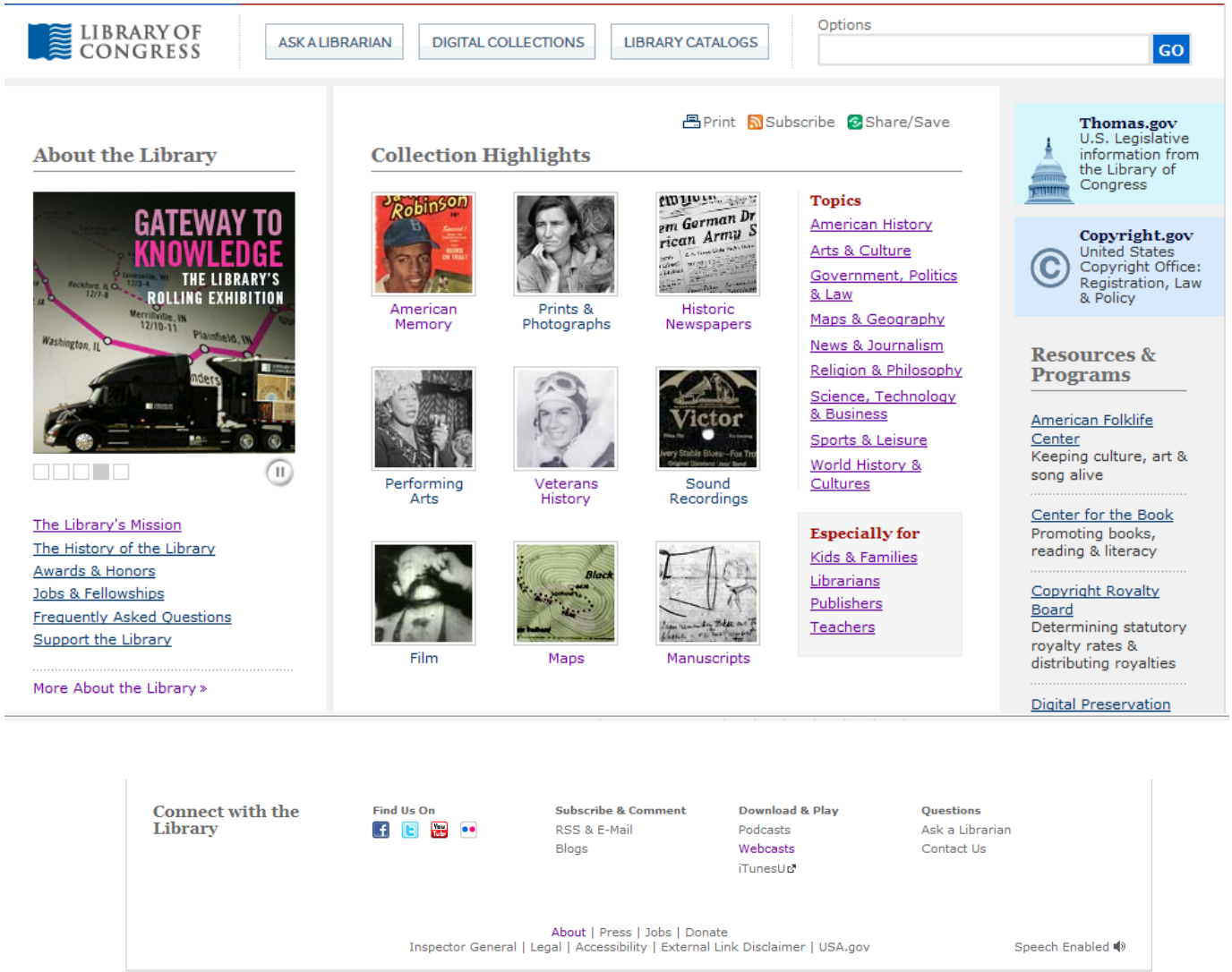
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
TEACHING with PRIMARY SOURCES

MILNER LIBRARY
Illinois State University

Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources
Illinois State University
http://www.teachingprimarysources.ilstu.edu/

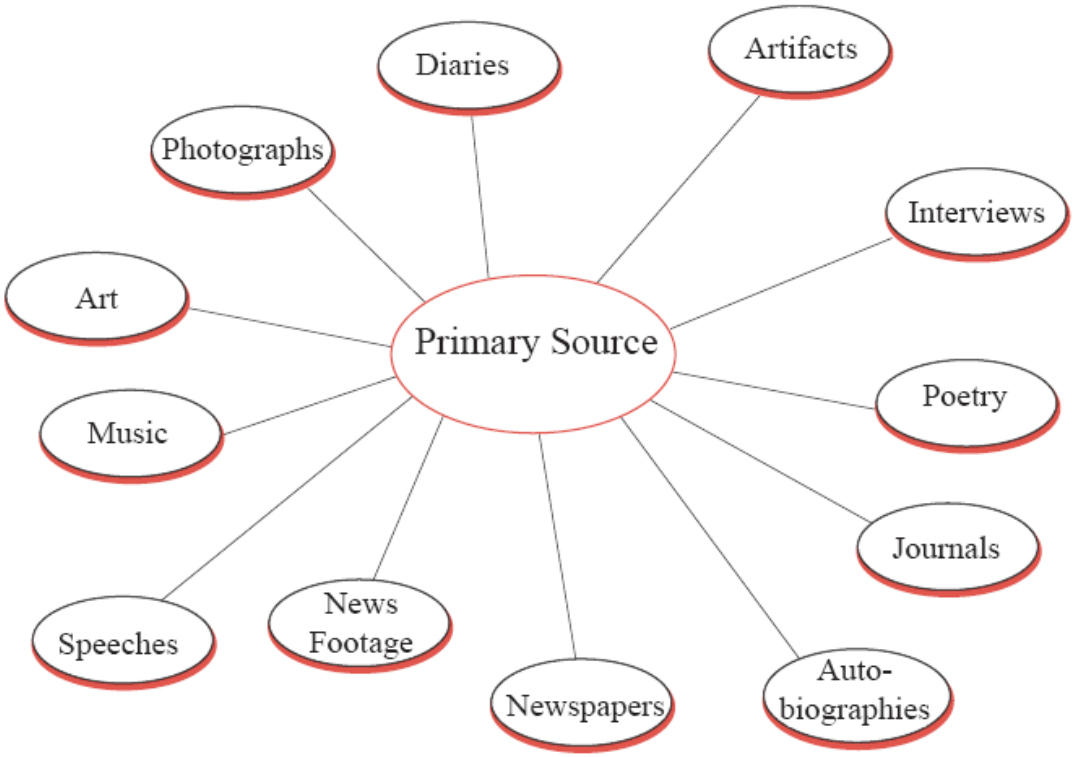
The Library of Congress Home Page



www.loc.gov

What is a Primary Source?

