Mini Lesson on Evaluating the Utility of a Source

AIM: to do a quick/active read to evaluate if this is a useful source (and in the process, begin to gather useful info for notecards…)

notes:
- *best if students already have some kind of research topic and have gathered some potential sources*
- *designed to counteract the "I can't find anything in these sources!" claim*
- *aims to cultivate more active/directed*

teacher needs:
- ✔ demo research question/topic
- ✔ short reading related to topic (copies for each student)
- ✔ post-its for students

1) Teacher presents a research topic/question (eg: *Was the NAZI genocide motivated by economic opportunism during a time of $ crisis?*) ➜ display for students
1) give each student copy of same short reading (3-4 paragraphs) printed out
2) have them write the given question/topic on post-it, place at top of page
3) direct them to handwrite "verdict ___" at end of each paragraph
4) emphasize that this process is designed to take 10 min per source (15 min tops)
5) actively read source and feel free to mark up however it suits the reader (I might demo how I mark side of paragraph w/ line anywhere there is stuff of potential value)
6) **at end of each paragraph**, where they've written "verdict ___" mark w/ + to indicate this was useful/relevant or − if not. If +, explain why briefly in few words/phrase in the margin
7) note that each paragraph that you've ranked + and you've briefly justified is a jumping off point for a notecard.

ZOOM OUT: tally the +s in the doc ➜ if there are many, this is probably a good source for you, if mostly -s, then probably not.

8) now repeat w/ your own research QU and one of your sources (I provide mini post-its for those using books) ➜ you have 10 min to do this and evaluate whether it's a useful source for your work. (if extra time, go back to annotate text in margins/create a notecard)