

ACC Library *Research Guide*

Western Civilization

Primary & Secondary Sources



Primary sources are first-hand historical accounts and records created by the participants and observers of events. Secondary sources include books and journal articles that explain history through commentaries and interpretations of primary sources.

Start your research at the ACC Library homepage arapahoe.edu/lrc.

>Find books: click Aquabrowser or Traditional Catalog.

>Find ebooks (NetLibrary): click Online Books (must register on an ACC computer first).

>Find journal articles: click Databases (see passwords on right)

History subject sections in Library: CB—history of civilization; D—world history, European history and Asia, Africa, Australia; E and F—North and South American history.

Online search strategies for using keywords and subject terms

>Use the following types of search terms:

city, country, continent, time period, event, war, battle, name of person, group of people, social movement, religion

Examples of keywords found in titles, subjects, notes: *Renaissance, Middle Ages, fifteenth century, Battle of Hastings; the Inquisition, Henry VIII, Ivan the Terrible, Celts, Vikings, feudalism, humanism, Puritanism*

(Combine specific city, country, continent with *history* or *politics and government* or other terms, as shown below.)

>Use specific Library of Congress (LC) subject headings for Library catalog searches: *western civilization, social evolution, classical civilization, Greco-Roman civilization, ancient history, Christian civilization, Catholic church history, feudalism, nationalism, Puritanism, monarchy, utopias, sixteenth century, seventeenth century, social history, [city] history, [country] history, [continent] history, [country] politics and government, world history, military history, battles, revolutions*

Examples: *Greece history; Rome politics and government; Constantinople history; France history; Russia history; Europe history;*

>To find primary sources, combine above terms with the following:

autobiography, biography, documents, journals, letters, narrative, personal narratives, reports, sources, speeches.

Examples: *western civilization sources, middle ages documents, England diaries, rome autobiography*

Web sites with primary sources

>Google search (click first link on results): “Using Primary Sources on the Web” (general guide)

>Euro Docs eudocs.lib.byu.edu (this site has images, transcriptions, and translations of primary sources)