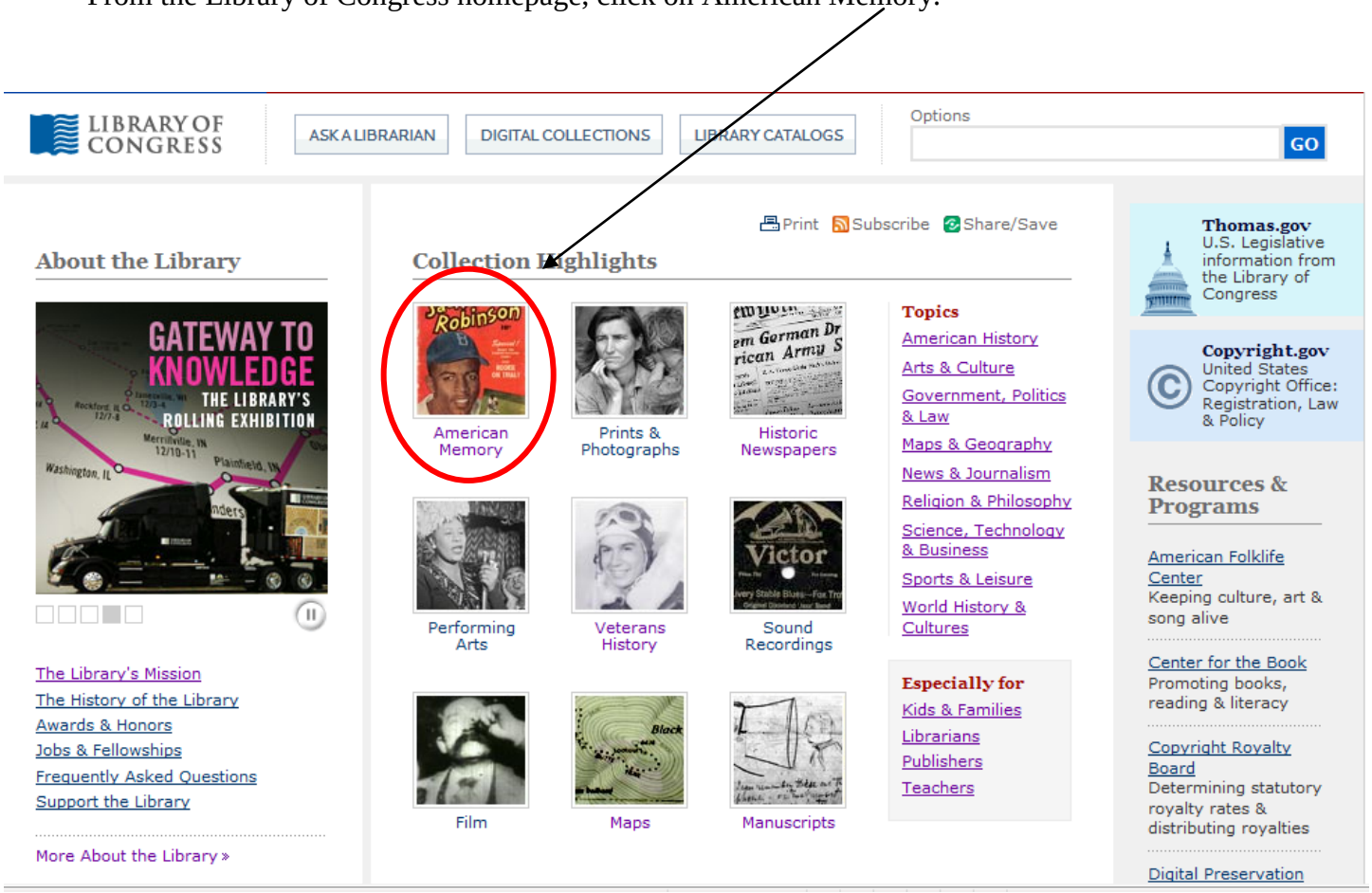
Simply put, primary sources are the original items or records that have survived from the past – such as clothing, letters, photographs, and manuscripts. They were part of a direct personal experience of a time or event. The online collections of the Library of Congress American Memory project are comprised of primary sources. For the purpose of contrast, it is important to note that secondary sources are created by documenting or analyzing someone else's experience to provide a perspective or framework of a past event. They may have been written long after an event took place and include items such as textbooks, encyclopedias, biographies, and documentaries.



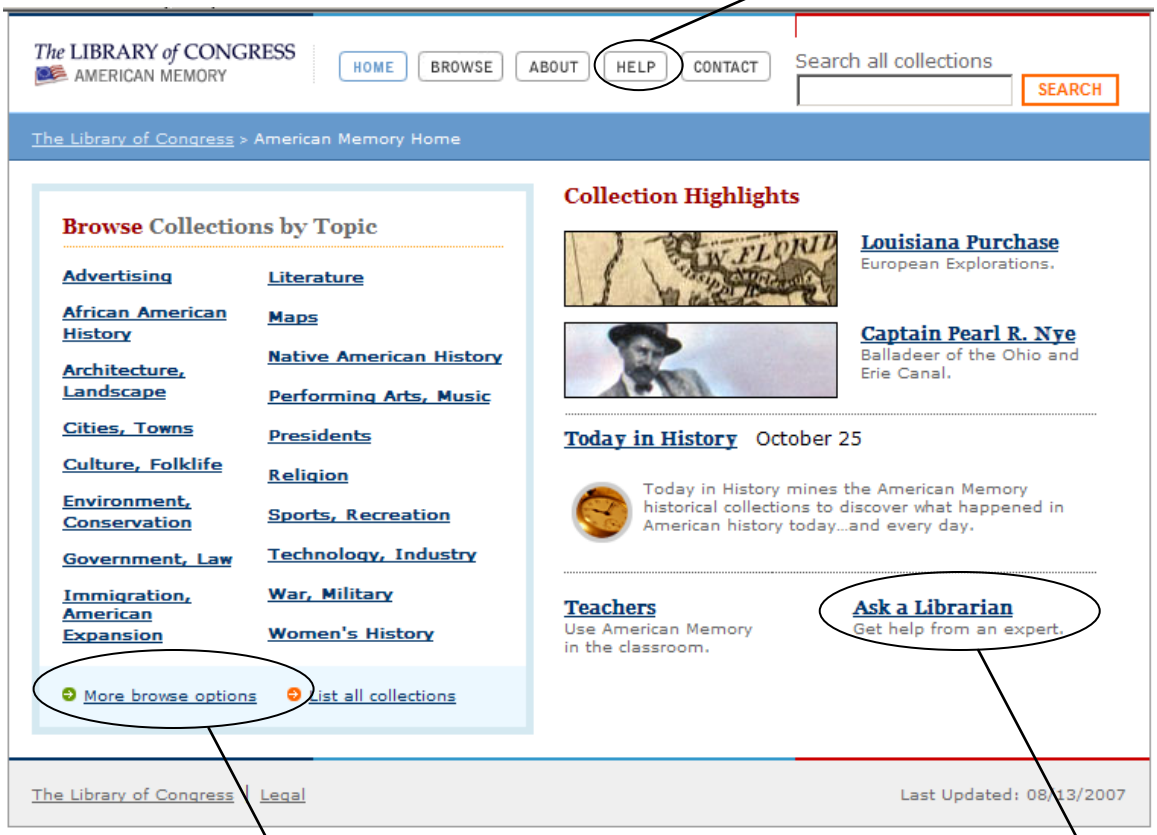
Exploring American Memory

American Memory is an online gateway to rich primary resources relating to the history and culture of the United States. The site offers more than 19 million digital items from more than 100 historical collections. Special collections include documents, films, manuscripts, photographs, and sound recordings that tell the American story.

From the Library of Congress homepage, click on American Memory.



Click on **Help** to find out how to view and listen to primary sources.



More browse options refines the search

Click on **Ask a Librarian** to get additional help from an expert.

Important Components on the American Memory Site

Browse Collections by Topic

This box presents a list of all of the digital collections of the American Memory project organized by broad topics. The collection finder is a good place to begin exploring the vast collections within American Memory; however, in order to find more specific sources, you will need to use the "Search all collections" box.

Search All Collections

The Search all collections box allows you to search by keyword for items across all of the collections. You can go here to find specific items. For example, if you wanted to find items on the Civil War in North Carolina, you could type "Civil War in North Carolina" into the search box and find specific items. Sometimes you have to be persistent and creative with the search, because there are millions of items the search engine searches through.

