Writing 1: Washington University Libraries’ Research Tips
http://www.library.wustl.edu

There are many types of sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you need</th>
<th>Use</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas for getting started</td>
<td>Jumpstart Your Research page at <a href="http://library.wustl.edu/research.html">http://library.wustl.edu/research.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background information, overview</td>
<td>Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, and other Reference Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas, current information</td>
<td>Magazines, Newspapers</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-depth analysis</td>
<td>Scholarly, peer-reviewed journals</td>
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<td>History, overview</td>
<td>Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics and Statistics</td>
<td>Government Publications and Government Web sites, News Magazines, Newspapers</td>
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Sources come in different formats:
- Print
- Electronic (open access and limited access)
- Microfilm
- Computer files
- Video recordings
- Sound recordings
- Maps
- Still images

**Primary sources** are firsthand accounts, historical documents, data, surveys, works of visual art and literature, government documents, and more; and **secondary sources** analyze, interpret, or comment on primary sources.

- **Research Tip** Carefully examine the footnotes and bibliographies of secondary sources to locate the primary sources they are agreeing with, disputing, or interpreting in a new light.
- Also, perform keyword searches on the names of people, organizations, phenomena, theories, and events associated with your topic—to find speeches, policy statements, studies, interviews, novels, poems, or photographs.

**Searching the WU Library Catalog for Primary Sources** published collections of primary sources carry the word “sources” as part of the subject heading. Examples:

- Missouri River Valley -- History – Sources
- African Americans -- Civil rights -- History -- 20th century – Sources
- Italy -- History -- 1922-1945 – Sources

- **Tip** Add “sources” to your keyword search:
  - Black Panther* and sources

Other terms to try: archives, personal narratives, interviews, pictorial works, maps, manuscripts, notebooks, diaries, correspondence, cartoons, description and travel.

**Suggested databases** for starting your research (link from **Find Database A-Z List**):

- Multidisciplinary
  - Academic Search Premier
  - Alternative Press Index
  - GPO Catalog (government info)
  - Oxford Reference Online
  - Web of Science

- Arts and Humanities
  - America: History and Life
  - Art Full Text
  - Historical Abstracts
  - Literature Online
  - MLA (language and literature)
### Search Strategies

1. **Combining** keywords with and, or, not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>And</th>
<th>Or</th>
<th>Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Television and Teenagers" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Letters or Correspondence" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Mexico not New" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **And**
  - Narrows search
  - Retrieves records with both concepts
  - Use for unrelated terms

- **Or**
  - Broadens search
  - Retrieves records with both concepts
  - Use for related terms

- **Not**
  - Narrows search
  - Retrieves records with first term except those that contain second term
  - May exclude relevant items

2. **Truncation**: Truncate the word with a common truncation symbol (*, ?) to return records with variants of the word. Ex. global* retrieves global, globalization, globalism

3. **Limits**: look for limits like date, language, peer-reviewed, publication type, etc.