

## Assessing with Primary Sources

**Grade Level(s):** 6-8

**Standard(s) or Objectives:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5: Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

### Library of Congress Resources:

We go around all dressed in rags  
While the rest of the world goes neat,  
And we have to be satisfied  
With half enough to eat,  
We have to live in lean-tos,  
Or else we live in a tent,  
For when we buy our bread and beans  
There's nothing left for rent.

“I’d Rather not be on Relief” song. Lester Hunter. Shafter, CA, 1938.

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/dust-bowl-migration/pdf/relief.pdf>

### Topic Background:

The Dust Bowl was a period of severe dust storms that greatly damaged the ecology and agriculture of the US and Canadian prairies during the 1930s. During this period, there were severe droughts and people were unable to farm and prevent erosion, which caused the Dust Bowl.

Excerpted from:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dust\\_Bowl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dust_Bowl)

### Source(s) Used:

The source used for this assessment is a song written by Lester Hunter in Shafter, California, in 1938 about what it was like to live during the Dust Bowl.

### Answer Key:

Question 1: D

Question 2: A

**Directions:** Below is an excerpt of a song by Lester Hunter in 1938, during the **Dust Bowl**. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

We go around all dressed in rags  
While the rest of the world goes neat,  
And we have to be satisfied  
With half enough to eat,  
We have to live in lean-tos,  
Or else we live in a tent,  
[ 'For when we buy our bread and beans  
There's nothing left for rent.

**Question 1:** Which statement best reflects the central idea of the above excerpt of the song? (CCSS.RH.6.2)

- A. We go around all dressed in rags.
- B. We have to be satisfied.
- C. Or else we live in a tent.
- D. There's nothing left for rent.

**Question 2:** Why are lines 7-8 important to this excerpt of the song? (CCSS.RH.6.5)

- A. These lines help to show that people worked hard but had no money left.
- B. These lines help to show that people had no money left for rent because they were paying for the utilities.
- C. These lines help to show that rags made them live in a tent.
- D. These lines help to show that people lived in lean-tos because they only ate bread and beans.