"Browse Collections by Topic" Box

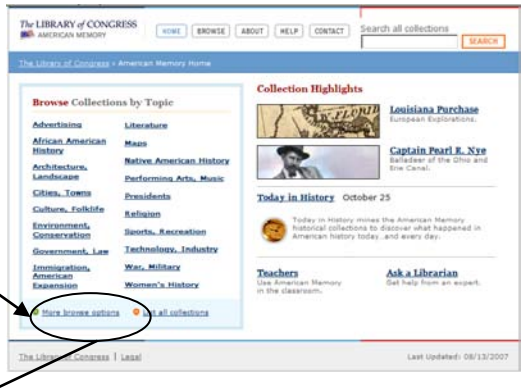
"Search All Collections" Box

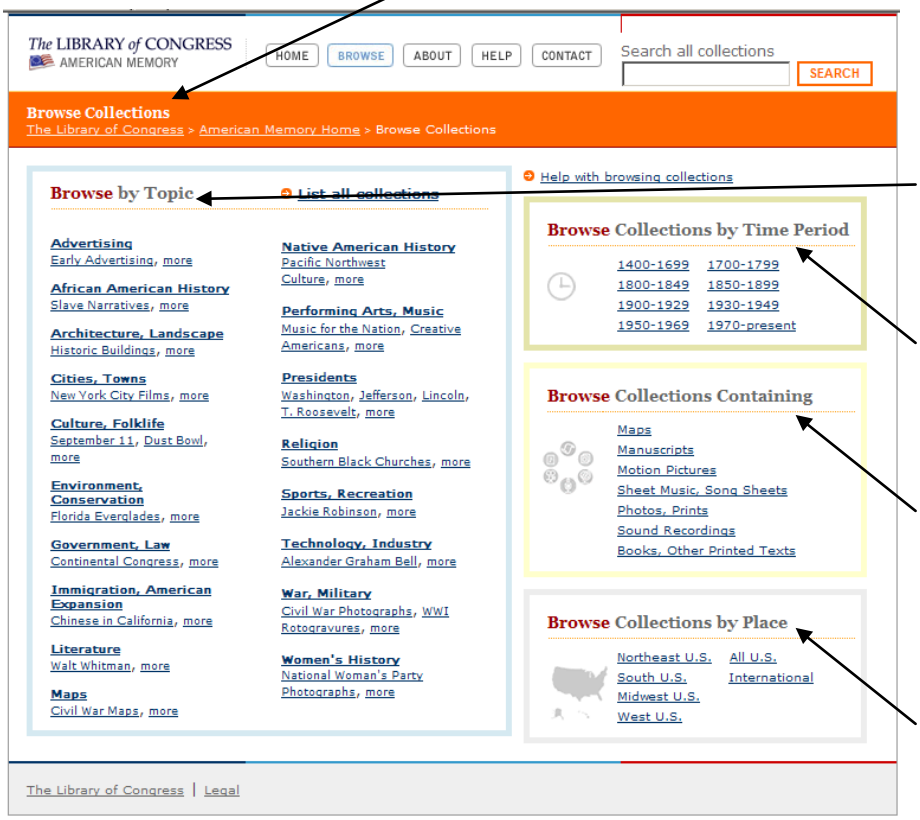
Search All Collections

*Click on **Help** and then click on **Search Help** for additional search strategies.

More Browse Options

The “More browse options” link at the bottom of the American Memory Home page is a useful way to browse the American Memory site.





Now you can browse by:

Topic

Time Period

Collections Containing

Place

Exploring the American Memory Collections

Take a look at the sample collection site to become familiar with the common format for American Memory Collections.

A Links to LOC.gov and American Memory

B Unique ways to browse a collection

C Learn more about a collection

D Explore Collection Connections to locate teaching resources

E Rights and Reproductions - suggested credit line

Original Look

New Look

Citing Primary Sources from the Library of Congress

The purpose of citing a primary source is to acknowledge the source of information and give as much detail as possible to find that primary source at a later date. The Library of Congress uses a variety of ways to cite primary source material.

Sometimes a credit line is available.

First:

- Find the bibliographic page that contains your primary source
- Look under the Notes area
- Look for the words Cite as:
- Copy the credit line
- Paste it into your document

Second:

- Find the bibliographic page that contains your primary source
- Look at the line above the thumbnail of your primary source
- Click on "Rights and Reproductions"
- Scroll down to CREDIT LINE:
- Copy the credit line
- Paste it into your document (note: change the sample reproduction number or digital ID to the one specific to your primary source)

Third:

- Find the bibliographic page that contains your primary source
- Click on the name of the collection at the top of the bibliographic page
- Scroll to the bottom of the Collection page
- Click on the Copyright and Other Restrictions link
- Copy the credit line
- Paste it into your document (note: change the sample reproduction number or digital ID to the one specific to your primary source)

If credit line is not available:

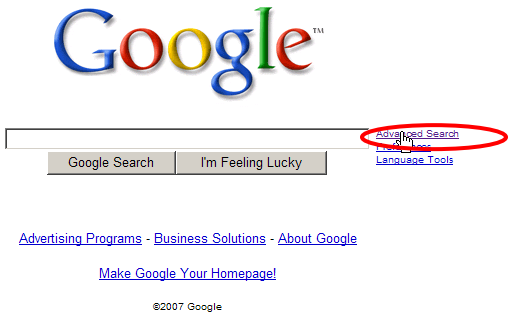
- Follow the directions for citing sources using the MLA style
- Go to: http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/mla.html
- Scroll to the type of primary source you are using
- Identify the information needed (ex. Author, title, date, etc.)
- Copy the example line into your document
- Fill in the information from the bibliographic page

Conducting an Advanced Google Search

There are times when the previous search strategies just don't work to find the items you are looking for. The Library of Congress holds many primary resources outside the American Memory Collections. For example, if you wanted to locate items related to the diary of Anne Frank and used the previous search strategies, you may not be able to find what you're looking for. Its times like these that the advanced search option on your favorite search engine comes in handy. The following activity will take you through the steps for using the advanced search option within the Google Search Engine. An advanced search using the Google Search Engine will allow you to easily search the entire Library of Congress web site at once and return useful items that may otherwise be hard to find.

1. Go to the Google web site at www.google.com

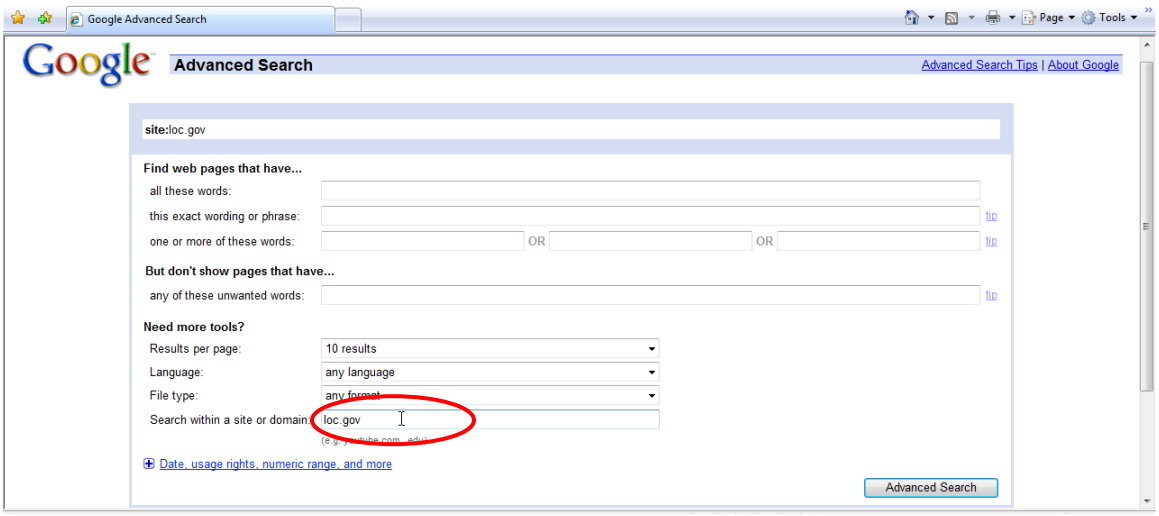
2. Click on the Advanced Search option on the right side of the search box.



3. Look down the list of options until you find Domain and type "loc.gov" in the Domain box. Be sure that "Only" is selected in the drop down in this option.

