Text Analysis Guiding Questions

OBSERVE: Identify and note details

- What type of text is this (letter, newspaper article, report, memorandum, legal document, advertisement, etc.)?
- Does the text have any special features (handwritten, typed, letterhead, form, notations, signature, stamp, etc.)? Does anything look strange or unfamiliar?
- Are there any headers, headlines, or other formatting that call out specific parts of the text?
- Are there any images or illustrations? What do they show?
- Is place relevant to this text? How?
- Are one or more dates listed in the text (written/published)? Is the creation date listed in the bibliographic record? If the creation date is listed, was this text created at or around the same time period the text relates to?
- Did a person or group other than the author publish this text? If so, who?
- What does the text describe or explain?

REFLECT: Generate and test hypotheses

- What tools might have been used to create this text?
- Why do you think this text was made? What might have been the author's or publisher's purpose? What evidence supports your theory?
- Why do you think the author chose to include these specific details of description or explanation? What information might have been left out of the text?
- If images or illustrations are included, what purpose might they serve?
- Who do you think was the audience for this text?
- What do you think the author might have wanted the audience to think or feel? Does the arrangement or presentation of words, illustrations, or both affect how the audience might think or feel? How?
- What do you feel when reading this text?
- Does this text show clear bias? If so, towards what or whom? What evidence supports your conclusion?
- Are there details that reference other people or events of the time period? What was happening during this time period? If someone wrote this text today, what would be different/the same?
- What did you learn from examining this text? Does any new information you learned contradict or support your prior knowledge about the topic of this text?

QUESTION: What didn't you learn that you would like to know about? What questions does this text raise? What do you wonder about . . .

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

What sources might you consult to learn more?