Hey, Susan! Why the long face?

Oh!, Hi, Luis

What is wrong? What ever it is I am sure I can help you.

I am just having a hard time in my Social Studies class.

Well what exactly are you having a hard time with?

Primary and secondary sources.

Did someone say primary and secondary sources?

Did you hear something?

No.
WHERE DID YOU HEAR IT OVER THERE! BEHIND THAT TREE.

WHO IS BACK THERE?

OBAMA!

OBAMA WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

SHHHH, LET'S BE QUIET. IT IS AN HONOR TO MEET YOU, MR. PRESIDENT.

HELLO, YOUNG AMERICANS. I DIDN'T MEAN TO SCARE YOU. I WAS JUST ON MY WAY TO AN IMPORTANT MEETING.

BUT I COULDN'T HELP TO OVERHEAR THAT YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE WITH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES.
I have to go tell my mom about this.

Yes, I am, I don’t know what primary and secondary sources are.

Well, young lady I am here to help.

Really, wow I can’t believe this.

Yes, it is my duty to help out my fellow citizens.

Let’s begin with primary sources, a primary source is a contemporary account of an event.

While, a secondary source is not an actual account of an event.

OK, that is starting to make sense.

Great!
A PRIMARY SOURCE is written by someone who experiences or witnesses a particular event.

Alright, so my diary is a primary source.

Exactly! You are getting it now.

So, what about secondary sources.

A secondary source interprets a primary source.

So, an example of a secondary source would be a history book.

Exactly! Secondary sources interpret, retell, evaluate, and draw conclusions from primary sources, which is what historians do.

I get it!

I knew you would but, let me just clarify a few more things.
So a biography is a primary source, right?

No, remember primary sources can be a diary, interview, letter, memoir, or speech.

Then what is a biography?

A secondary source.

Why is a biography a secondary source?

Because a biography is a retelling of someone's life, by someone else. An autobiography, on the other hand, is a primary source, because it is a first-hand account.

Alright, so a biography is a secondary source, and an autobiography is a primary source.

Yes, I am glad we clarified that, because it usually confuses people.
Thank you so much for helping me, Obama.

It was a pleasure, Susan. I should be getting back to my meeting now.

Bye, Obama!

Goodbye, young lady.

Where is Obama? My mom asked me to get a picture.

He left already, but if you would have taken a picture that would have been a primary source.

Oh well, you sure learned a lot today.

I sure did!
MR. C
SOCIAL STUDIES
CLASSROOM

MR. C: Alright, class. The question of the day is on the board. Get into groups and discuss.

WHAT ARE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES?

DO YOU GUYS HAVE ANY CLUE WHAT THEY ARE?

I HONESTLY HAVE NO IDEA.

VALERIA: I mean, primary, maybe.

DO YOU THINK VALERIA?

WHAT CAN THEY BE I AM SO CONFUSED

PRIMARY SOURCES MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH COMING FROM BECAUSE PRIME IS THE ROOT WORD.

NO, WHAT?

YES, VALERIA DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES ARE?
WELL, I THINK THAT PRIMARY SOURCES ARE ORIGINAL SOURCES OR FIRST HAND HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS.

WHAT ARE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES?

ORIGINAL SOURCES?
FIRST HAND ACCOUNTS?
AND WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT, VALERIA?

YES, CAN YOU EXPLAIN HOW YOU CAME TO THAT CONCLUSION?

WELL, I WAS JUST THINKING THAT THE ROOT WORD PRIME, IN PRIMAL, MAYBE MEANS FIRST. THEN I CONNECT THAT THOUGHT TO SOMETHING ORIGINAL, SINCE SOMETHING ORIGINALLY MOST COME FIRST.
I am a bit confused, so what is a secondary source?

Well, let's think about it. If a primary source is an original document, or a recollection of first-hand accounts, a secondary source must be...

It must be, like the name states, a second-hand account, something written after the fact.

What are primary and secondary sources?

Yes, I think so, but what would be an example of a primary source?

Oh, well, that makes sense. Primary sources are original historical documents like a first-hand account, on and event, right?

Hmmm, let's think. What is an example of a primary source?

Oh, I know! Could your birth certificate be a primary source?

Yes! Because it is an original document that proves when you were born.