4. Type the keywords in the top box of Find Results labeled "with all of the words."

5. Click the Advanced Search button.

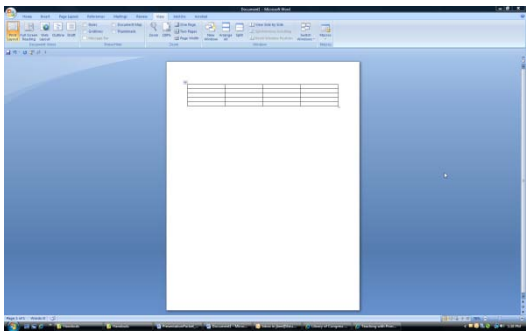


Creating a Resource Table

We will only focus on saving photographs here, however, the process for saving any type of primary resource (e.g., audio files, video files, maps, documents) would follow similar steps. Before we begin saving primary sources, we need to establish some type of management system. One useful, easy technique is to create a table in a Word document to hold the necessary information in order to find the source again, or quickly determine what resources we have collected for our classroom.

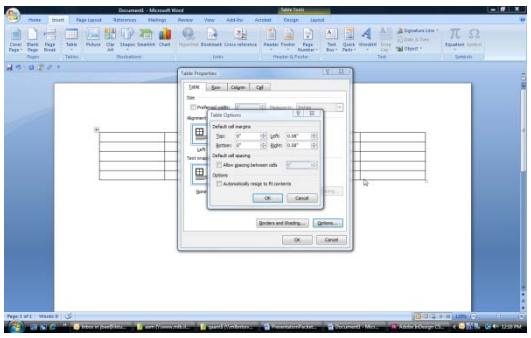
To create a table: Depending upon the version of your word processor the directions may vary.

1. Click on the INSERT TAB choose TABLE and then INSERT TABLE
2. Use the up/down arrow keys to choose the number of columns and rows you want (4 columns—5 rows)
3. Click OK -The table is now inserted into your document.
4. Label the columns:
   - First Column – Image
   - Second Column - Description
   - Third Column - Citation
   - Fourth Column – URL



Screen shot of table from Microsoft Word 2007

5. **To control the size of the cells in your table, place the cursor in one of the cells.**
   - Right click and choose TABLE PROPERTIES from the dropdown menu.
   - Click OPTIONS in the Dialog Box.
   - A second Dialog Box will appear, click in the box in front of "Automatically resize to fit contents" to remove the checkmark and click OK.
   - Click OK again to return to the table.



Screen shot of Table Options from Microsoft Word 2007

Tips

* To move from cell to cell, use the tab or arrow keys or

* To add a new row or column,

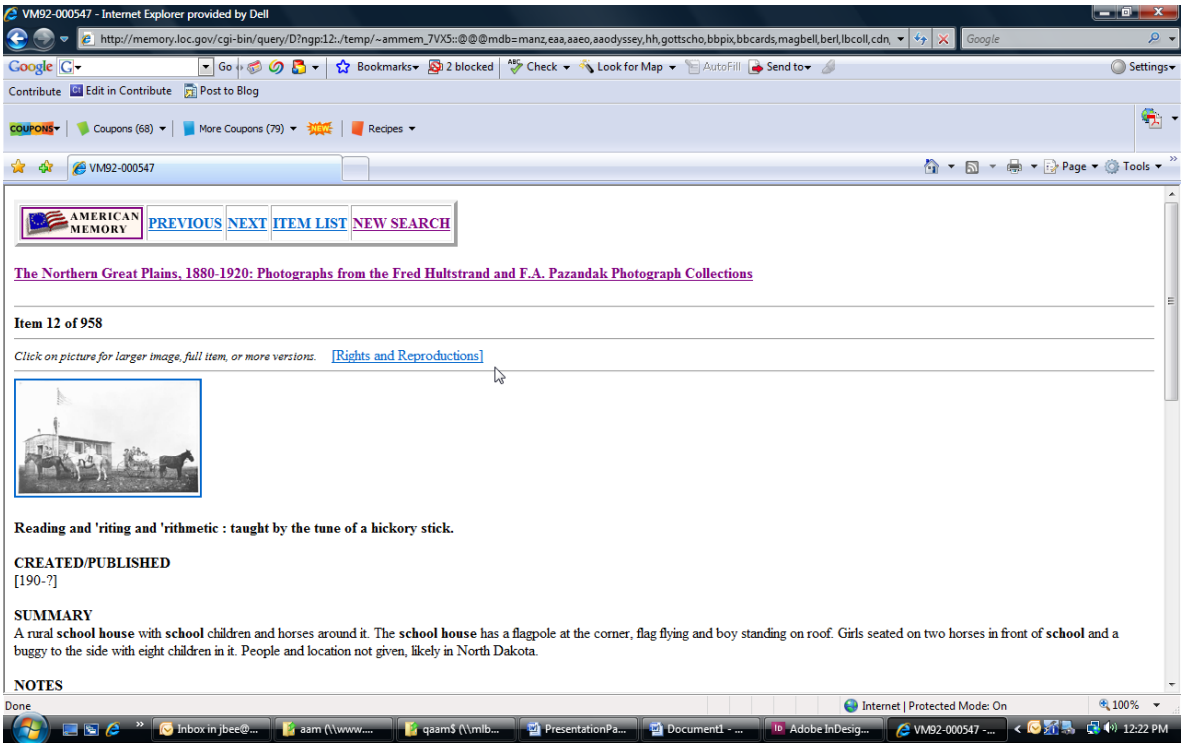
- Click in the row or column next to where you want to insert a new row or column.
- Right click
- Choose the option you need to add rows or columns

For additional information about creating and using tables, search the help files located in your word processing program.

Inserting an Image into a Resource Table

It will help you to add a small version of the image (thumbnail image) to your resource table so that you can more easily identify sources you are looking for.

1. Locate the thumbnail on the web page where you found your image.
2. Place the computer's mouse over the image. The arrow will change to a hand.
3. Right click and choose COPY
4. Open your Resource Table and click in the cell where the picture will be inserted.
5. Right click and choose PASTE
6. The thumbnail should appear in your Resource Table.



Inserting image into Resource Table

Now that you have the photo saved in your table, you can place it into a word processing document such as Microsoft Word, or presentation software such as Microsoft PowerPoint. The image can also be placed into a web page for use in instruction.

Saving a Permanent URL for a Primary Source

When you visit pages at the American Memory site, most of the resources you find appear by using a temporary URL generated by the search engine. If you bookmark the page using this temporary URL and try to come back to the same resource later, you will likely get an error. So, how do you get a permanent URL for the item that you have found? There are a few easy steps involved.

1. Find the primary source that you want to copy (Look at the address bar, you should see "temp as part of the address)
2. Right click on the primary source page (make sure you are in the empty space). A menu will appear.
3. Click on VIEW SOURCE
   **you will see a new window with a bunch of computer* code
4. Scroll to the bottom of the window . . . you will see the message:

<!-- The following URL will result in display of this document -->
<!-- http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/ngp:@field(NUMBER+@band(ndfahult+b272)) -->

