

Guiding Questions

The 18th Amendment

1. What is your first reaction to the 18th amendment?
2. Do you think this amendment could be passed today? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think some Americans in 1918 might have wanted this amendment?

Document A

1. (Sourcing) When was this document written? Was this before or after the passage of the 18th Amendment?

Why might the National Temperance Council have met in 1920 (*after* the passage of the 18th Amendment)? What do you predict they will say?

2. (Close reading) What does the National Temperance Council claim is caused by alcohol?
3. (Context) Do you find these claims convincing? Do you think people at the time found these claims convincing? Explain.

Document B

1. (Sourcing) When was this document written? Was this before or after the passage of the 18th Amendment?
2. (Close reading) What is the “Hooch Murder Bill”?
3. (Context) Based on this document, who is the Anti-Saloon League blaming for the sale of alcohol during Prohibition? Why do you think they singled this group?

Document C and D

1. (Sourcing) When were these posters made? Was that before or after the passage of the 18th Amendment?

Who published these posters? What was their perspective?

2. (Close reading) According to these posters, what are two reasons why Prohibition is a good idea?

3. (Close words) Look at the words used in Document C. These were considered “scientific” categories. What does that tell you about science at this time?

4. (Context) Using these posters, explain some of the beliefs about children that were common in the early 20th century. Do you think these beliefs are silly or reasonable? Explain.

People who supported Prohibition thought it would solve a lot of society’s problems. Use the documents to explain what problems they saw in society and why they thought Prohibition would solve these problems.