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|  **Video Transcript Secondary Sources** |

The first scene shows a student talking to their professor. The student asks:

*Hey Professor Primary, I really don’t understand this secondary source thing. Please explain it again.*

Professor Primary responds:

*The thing that makes secondary sources particularly problematic is that using them can result in a distortion in meaning. When you were a kid, did you play that telephone game? You all sit in a circle, and one kid whispers a message into the ear of the next kid, who passes it to the next kid, and so on around the circle.*

In the next scene, a group of kids appear and start to play the game. The first kid whispers into the ear of the next kid.

*The fire chief took a speedboat to rescue a man who was drifting out to sea on an old log.*

The image of a speedboat appears in a thought bubble above the first kid’s head. The kid listening to this message has a thought bubble pop up that shows a goat eating weeds. They pass on the message.

*The fire chief took a weed goat to rescue a man who was drifting out to sea on an old dog.*

An old dog with fleas appears in the thought bubble of the third kid. They pass the message on to the fourth kid.

*The fire chief took a weed goat to rescue a man who was picking out a flea on an old dog.*

The fourth kid focuses on the image of a fire chief in a coat covered in weeds.

*A fire chief in a weed coat rescued a man who was picking out fleas on an old dog.*

By the time the message makes it all the way around the circle, the last kid sees an image in his head a man chasing another man and a dog.

*A retired thief in a tweed coat pursued a man trying to flea with his old dog.*

The scene now switches back to Professor Primary and the student. The professor begins to speak again.

*What this game illustrates is how distorted a message can become as it passes around the circle. That is the essence of the problem with secondary sources. When you read an article in the original source you have a really clear sense of the context a person is using, the meaning behind what they are saying, and how it fits in with the rest of the article or the chapter that they have written.*

*Imagine that a sentence I wrote in 2012 is paraphrased by someone else in 2015 in a way that adds their particular twist on what it is that I meant by that statement. Then in 2017, someone else repeats that person's statement, but maybe they add a little different interpretation. By the time you get to 2020, I might be cited as saying something that doesn't capture at all what I actually meant or what I actually believe. Instead all of those slight adjustments and misinterpretations have accumulated over time.*

The student looks like they are now beginning to understand. Their thought bubble shows the word secondary sources with a large red X through the words. Professor Primary continues to speak.

*Imagine if I had written in 2012, “Secondary sources should only be used if there is no possibility of accessing the original source, and there is no way to support that key point with another source,” but the version that was passed on in 2020 was, “If you can’t talk to Freud directly, then nothing he had to say can be used in your writing.” There is only a small grain of my original message in this statement. This potential for distortion of meaning is why misusing secondary sources is considered academic misconduct.*

The student final thought bubble changes to show a road sign that says “Secondary Sources: Proceed with Caution.”