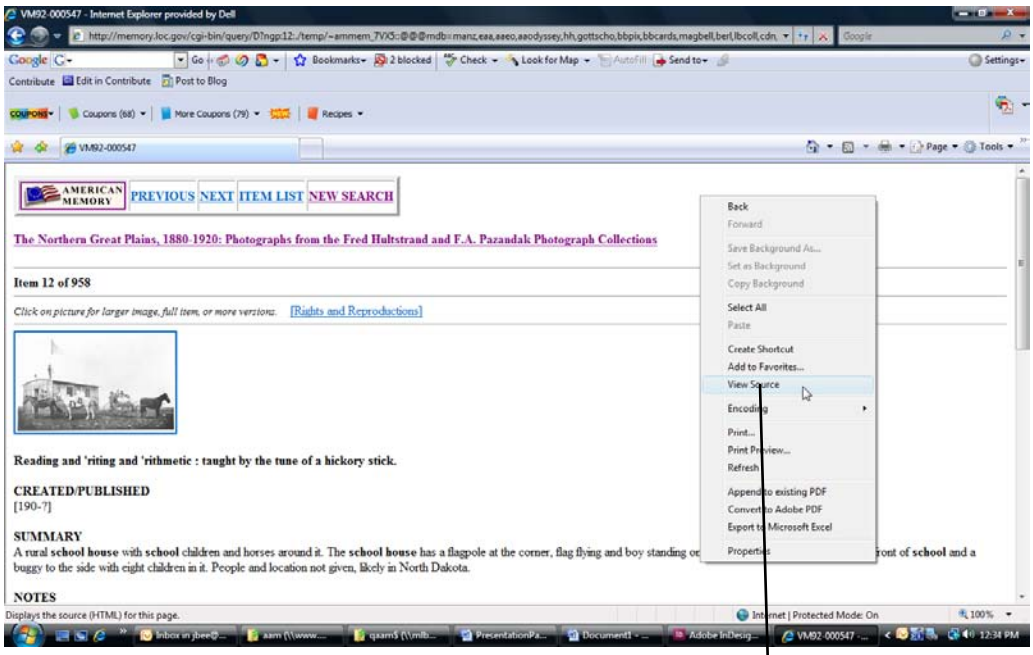
5. Highlight the URL underneath that line **starting with the http:// and including the ending parentheses "))"

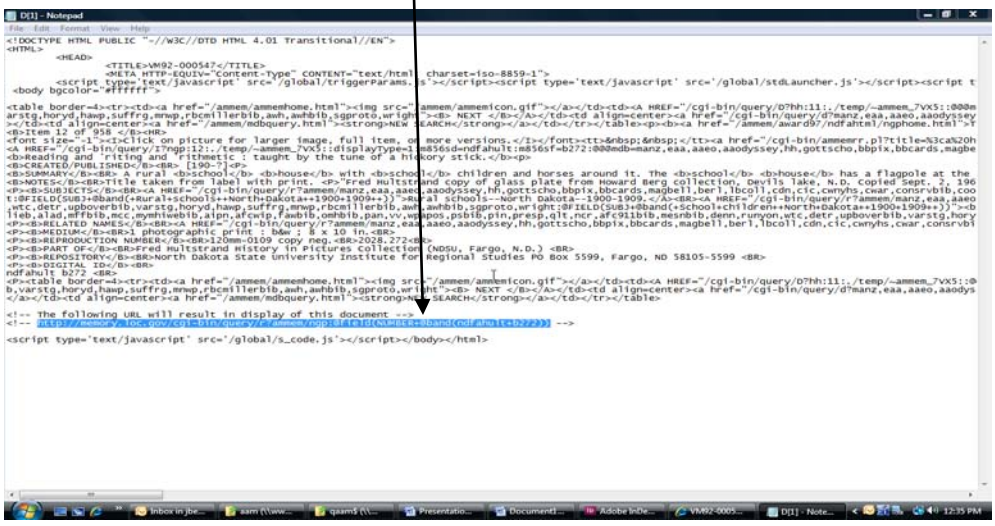
<!-- http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/ngp:@field(NUMBER+@band(ndfahult+b272)) -->

6. Click on the link and choose COPY
7. Open your Resource Table
7. Click in the cell where you want to insert the permanent URL
8. Right click choose PASTE
9. Hit ENTER to make the link turn blue. It will now hyperlink you back to the Bibliographic page for your image.

To create an active hyperlink:

1. Highlight the link that you just pasted
2. Click on the HYPERLINK icon under the INSERT tab.
3. Make sure the address in the dialog box at the bottom matches the URL in your table
4. Click OK


VM92-000547 - Internet Explorer provided by Dell
AMERICAN MEMORY
PREVIOUS NEXT ITEM LIST NEW SEARCH
The Northern Great Plains, 1880-1920: Photographs from the Fred Hultstrand and F.A. Pazandak Photograph Collections
Item 12 of 958
Click on picture for larger image, full item, or more versions. [Rights and Reproductions]
Reading and 'riting and 'rithmetic : taught by the tune of a hickory stick.
CREATED/PUBLISHED
[190-?]
SUMMARY
NOTES
Back
Forward
Save Background As...
Set as Background
Copy Background
Select All
Paste
Create Shortcut
Add to Favorites...
View Source
Encoding
Print...
Print Preview...
Refresh
Append to existing PDF
Convert to Adobe PDF
Export to Microsoft Excel
Properties
Displays the source (HTML) for this page.

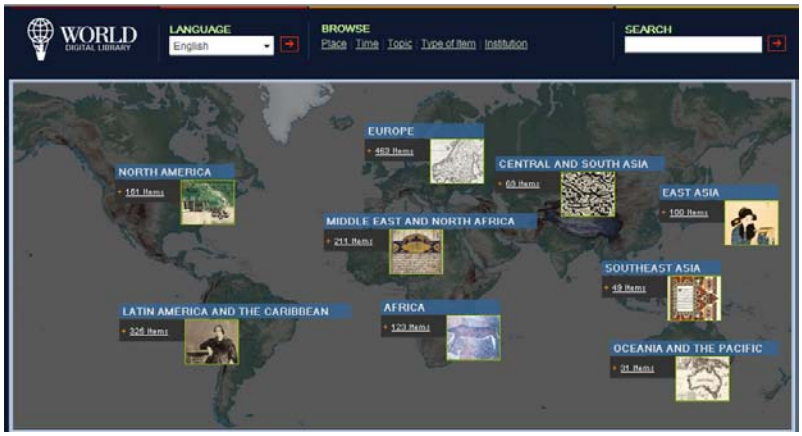

D[1] - Notepad
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN">
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>VM92-000547</TITLE>
<META HTTP-EQUIV="Content-Type" CONTENT="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1">
<body bgcolor="#ffffff">
<B>Item 12 of 958 </B><HR>
Reading and 'riting and 'rithmetic : taught by the tune of a hickory stick.<p>
<B>CREATED/PUBLISHED</B>
 [190-?]<P>
<B>SUMMARY</B>
 A rural school house with school children and horses around it. The school house has a flagpole at the
<B>NOTES</B>
Title taken from label with print. <P>"Fred Hultstrand copy of glass plate from Howard Berg collection, Devils Lake, N.D. Copied Sept. 2, 196
<P><B>SUBJECTS</B>
<A HREF="/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/manz,eaa,aaeo,aaodyssey,hh,gottscho,bbpix,bbcards,magbell,berl,lbcoll,cdn,cic,cwnyhs,cwar,consrvbib,coo
<P><B>MEDIUM</B>
1 photographic print : b&w ; 8 x 10 in.
<P><B>REPRODUCTION NUMBER</B>
120mm-0109 copy neg.
2028.272
<P><B>PART OF</B>
Fred Hultstrand History in Pictures Collection (NDSU, Fargo, N.D.)
<P><B>REPOSITORY</B>
North Dakota State University Institute for Regional Studies PO Box 5599, Fargo, ND 58105-5599
<P><B>DIGITAL ID</B>
ndfahult b272
<!-- The following URL will result in display of this document -->
<!-- http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/ngp:@field(NUMBER+@band(ndfahult+b272)) -->
<script type='text/javascript' src='/global/s_code.js'></script></body></html>

From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **More Exhibitions** in lower left corner.
Click on **All Exhibitions** on the left side.

EXHIBITIONS are online exhibits that highlight a specific theme or topic. These special collections allow you to take a virtual tour of the treasures housed at the Library of Congress.

From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **Tomas.gov** in the upper right corner.

THOMAS is the area of the Library of Congress web site that has information on current and past legislation. THOMAS makes federal legislative information freely available to the public. You can search by word/phrase, bill number or specific legislator. Thomas includes resources and activities for teachers.



