PICTURE THIS: Finding Primary Sources at the Library of Congress



Learn strategies for successfully Researching the Archives from The Library of Congress

Objectives for this workshop

1. Learn strategies to navigate the Library of Congress Digital Archives / online collections (specifically the **Prints & Photographs Online Catalog**) when conducting research.
2. Learn how to use Photographs, Prints, and other visuals from the Library of Congress Digital Archives AND Library of Congress **Photographs & Prints 'Featured Collections'.**
3. Learn about the copyright and fair use policy for the **Library of Congress**.

Analyzing Primary Sources

- Analyzing primary sources is a critical step in the research process. Teachers can help students internalize the basic process of observing an item, reflecting on their own personal knowledge, and, finally, generating questions.

- **Primary Source Analysis Tool –**

https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool_LOC.pdf

Library of Congress Digital Collections & Teacher's Guides (part 1)

Books / Printed Materials - https://www.loc.gov/books/

Analyzing Printed Text – https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Books_and_Other_Printed_Texts.pdf

Maps Collections – https://www.loc.gov/maps/collections/

Analyzing Maps - https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Maps.pdf

Newspapers – https://www.loc.gov/newspapers/

Analyzing Newspapers- https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Newspapers.pdf

Cartoon Prints - https://www.loc.gov/collections/american-cartoon-prints/about-this-collection/

Analyzing Political Cartoons - https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Political_Cartoons.pdf

Library of Congress Digital Collections & Teacher's Guides (part 2)

Photos, Prints, Drawings - https://www.loc.gov/photos/

Analyzing Photos & Prints - https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Photographs_and_Prints.pdf

Songs of America - https://www.loc.gov/collections/songs-of-america/about-this-collection/

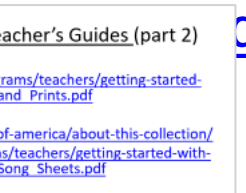
Analyzing Sheet Music -https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Sheet_Music_and_Song_Sheets.pdf

Films, Videos - https://www.loc.gov/film-and-videos/

Analyzing Motion Pictures - https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Motion_Pictures.pdf

Charts and Graphs - https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/charts-and-graphs/

Analyzing Charts and Graphs - https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/teachers/getting-started-with-primary-sources/documents/Analyzing_Charts_and_Graphs.pdf



Library of Congress collection topics

- American History
- Arts and Culture
- Government, Politics, and Law
- Maps and Geography
- News and Journalism
- Religion and Philosophy
- Science, Technology, and Businesses
- Sports and Leisure
- World History and Cultures

Featured Digital Collections *

American History & Culture - historic photos, documents, and video from **American Memory**

Historic Newspapers - access to America's historic newspapers through the **Chronicling America** project

International Collections - Materials from overseas libraries from **Global Gateway**.

Legislative Information - **THOMAS** provides searchable full text of bills

Performing Arts - articles and special presentations on music, theater and dance

Prints and Photographs - over 1 million digital images

Veterans History - first-person stories of wartime service

Early Sound Recordings - **The National Jukebox** features over 10,000 78rpm disc sides issued by the Victor, 1900-25

**Information from the LOC web site*

Engage with primary sources

Because primary sources are incomplete snippets of history; each one represents a mystery that students can only explore further by finding new pieces of evidence.

Observe each primary source.

- Where does your eye go first?
- What do you see that you didn't expect?
- What powerful words and ideas are expressed?

Think about your response to the source.

- What feelings and thoughts does the primary source trigger in you?
- What questions does it raise?

Promote Inquiry Learning

Speculate about each source, its creator, and its context.

- What was happening during this time period?
- What was the creator's purpose in making this primary source?
- What does the creator do to get his or her point across?
- What was this primary source's audience?
- What biases or stereotypes do you see?

Ask if this source agrees with other primary sources, or with what you already know.

Fair Use & Copyright Issues for the Library of Congress

1. Review the **Library of Congress** checklist – for use of ***Library*** materials***.***

Most items published in the United States more than 95 years ago are now in the public domain. Items that were never published, like letters and family photographs, are copyrighted for the life of the creator plus 70 years.

2. Practice with an item from the **Library of Congress** digital collection, using the 'Checklist'.

a. Reviewing the purpose of use

b. Checking on the type of copyrighted material

Search Tips in the Library of Congress Digital Archives
Photographs & Prints

- You can use either capital or lowercase letters. Case does not affect the results of your search.
- You can enter words in any order.
- Some punctuation and special characters (for example, letters with marks) throw off the search. If you get zero results, try re-entering the search without those characters.

Library of Congress: Photographs & Prints digital archives

https://www.loc.gov/pictures/

Not finding enough.

