

Comparing and Contrasting Primary and Secondary Sources on the Topic of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

Criteria for Comparison	Secondary Source #1	Secondary Source #2	Primary Source #1	Primary Source #2
Title of document	Introductory Information from Our Documents website on the Voting Rights Act of 1965	Supreme Court Invalidates Key Part of Voting Rights Act (New York Times)	The American Promise	Attorney General Eric Holder Delivers Remarks on the Supreme Court Decision in Shelby County v. Holder
Date of creation	No date of creation /Accessed date given	June 25, 2013	March 15, 1965	June 25, 2013
Author of document	U.S. National Archives and Records Administration	Adam Liptak	President Lyndon Johnson	Attorney General Eric Holder
Purpose/Audience of document	Provide background information to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 The audience is the general public	Reports to the public discussion about how the Supreme Court ruling affected the Voting Rights Act of 1965	Speech to Congress urging for the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965	To express his disagreement with the Supreme Court decision in Shelby County v. Holder He vows to enforce remaining laws that prevent voter discrimination He urges Congress to pass new voter protection laws Audience is the general public and newspaper reporters
Author's Point of View	It was not until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that African Americans truly gained the right to vote	Supreme Court action effectively struck down the Voting Rights Act by removing federal oversight of election laws in nine states, thereby impacting future voting rights	Action must be taken to ensure every American citizen has a constitutional right to vote	Disappointed in the Supreme Court ruling that was perceived to have weakened voting rights protections

<p>Information that is similar to other sources (corroborated information)</p>	<p><i>African Americans in the South faced obstacles to voting such as poll taxes, literacy tests, harassment, and physical violence</i></p> <p><i>Very few African Americans were registered voters and most had little political power locally or nationally</i></p> <p><i>Numerous demonstrations and outbreaks of violence brought national attention and political pressure to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965 – the murder of civil rights workers and violence in Selma, AL</i></p> <p><i>Literacy tests and poll taxes were made illegal and Federal examiners were sent to assist in registering voters</i></p> <p><i>Section 5 identified the jurisdictions that need preclearance by a federal court before making changes in their voting practices or procedures</i></p> <p><i>The Act was challenged and upheld by the Supreme Court several times</i></p> <p><i>By the end of 1966 only 4 of 13 southern states had less than 50% of African Americans voters registered</i></p>			
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	<i>The Act was readopted in 1970, 1975, and 1982</i>			
Information that is different from other sources	<p><i>Section 2 applied a national prohibition to denying the right to vote based on race or color</i></p> <p><i>By the end of 1965, 250,000 African American voters had been registered</i></p>	<p>The law had been applied to nine states: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia</p> <p>The Supreme Court considered the question of whether minorities still faced barriers to voting in the states with a history of discrimination.</p> <p>The Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that those barriers no longer existed and information about the majority and dissenting opinions were included.</p> <p>The ruling had immediate impact as it allowed states such as Texas to redistrict and pass laws on voter ID and restrictions on early voting</p> <p>Court ruled that the act was no longer needed, citing the African American voter turnout that was higher in 5 of the 6 states covered by Section 5</p>	<p>Current laws in place are not effectively carrying out the constitutional right to vote</p> <p>Passing the act is an issue of morality and living up to American ideals and principles</p>	<p>2006 was the latest reauthorization by Congress</p> <p>Congressional hearings in 2006 recognized that racial and language minorities still faced voter discrimination</p> <p>The Voting Rights Act – Section 4 prevented discriminatory photo ID laws in South Carolina and redistricting in Texas that discriminated against Latinos</p> <p>The Supreme Court acknowledged that voting discrimination still exists today</p> <p>Despite the Supreme Court ruling, the Justice Department will continue to enforce remaining laws that govern the right to vote</p>