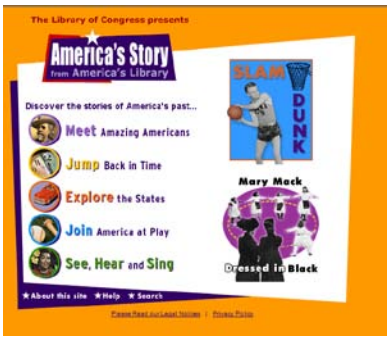
From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **World Digital Library** under **Resources & Programs.**

WORLD DIGITAL LIBRARY is a cooperative project of the Library of Congress, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and partner libraries, archives, and educational and cultural institutions from the United States and around the world.

KIDS AND FAMILIES

From the Library of Congress homepage,
Click on **Kids & Families** under **Especially for.**

The **Kids and Families** area of the Library of Congress includes resources, information, and activities that would be of interest to kids, parents and teachers.



America's Story was designed especially with young people in mind, but there are great stories and activities for kids, parents, and teachers. Discover stories from America's past: Meet Amazing Americans, Jump Back in Time, Explore the States, Join America at Play, See, Hear and Sing.

Lifelong Literacy promotes lifelong literacy beginning with young children. When kids become good readers in the early grades, they are more likely to become better learners throughout their school years and beyond. It's never too early to open your mind to reading. This site includes poetry, digitized rare children's books, and resources for parents and teachers.

Everyday Mysteries is filled with fun facts from the Library of Congress. Did you ever wonder why a camel has a hump? Can you really tell the weather by listening to the chirp of a cricket? Why do our joints make popping sounds? Visit Everyday Mysteries to learn about the fascinating science behind ordinary things.

WEBCASTS

From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **More Webcast** under **Featured Webcast About the Collections**.

Webcasts allow visitors to view presentations from dozens of your favorite authors, poets and storytellers as well as speakers from a variety of fields including, science, technology, religion, government etc. New Webcasts are added on a regular basis

EXPLORE & DISCOVER

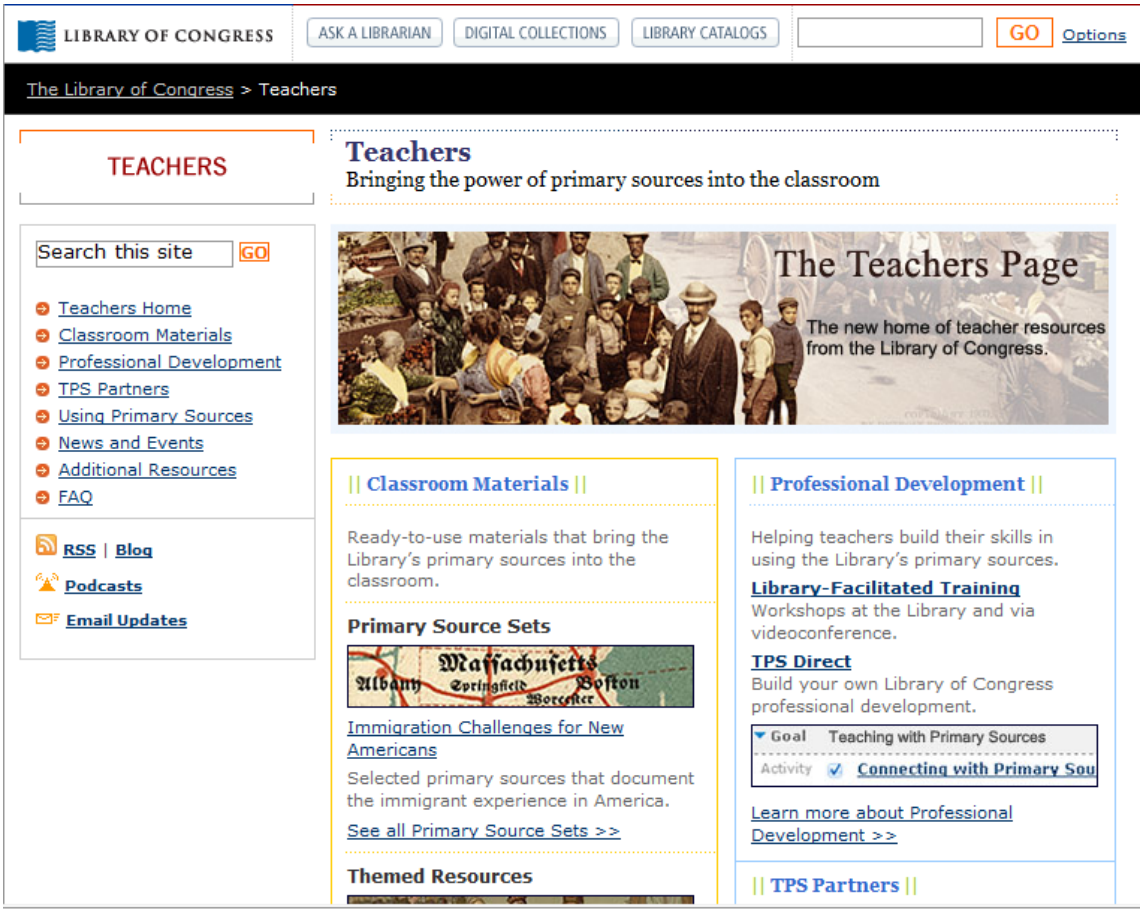
From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **Wise Guide to the loc.gov** under **Explore and Discover.**

The **Wise Guide** portal was designed to introduce you to the many fascinating, educational and useful resources available from the nation's library and one of the most popular websites of the federal government. The "Wise Guide" will be refreshed monthly, much like a magazine, offering links to the best of the Library's online offerings. Each of the "articles" is based on items contained in a collection, database, reading room or other area of the Library's online offerings.

From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **Today in History** under **Explore & Discover**.

Today in History is a Library of Congress presentation of historic facts highlighted by items from the American Memory collections. Travel back in time by visiting the Today in History and using the archives to search for specific information by topic or date.

TEACHERS



www.loc.gov/teachers

From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **Teachers** under **Especially for**.

The Teachers page is an online resource, created especially for teachers. It includes:

- Classroom Materials
- Professional Development
- TPS Partners
- Using Primary Sources
- News and Events
- Additional Resources

*Use the links on the left to navigate the Teachers page.
The Teachers page is an online resource created especially for teachers.

It includes:

Classroom Materials

- Lesson Plans
- Themed Resources
- Primary Source Sets
- Presentations & Activities
- Collection Connections

Professional Development

- Library-Facilitated Training
- TPS Direct
- Self-Directed

TPS Partners

- TPS Program

Using Primary Sources

- Why Use Primary Sources
- Citing Primary Sources
- Copyright and Primary Sources
- Finding Primary Sources
- Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tools

News and Events

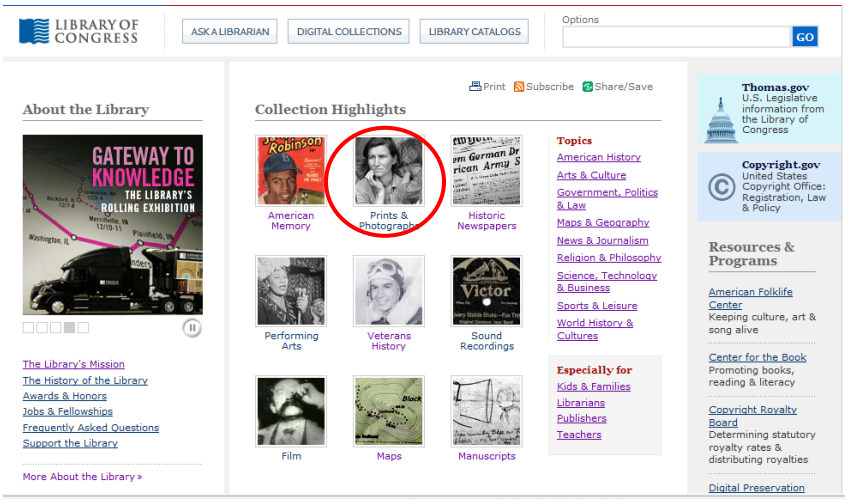
- News and Events at LOC and other Places

