

Answers to Questions

LETTER ACTIVITY TWO

1. Who wrote each of the letters?

Walter Childers, Kate Pulliam, Rosebud Morse Gurriott – two are agents and one is a stringer.

2. To whom did they write them?

They are all writing to Mr. Bronson.

3. Why did they write these letters?

They are trying to support the work of Mr. Bronson in his efforts to secure an amendment to the FLSA.

4. Historians look at time and place (whether the author was writing near the time of the event, and whether the author was physically close to the event) and the possibility of bias in their analysis of primary sources. How would you evaluate these letters in those three areas?

The letters are accurate as to time and place – North Carolina in the spring of 1939. However, there is evidence of bias as these people count on tobacco bag stringing for income.

5. Which of the three letters do you think is the most powerful? Why?

Answers may vary. Teachers should be sure that students can justify their choice with good reasons and examples from their chosen letter.

6. In two of the letters there is a notation of [sic]. By using the context of the letter, what does this notation mean?

[sic] indicates that the misspelling or grammatical error was in the original and not an error of transcription. Students may be able to figure that out, or may need to be helped to that conclusion. Most will tie the notation to an error.

7. Why is it important to include the [sic] notation in primary source materials?

It is important to know if the mistake was by the original author. This helps to set up the context for the source.

8. Imagine that you are a tobacco bag stringer from the Piedmont of North Carolina. Write a letter to Mr. Bronson that explains why this activity is so important to your family.

Answers will vary.