of the big windy city. This section happens to be the only residential district in this vast city where people of our group have been able to watch their dreams turn into a reality. Previous to the development of this locality it was impossible to acquire a loan for a home due to the fact that Bankers claim that negroes allow their property to depreciate to such an extent that they are a bad investment but [during?] the [period?] with the F.H.A. [Federal Housing Authority] in full swing and so many homes being built for other groups a small [group?] of negroes with ideals the chief one being a home worked entirely toward this end and were successful. Here just let me say that I represent no group but am only writing for myself with of course the good will of the [community?] . . . I am of the opinion that better homes make better people and better people are at this time more than ever a necessity to our race [illegible] due to the fact that our money was very limited as we are people in very moderate circumstances and three children to rear and educate. There were many times during this fight that we felt that our dream was to no avail. We have a community here that I can truthfully say without boasting that we are proud of and when people from other communities drive through to gaze and comment on our homes we want them to know that they didn't just grow but they represent many years of thought planning, [illegible], and hard work.

--Eunice Lyons Prescott, date unknown

Close Reading Questions

What kind of text is this: a diary entry, a letter, a speech, or something else? Why do you think that?

Who wrote this? How do you know?



NAME _____

Where is West Chesterfield? How do you know? How could you find out more about this place?

Who does the author mean by “people of our group”? How do you know?

Why couldn't the people in this group buy houses?

How does the author feel about owning a house?

How could you find out approximately when this was written?



NAME _____

From the context of the text what do you think the Federal Housing Authority is? Do you need to know the exact purpose of this agency to understand the rest of the text?

Analysis Questions

Is this a primary or secondary source? How do you know?

What can you determine about the author of this source? How did you come to that conclusion?

What is the perspective of the author of this source?

What do you *not* know about the author? What questions do you have about her?



NAME _____

Does anything in this source surprise you?

What questions does this source raise? Where could you find answers to your questions?



NAME _____

Source 2: Journal by Lillian Gartz

Frankly, I think by next spring, if not sooner, all houses west of Parker's will be colored. . . . Miss McCarthy may stay to the end due to her advanced age. I also believe next May, Fred Jones will sell to colored and the Canersay's & Brown's will move. . . .

Friday, June 21, 1963

Well, the mystery of who bought the Young-Parker house has been solved as more or less expected, the blackies moved in today. It somehow gives me a squeamish feeling to be confronted with the actual fact of having them in our block. The question is what course to follow. How long before no whites will be renting here any more.

--Lillian Gartz, June 1963

Close Reading Questions

What kind of text is this: a diary entry, a letter, a speech, or something else? What makes you think so?

Who wrote it? How do you know?

What can you tell about the author from the source only?



NAME _____

When was this text written? How do you know?

What does the author think Miss McCarthy will do and why?

Who purchased the Young-Parker house? How does the author feel about this?

What does the author think will ultimately happen to the neighborhood?

How does the author feel about integration?

Analysis Questions

Is this a primary or secondary source? How do you know?



NAME _____

What can you determine about the author of this text? How did you come to that conclusion?

What do you *not* know about the author? What questions do you have about her?

Does anything in this source surprise you?

What questions does this source raise? Where could you find answers to your questions?



NAME _____

Compare and Contrast the First Two Sources

How are the authors similar and how are they different?

How are the sources similar and how are they different?

What different perspectives do the two authors bring to their texts?

Were these sources written in about the same time period? Why do you think that?

Did reading the second source affect your understanding of or reaction to the first? If so, how? If not, why not?



NAME _____

Source 3: *Encyclopedia of Chicago*

“Blockbusting” refers to the efforts of real-estate agents and real-estate speculators to trigger the turnover of white-owned property and homes to African Americans. Often characterized as “panic peddling,” such practices frequently accompanied the expansion of black areas of residence and the entry of African Americans into neighborhoods previously denied to them. In evidence as early as 1900, blockbusting techniques included the repeated—often incessant—urging of white homeowners in areas adjacent to or near black communities to sell before it became “too late” and their property values diminished. Agents frequently hired African American subagents and other individuals to walk or drive through changing areas soliciting business and otherwise behaving in such a manner as to provoke and exaggerate white fears. Purchasing homes cheaply from nervous white occupants, the panic peddler sold dearly [at a high price] to African Americans who faced painfully limited choices and inflated prices in a discriminatory housing market. Often providing financing and stringent terms to a captive audience, the blockbuster could realize substantial profits.

--Arnold R. Hirsch, “Blockbusting,” *Encyclopedia of Chicago*

Questions

Is this a primary or secondary source? How do you know?

What questions raised by the other sources does this source answer?

Does anything in this source surprise you?



NAME _____

What information does your background knowledge of African American history or the history of Chicago give you about this source?

What questions does this source raise? Where could you find answers to your questions?

Questions for All Sources

Do these sources affect your understanding about housing discrimination? If so, how? If not, why not?

How do these texts relate to the civil rights movement?