Additional Resources

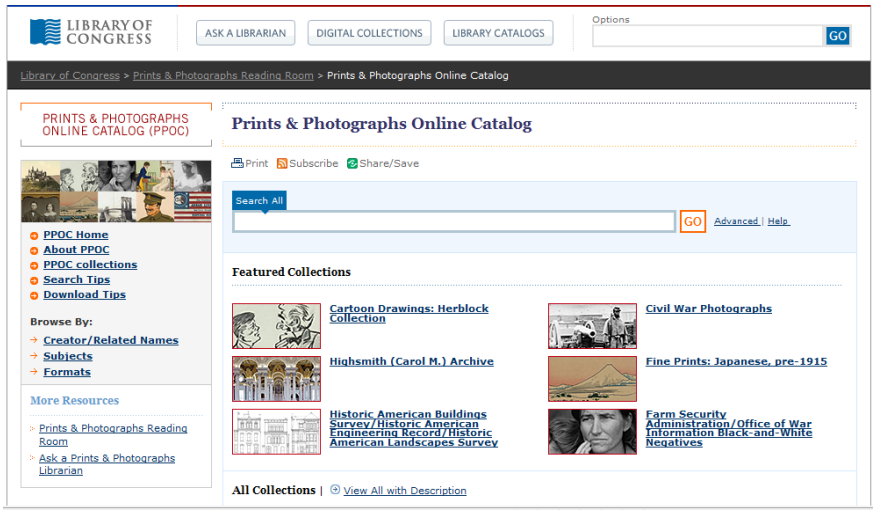
- Slide Shows/Handouts
- Resources from Outside the Library
- Class Starters
- More Library Resources

The prints and photographs collections include photographs, prints, drawings, posters, and architectural and engineering drawings. The Prints and Photographs Online Catalog holds items that are not located in American Memory, but some collections can be found in both places. Not all images displayed in this catalog are in the public domain, in some collections only thumbnail images are displayed.

1. From the Library of Congress homepage, click on **Prints and Photographs**.



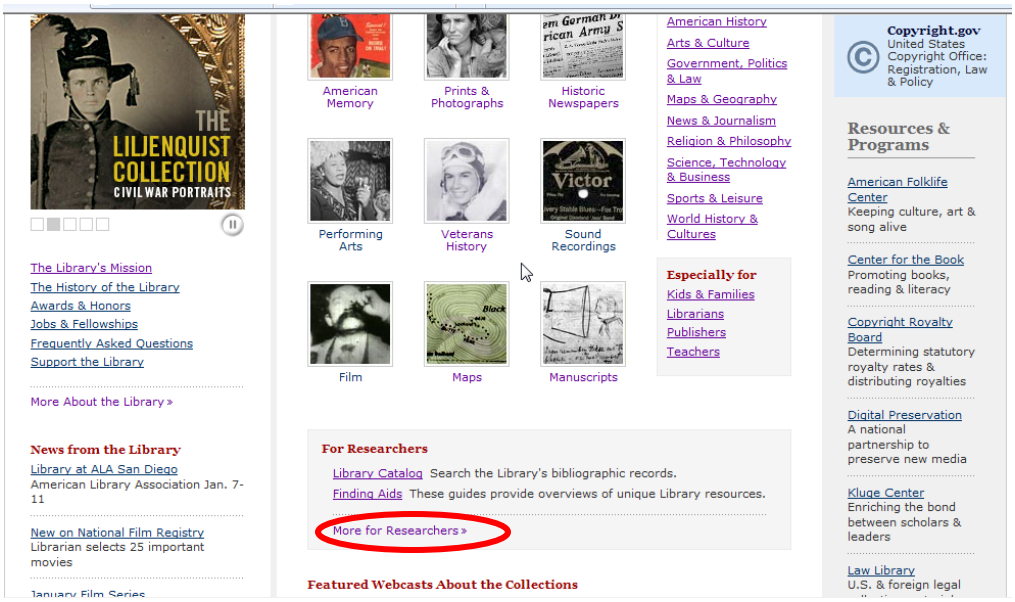
2.Type in the search term or terms in the search box.



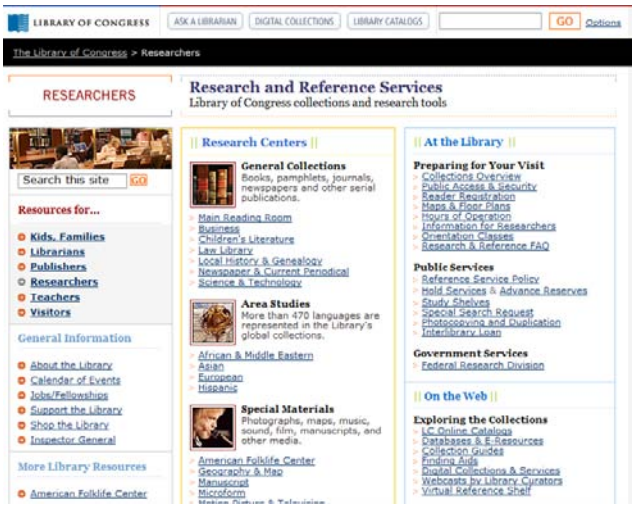
Research Centers Overview

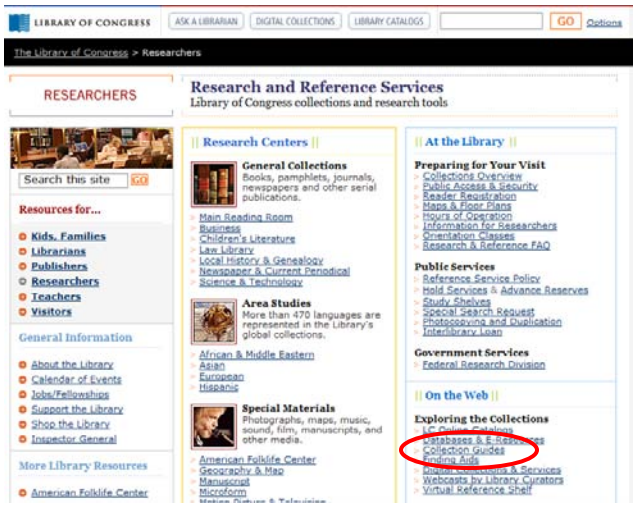
The Library of Congress is organized into Research Centers, also referred to as Reading Rooms, where collections of materials are maintained. Research Centers/Reading Rooms offer hundreds of special format, language, and subject area Collections.

1. From the Library of Congress Home page, click on **More for Researchers**



2. Click on the Research Center you want to use.





3. Click on **Collection Guides** to help you find specific topics.

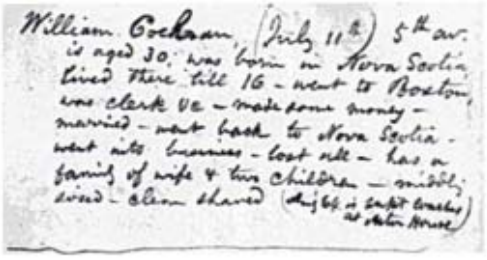
Why use Primary Sources?

In words, pictures and sounds the Library of Congress American Memory collections… bring living history into our classrooms.

Develop critical thinking skills…

Understand all history is local…

Acquire empathy for the human condition…



Primary sources are snippets of history. They are incomplete and often come without context. They require students to be analytical, to examine sources thoughtfully and to determine what else they need to know to make inferences from the materials.

A high school student states, "I learned that in order to do history, one must be objective and be able to look at a puzzle of historical events and put them together in order."

Local history projects require students to "tell their own stories" about familiar people, events, and places. Memories from an adults' perspective provide a rich glimpse of history that is not available in a textbook. What evolves is the sense that world history is also personal family history, which provides a compelling context for student understanding.

