Searching for Primary Documents

DESTINY: USC High School Library’s Online Book Catalog

Before you go onto DESTINY make a list of search terms to use. Think of your topic and the different ways it could be indexed---think KEYWORDS!

How to Use DESTINY: The USC High School Library Book Catalog—Accessible from the Web anywhere!

- From STUDENT LINKS click DESTINY.
- Type in your search and click onto the appropriate icon (KEYWORD, TITLE, AUTHOR, SUBJECT, ETC.).
- On the Results page, you will see what titles are available, where they are located, and if they are currently on the library shelves. You can get additional information when you click onto each title or the DETAILS button.

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American Decades Primary Sources (REF 973.91 AME) is a wonderful series located in the Ready Reference section of the library.
There are other books available in the Reference Section. Please take note: reference books are not available to check out of the library. Copies can be made.
Ask a librarian for help.
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Online Sources and Web Sites

Before you go online to do a search on a database or the Internet, make a list of search terms to use. Think of your topic and the different ways it could be indexed---think KEYWORDS!

Choosing Keywords to Search on Google and Most Other Search Engines

For best results, it's important to choose your keywords wisely. Keep these tips in mind:
- Try the obvious first. If you're looking for information on Picasso, enter "Picasso" rather than "painters".
- Use words likely to appear on a site with the information you want. "Luxury hotel dubuque" gets better results than "really nice places to spend the night in Dubuque".
- Make keywords as specific as possible. "Antique lead soldiers" gets more relevant results than "old metal toys".

☐ To do an Effective Search, put phrases in quotes (i.e. “primary documents”)
Try this search: american revolution “primary documents”
When searching online, it's one time in your life when you usually don’t have to worry about capitalization.
Make sure that you take the time to review the information at the end of this document about evaluating web sites to make sure that you are getting relevant, credible information! There are lots of bogus web sites out there! BEWARE!

Try these databases when looking for primary documents:

**Gale Discovering Collection**
From STUDENT LINKS: Click “Gale Discovering Collection”
User name: uschs  Password: panther
Keyword search
Primary Documents: click box by “Primary Sources” under “Content Type” at search page to exclusively search for primary sources. Otherwise, click “Primary Sources” tab on result list.

**History Reference Center**
From STUDENT LINKS: click “History Reference Center”
If needed, use uschs and panther to login.
Keyword search
Primary Documents: Do an ADVANCED SEARCH and choose “primary source document” under the PUBLICATION TYPE area.

**Britannica Online School Edition**
From STUDENT LINKS: click “Encyclopedia Britannica”
If needed, use uschs and panther to login.
Primary Documents: On the results page, left side-bar, click the PRIMARY SOURCES AND eBooks link.

**JSTOR**
From STUDENT LINKS: Click “JSTOR”
Username: uschs  Password: panther
JSTOR Primary documents – At the search window, click “Advanced Search.” Scroll down to “Narrow Search” and click the box by ‘pamphlets,” which is how JSTOR refers to primary documents.

**Points of View**
From STUDENT LINKS: Click “Points of View.”
If needed, use uschs and panther to login.
Primary Documents: Do an ADVANCED SEARCH and choose primary documents under the PUBLICATION TYPE area.
NEW!!!! Student Resources in Context

From STUDENT LINKS: Click "Gale Discovering Collection"
Password: panther
In the upper RIGHT CORNER of the page, click CHANGE DATABASES, and click Student Resources in Context.
Choose ADVANCED SEARCH.

Then choose PRIMARY SOURCE under DOCUMENT TYPE.

POWER Library
Check with individual databases for primary document availability.

☐ Try these internet collections when looking for primary sources/documents

The 10 Best Free U.S. Online Historical Newspaper Research Sites
http://www.theancestorhunt.com/1/post/2014/04/the-10-best-free-us-online-historical-newspaper-research-sites.html#.U2twpl5RGY8

Access PA Digital Repository http://www.powerlibrary.org/collections/#.VA8-Hxav0rw
The service permits the storage and retrieval of digitized collections created by libraries and other entities located throughout Pennsylvania. Primary focus is on collections of interest to the citizens of Pennsylvania.

INCREDIBLE LINKS TO INDEPTH PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS!

Internet Archive http://www.archive.org/
The Internet Archive, a non-profit organization, is building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. The Internet Archive contains over 400,000 moving images, 85,000 concerts in the live music archive, 725,000 audio files, and 2,500 texts.

Penn State University’s Digitized Collections
http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/digital.html
Penn State University Libraries offers a wealth of digitized documents like annuals/yearbooks, books, correspondence, exhibits, image collections, indexes, journals, manuscripts, maps, newspapers, thematic collections and, theses and dissertations. For example:

- Google Books at Penn State
- Western Pennsylvania History
- The Johnstown Flood
- Pennsylvania Civil War Era Newspapers
- The Jack Rabin Collection on Alabama Civil Rights and Southern Activists
- Penn State Electronic Theses and Dissertations Archives

**Chronicling America**  [http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/)
Offering access to America's historic newspapers, this site allows you to search and view newspaper pages from 1860-1922 and find information about American newspapers published between 1690-present. Chronicling America is sponsored jointly by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress as part of the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP).

**Cybrary Man's Educational Web Sites**
The internet catalogue for students, teachers, administrators & parents. Over 20,000 relevant links personally selected by an educator/author with over 30 years of experience.  [http://cybraryman.com/primary.html](http://cybraryman.com/primary.html)

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**Evaluating Web Sites**

Evaluate those web sites! Make sure that the sites are credible and relevant for our topic.

Evaluate each site using the points below:

- Are the links relevant and appropriate?
- Locate the author/producer of the site. Is her/his name listed on the page?
- What is the author’s authority in the subject matter presented in the website? Look in the About This Site link on the page, if applicable.
- Is there a way to contact the author on the page (e-mail, address, phone number)?
- Is the site linked to a government, educational, or industrial establishment? If so, this is a good sign. 😊
- Does the site list sources used in the information presented? If so, great!
- Is the purpose of the site obvious?
- To the best of your knowledge, does the site use correct spelling and grammar?
• Does the site have a copyright and/or last revision date? (Sometimes this is located at the bottom of the page.)
• Do the links on the page work? Beware of excessive, irrelevant advertisements on the page.