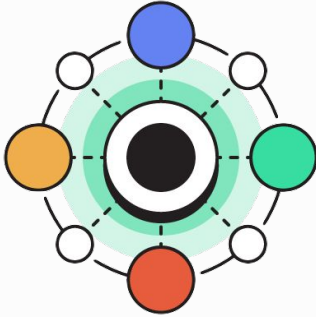


## Formative Assessment: Contextualization and Sourcing



**Thinking historically means interpreting historical events, developments, or processes in light of the surrounding historical context. It also means understanding key information about a historical source, such as its purpose, perspective, and reliability as a piece of evidence.**

**Directions:** Read the following primary source. Then, answer the questions on contextualization that follow. The multiple choice questions for this formative assessment are Weighted Multiple Choice (WMC) Questions. This means that there is only one *incorrect* answer, but the other 3 choices are weighted. The *best* answer is 3 points, the *second-best* answer is 2 points, and the *third-best* answer is 1 point. The *incorrect* answer is 0 points.

# Formative Assessment: Contextualization and Sourcing

Source: Kirkor Minassian (Former Owner), Cuneiform School Exercise Tablet, no. 02. Kirkor Minassian Collection, 1900–2200 B.C.E. [Library of Congress](#).



1. Each of the following statements is a historical fact that is related to the tablet. Which historical fact *best* helps to contextualize the purpose of the tablet? In other words, which fact *best* helps us understand why this tablet existed?
  - A. This tablet was acquired by the Library of Congress in 1929 from art dealer Kirkor Minassian.
  - B. All student tablets were unfired as the intention was to reuse the same tablet.
  - C. The teacher in the scribal school (edubba) typically inscribed the lesson, three words or a short sentence, on one side of the tablet, and the student copied and recopied it onto the other side until memorized correctly.
  - D. The student tablets are recognizable by their roundness, deliberately made so by scribes in order not to confuse them with other tablets, which were almost always square or rectangular.

2. Justify your choice in the space below.



1. Each of the following statements is a historical fact that is related to the tablet. Which historical fact *best* helps to contextualize the purpose of the tablet? In other words, which fact *best* helps us understand why this tablet existed?
  - A. This tablet was acquired by the Library of Congress in 1929 from art dealer Kirkor Minassian. **(0 points)**
  - B. All student tablets were unfired as the intention was to reuse the same tablet. **(3 points)**
  - C. The teacher in the scribal school (edubba) typically inscribed the lesson, three words or a short sentence, on one side of the tablet, and the student copied and recopied it onto the other side until memorized correctly. **(2 points)**
  - D. The student tablets are recognizable by their roundness, deliberately made so by scribes in order not to confuse them with other tablets, which were almost always square or rectangular. **(1 point)**

2. Justify your choice in the space below.

**Choice B, worth 3 points, is the most helpful statement for contextualizing the purpose of the tablet. When trying to understand why this tablet existed, knowing from the source information that it is a "school exercise tablet," the fact that these tablets were "unfired" means there were multiple opportunities for "student exercises." This fact clearly helps us understand the tablet's purpose. Choice C is also very helpful for contextualizing the purpose of the tablet, however, rather than focusing on its purpose, this fact illuminates its use, which isn't quite as related to its existence as Choice B; therefore, it is worth 2 points. Choice D is also a helpful fact to contextualize the tablet, but this fact is helpful for distinguishing this tablet from others, rather than its inherent purpose; therefore it is worth 1 point. Finally, Choice A is a historical fact about its acquisition, not its purpose, and so is worth 0 points.**



## 1. Weighted Multiple Choice

3 points (Choice B)	2 points (Choice C)	1 point (Choice D)	0 points (Choice A)
			<b>Subtotal: _____ / 3</b>

## 2. Short Answer: Justify Your Answer

3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Student thoroughly justifies their choice of the <i>best</i> fact—which was worth three points as shown on the teacher key—that would help contextualize the purpose of the source.	Student thoroughly justifies their choice of either the 1 or 2 point option from the WMC question. OR Student's justification of the 3 point option needs deeper analysis.	Student's justification of their choice (either the 1 or 2 point option) lacks deep analysis.	Student either makes no attempt to justify their choice OR tries to justify the 0 point option.
			<b>Subtotal: _____ / 3</b>

**Total: \_\_\_\_\_ / 6**

