







Step by Step Library Research

1. Background Information:

Use encyclopedias, dictionaries and credible Web sources to become informed on your topic and the surrounding issues. Useful sources include:

-  **African American Desk Reference**
Location: Reference Desk E185.N57 1999
-  **Africana.com: The Gateway to the Black World**
Location: <http://www.africana.com/>
-  **Almanac of African American Heritage**
Location: Reference E185.A448 2001
-  **Facts on the Black or African American Population (U.S. Census)**
Location: <http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/NEWafamML1.html>
-  **Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture**
Location: <http://www.nypl.org/research/sc/>
-  **Statistical Record of Black America**
Location: Reference Desk E185.5.S83 1995

2. Research Questions:

Be specific here about your research, facts, opinions and statistics that you will need to cover your topic or thesis. *You may add to this list as you do your research.*

3. Brainstorm Keywords:

Think of synonyms and related words for your searches.

Concept #1	Concept #2	Concept #3
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4. Finding Books

Use the Library Catalog to find books on your topic.

1. Go to the Library home page: <http://www.auctr.edu>
2. Click on **Library Catalog** under the section entitled, "**FINDING BOOKS.**"
3. Click on the **Keyword Search** tab.
4. Combine your concepts and synonyms in the search boxes.

5. Find Articles

Use Library electronic resources to locate articles in scholarly journals and other sources.

1. Go to the Library home page: <http://www.auctr.edu>
2. Click on “**Databases including GALILEO**” under “**E-RESOURCES**”
3. Select a database from the alphabetical list or subject list

Useful databases include:

JSTOR
Academic Search Premier
Research Library Proquest
International Index to Black Periodicals (IIBP)

6. Find Web Sources

Be sure to use credible sources of information on the Web. Remember that anyone can put up a Web page.

Web site evaluation criteria:

- ☐ Is the author or organization providing the information recognized as an **authority** on your topic? (On an authoritative site, it should be easy to locate information about the author or organization including complete contact information.)
- ☐ What is the site’s domain (edu, com, org, gov, etc.)? Limiting to **EDU** (education) and **ORG** (nonprofit organization) sites may help you to refine your searching.
- ☐ Is the author or organization **biased**? It is fine to use biased sites as long as you recognize the bias and look for other sources that provide different points of view.
- ☐ Is the content of the Web page **accurate**? Are you able to confirm facts and statements made on the page in other sources?
- ☐ Is the Information provided **current**? You should be able to find a date of the last update or review. This is very important when considering the currency of the information.

7. Citing Sources

Citing your sources credits those individuals whose hard work forms the basis of your arguments and provides your readers with a list of possible places for more information. All the citation style manuals are located at the **Reference Desk**. In addition, these Web sites may prove useful:

- ☐ **Citing Sources** (Duke University)
<http://library.duke.edu/research/guides/citing/>
- ☐ **Citation Guides** (Ohio State)
<http://library.osu.edu/help/faq.html#citations>
- ☐ **Research and Documentation Online**
<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

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