- Use the **"Search all"** blank on the home page to search everything in the catalog at once rather than searching a single collection
- **Use fewer words** (many "inventory level" records include only information from a caption or caption card, so, for instance, an individual's first name may not be included or fully spelled out)
- **Check spelling and spacing** of search word(s): Are there alternate spellings? Could two words have been combined into one (or vice versa) in image captions? Have you used abbreviations that can be spelled out?
- Try using **wildcards** to enable the search to include variations on a word (E.g., child* retrieves *child*, *children*, *childlike*)

Continuation – how to be successful when researching online in the Library of Congress

- Try selecting from lists of terms in the **"Browse By"** offerings at the left of the search screen.
- Try **"View all"** records or images to see if this gives clues about the kinds of images that are in a collection or the kinds of words that are in the descriptions.
- **Look through the list of collections with descriptions**. Is the image you are looking for something we are likely to have? (E.g., art reproductions, photos of very recent news events, and illustrations of ancient peoples are not strengths of our collections.) For information about what the catalog includes, see "About the Prints & Photographs Online Catalog"

Finding too much?

- In the **Advanced search, select to "match all words" or to "match exact phrase." Select "No variants**" to eliminate words with alternate endings.

- **Look through the list of collections with descriptions**. Is the image you are looking for something we are likely to have? (E.g., art reproductions, recent news photos, and illustrations of ancient peoples are not strengths of our collections.)

- Try selecting from lists of terms in the **"Browse By"** offerings at the left of the search screen. *Note:* Selecting a heading retrieves only records with that exact heading, not records that contain words from the heading.

- Try searching the **Thesaurus for Graphic Materials** to see what standardized terms we use to index images you might be interested in.

Searching a 'Time Period' - At present, there is no simple, precise way to search for a date or time period.

- You can search for a year or a span of years. But the appearance of the date or the particular string of numbers anywhere in the record will cause the record to be retrieved, so you may get records for items whose artist was born in that year, or records that include a four-digit address.

Note: Catalog records often use estimated dates or multiple dates that are expressed as a range of years. If your year falls within that range, it will not be retrieved. Try neighboring years that end in 5 or 0, e.g., 1750, 1755

- Subject headings often include a chronological component that is expressed in decades. For instance, if the item was produced or depicts something in 1844, the subject subdivision will be *1840-1850*. So, you might try searching for decades that would be relevant.

Searching for a ‘Place’

- It is best to try both specific place names and the names of the larger geographic jurisdictions when searching geographically.

- Some catalog records include a hierarchy of the places represented by an image or set of images, going from the larger geographic unit to the smaller. Example: *Canada--British Columbia--Columbia Mountains*.

- In other cases, only the specific place is mentioned, sometimes with an abbreviation for the larger geographic jurisdiction. Example: *Los Angeles (Calif.)*

Downloading Image Files: The Prints & Photographs Online Catalog includes images in the following formats.

- **gif** - generally small "thumbnails" used for previewing images; a gif image displays at the top of its associated catalog record and, in some cases, it is the only image that will display to those searching outside the Library of Congress because of rights considerations (extension on the file name is *.gif*). The resolution is generally about 150x150 pixels.

- **jpeg** - generally a larger image that displays in a separate screen from the catalog record; sometimes two types of jpeg files are available--one for reference viewing and one at a higher resolution (extension on the file name is *.jpg*).

- **tiff**- generally the highest resolution file available in PPOC, viewed or downloaded via a link on the screen where the reference jpeg displays (extension on the file name is *.tif*).

To save images:

- Place your mouse over the image of the desired jpeg or tiff link.
- Click the right mouse button (PC) or hold the control key while clicking to get the dialogue box (Macintosh OSX. For earlier versions: depress and hold the single button of the mouse).

A menu will appear.

  - Select *Save image as* or *Save Picture as* if you moused over an image.
  - Select *Save target as* or *Save link as* if you moused over a link.

- A box will appear in which you indicate your desired name of the image file and where you wish it to be saved. Note: Web images often have non-intuitive file names (ex. 1a34653u.tif)- you may want to rename the image to something you will understand later (e.g., railroad.tif).

Activity – research in the Library Photographs & Prints

- Colt Armory and Firearms Company

Search: **Colt Firearms**

Colt Firearms Company

Colt Armory Company

Colt Firearms Workers

- Title: Colt's Armory, Hartford, Ct.
- Part of: Detroit Publishing Company photograph collection (Library of Congress)
- Bookmark This Record: https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016804525/



Innovation in History: Impact, Influence, Change (NHD 2027 Theme)

- Researching the Library of Congress: Photos, Prints, Drawings

1st – Research **Colt Firearms** &/or **Colt Firearms Workers.**

- What did you find? What did you learn? What questions arise from what you discovered?

2nd – Research your own topic (for CHD) in the Library of Congress: Photos, Prints, Drawings

- What did you find? What did you learn? Do you still have questions about what resources are available (online) from the Library?

Library of Congress: Photographs, Prints, Drawings
Featured Collections

https://www.loc.gov/picture

Review the Collections to determine if there is a set of photos/prints that would help you in your CHD topic.

Additional suggestions to find sources at the Library of Congress

Searching the Library of Congress via Google

Enter Topic (name) site:loc.gov

Ask the Librarian (at the Library of Congress) - https://ask.loc.gov/

Have a question? Need assistance?

Contact us at the Connecticut Democracy Center & Connecticut History Day program

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