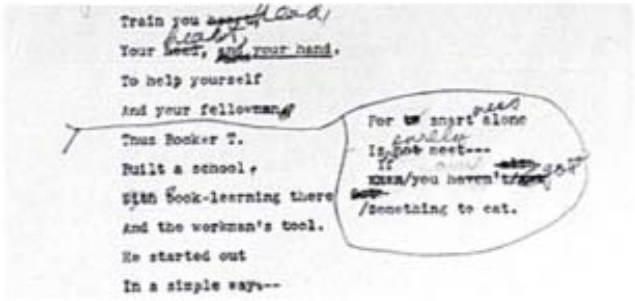
An elementary/middle school teacher reports that " ..finding information about topics that are of importance to our local history is invaluable. Students are excited by the fact that our local history is archived nationally. This gives their immediate cultural area importance in their eyes.

Primary sources help students relate in a personal way to events of the past coming away with a deeper understanding of history as a series of human events.

A high school teacher reported that, " In sharing the Whitman hospital letters, I clearly saw a sheen of tears in students' eyes and noted an avid interest in Civil War soldiers as 'people' not simply as pallid historical figures.

Consider different points of view in analysis…

Understand the continuum of history…



In analyzing primary sources, students move from concrete observations and facts to making inferences about the materials. "Points of view" is one of the most important inferences that can be drawn. What is the intent of the speaker, of the photographer, of the musician? How does that color one's interpretation or understanding of the evidence?

A high school teacher states that, "Discovering that two people seeing the same primary source differently creates a kind of dissonance that opens up the meaning of the source and creates new understanding in learners"

It is difficult for students to understand that we all participate in making history everyday, that each of us in the course of our lives leave behind primary source documentation that scholars years hence may examine as a record of "the past." The immediacy of first-person accounts of events is compelling to most students.

"Comparisons of events of the past to events our are students are engaged in daily helps to bring "history" to the present and make it 'live" for our students."

Why Would I Use a Primary Source in Teaching and Learning Activities?

For years, historians and educators across the curriculum have understood the value of primary sources in K-12 education. Two key reasons for including primary sources in the curriculum are:

1. Primary sources expose students to multiple perspectives on great issues of the past and present. The human experience, after all, deals with matters that were furiously debated by the participants. Interpretations of the past are furiously debated as well, among historians, policy makers, politicians, and ordinary citizens. By working with primary sources, students can become involved in these debates.

2. Primary sources help students develop knowledge, skills, and analytical abilities. By dealing directly with primary sources, students engage in asking questions, thinking critically, making intelligent inferences, and developing reasoned explanations and interpretations of events and issues in the past and present. Primary sources also often provide a real-life framework to apply skills learned in the classroom. For example, using a chart documenting production from a copper mine in Bryson City, NC, students can calculate information such as profits and losses, and cycles of production.

Activity Ideas to Enhance Curriculum

The following suggestions for student activities can help you enhance your curriculum using authentic artifacts, photographs, audio clips, music, and documents from the Library of Congress and other sources.

Artifacts

Make a hypothesis about the use of an unknown artifact pictured in an old photograph. Use online and library research to support or refute the hypothesis. Make a presentation to the class to “show and tell” the object, hypothesis, search methods, and results.

Study an artifact and trace the development of this invention over time (examples: automobiles, tractors, trains, airplanes, weapons). What can you find about the technology, tools, and materials available through time? Who used the invention in the past? How is the invention used today?

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Select a piece of fine art that appeals to your senses. Research the artist, the date of the piece, and the medium. What does information about the artist; the medium, the subject, and the composition tell you about the prevailing attitudes and conditions of the time period? (For example, What symbolism is used? How is perspective used? In what roles are people portrayed? What is left out of the composition?)

Use resources to study fashion trends. How has fashion changed over time? How did clothing styles reflect people's work and their roles in society? What clothing styles have carried over into present times?

Photographs

Use an historic photograph or film of a street scene. Give an oral description of the sights, sounds, and smells that surround the scene, presenting evidence from the photograph itself and other sources about the time period. Examine the image to find clues about the economics and commerce of the time.

Select a historical photograph or film frame. Predict what will happen one minute and one hour after the photograph or film was taken. Explain the reasoning behind your predictions

To encourage focus on detail, show a photograph or film frame to the classroom for three minutes and then remove it. Have students draw the contents of the image on a piece of paper divided into a grid of nine sections. Repeat this exercise with new images and watch students' ability to recall detail improve

Audio

Research your family history by interviewing relatives. Use letters, audio recordings, and videotape to compile a report on an important time for your family. Make note of differing recollections about the same event.

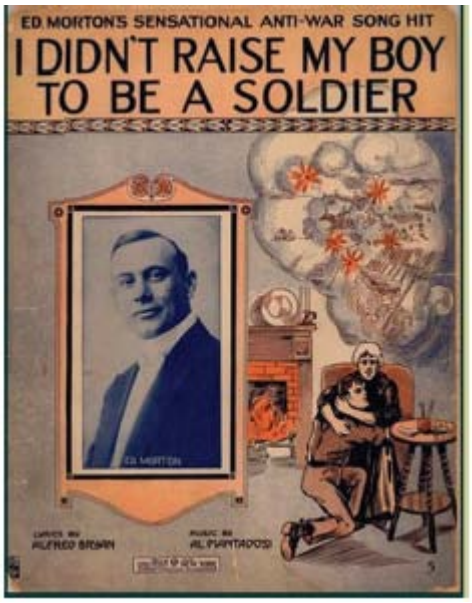
Work in teams to record interviews of older citizens in the community. Focus on and compile interviews on one aspect of community life such as work, family, or schools. Combine class reports with historical images and documents to produce a documentary on the history of your community.

Introduce an audio recording of a famous political speech. Ask students to think about and write down impressions while they listen to the speech. What is the speaker's key message? What is the speaker's point of view? How does the speaker's oratory style affect the impact of the message? If the text of the speech is available, have students compare impressions from hearing the speech to impressions from reading the speech.

Have students listen to audio recordings from old radio broadcasts. Compare the language, style of speaking, and content to radio and television programs of today. How does the content of the older radio broadcast exemplify the events and prevailing attitudes of the time? How does modern radio and television programming exemplify events and attitudes of the present time?

Music

Research and study lyrics of popular songs from the periods of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. What do the lyrics tell you about public attitudes toward the war? Interview veterans of these wars about their perception of the accuracy of the information in the lyrics.



Have students search for events that have inspired lyrics in current popular music. Have students compare present day events and music to lyrics from the past inspired by historical events. What are the similarities and differences between present day and historical songs and the events that inspired them?

Documents

Study historical maps of a city, state, or region to find evidence of changes in population, industry, and settlement over time. Use other resources to find and report on causes for the changes you find. Use maps to illustrate your descriptions of these changes.

Choose a famous, historical, public building in your area. Research blueprints or architectural drawings of the building. With help from an architect or librarian, compare the plans to the building as it exists today. What changes do you see? Why do you think the changes occurred?

Suggestions for using primary sources were compiled from the National Digital Library's Educators' Forum held in July, 1995 and from the Library staff. Educators at the Forum, like many throughout the country, know that history comes alive for students who are plugged into primary sources. These suggestions for student activities can help you enhance your curriculum using authentic artifacts, documents, photographs, and manuscripts from the Library of Congress and other sources.

Image References

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Page 7 Top A Civil War Soldier in the Wild Cat Regiment, Selections from the Tilton C. Reynolds Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/tcrhtml/tcrhome.html

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Page 21 Top The close of a career in New York. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Detroit Publishing Company Collection. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?detr:11:./temp/~ammem_soax::@@@mdb=mcc,gottscho

Page 21 Bottom *Civil War Treasures from the New-York Historical Society*, [Digital ID nhnycw/al al00001] http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpcoop/nhihtml/cwnyhshome.html, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cwnyhs:@field(DOCID+@lit(al00001))

Page 22 Detail from Incidents of the war. A harvest of death, Gettysburg, July, 1863. Photographed by Timothy H. O'Sullivan, July 1865 (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Reproduction number: LC-B8184-7964-A). http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cwar:@field(NUMBER+@band(cwp+4a40875))

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