



African American Culture

This orientation will show you how to find the best information in the shortest amount of time. You will be able to use it as a framework for most of the research that you will do in college. Remember that the librarians are your partners in research; they can guide you from beginning to end during your research project.

Reference Books are useful for overviews of a topic. The information is current, concise, and often highlights specific aspects of a subject. Reference books must be used in the library; plan to take notes or photocopy the information. Start your research after consulting books such as the following:

<i>Atlas of African-American History</i>	Ref E 185 .C55 2001
<i>Black Firsts</i>	Ref E 185 .B574 2003
<i>Dictionary of Black African Civilization</i>	Ref DT 352.4 .D5213
<i>Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History</i>	Ref E 185 .E54 2006 v.4
<i>Encyclopedia of Black America</i>	Ref E 185 .E55
<i>Encyclopedia of Black Studies</i>	Ref E 185 .E554 2005
<i>Historical and Cultural Atlas of African Americans</i>	Ref E 185 .A8 1991
<i>Reference Library of Black America</i>	Ref E 185 .R455 2005
<i>Timetables of African-American History</i>	Ref E 185 .H295 1995

Circulating books can be checked out. They are found in the library's bookstacks. Books develop a topic in detail. You search the [library catalog](#) to find books on your subject. Try some of these words and phrases in the subject search box:

African Americans – Education	African Americans – Race identity
African Americans – Employment	African Americans - Segregation
African Americans – Economic conditions	African Americans – Social life and customs
African American families – History	African Americans – Civil rights

Magazine, Newspaper and Journal Articles can provide current information on your topic. They can be found through the library's [databases](#). The following are just a few that the library subscribes to. You can also search the databases from home.

[African American Experience](#)

This database specializes in African American history and culture. It gives overviews of topics, biographical information, timelines, statistics, tables and graphs, history, and more. Click on **Timeline** (under **Resources**), select a **Time Period**, and then a decade (top of page). Now scroll through the various categories for each year, such as **Art**; **Business**; **Education**, etc., and select something that you would like to research in more depth. Return to the database homepage; enter your topic in the **Quick Search** box to find more information on your subject. Or, if you wish to **Browse** through categories, such as **History**; **Music**; **Social Issues**, etc. you will find many articles of interest.

[Expanded Academic ASAP](#)

Magazines and academic journals can be found here. Start with an **Advanced Search** to enter a combination of search words or phrases, such as *African Americans* AND *education* AND *1960s*. A **Browse Subject Search** will find articles on a topic and organize the articles according to topical subdivisions.

[Issues and Controversies](#)

This database specializes in current (and past) controversial issues. It gives background information on many topics, as well as related news events; statistics; tables and graphs; pro/con arguments and much more. You can search general or specific topics, such as *African Americans*, or *Black History Month*.

[Web Sites](#)

Beware of the Web. Unless you are an expert on your topic, it might be difficult to find a reliable site using Google or Yahoo. Instead, try one of the search engines linked from the library's web site. These search engines provide access to websites that have been evaluated by researchers and scholars. From the library homepage, click on [Research Aids](#) on the left hand margin; then, go to the [Best Websites](#) link. Select one of the recommended search engines, and try searching with general words or phrases, such as *African Americans*, or *civil rights*.

[Ipl2 \(Internet Public Library\)](#)

This is a subject index to Internet resources. It also links to additional resources by subject, newspapers and magazines, special collections leading to reference resources, literary criticism and help with writing research papers.

[Google](#)

Google is loaded with information – some excellent, some fraudulent. Just remember that you must evaluate what you find here. Rather than doing a general search, try some of Google's more sophisticated search possibilities, such as its Advanced search option.

[Google Advanced Search](#)

Use the "Search within a site or domain" box to limit your search to an educational (enter .edu) or government (enter .gov) site. Articles from educational or government sites may have more accuracy and authority.

Use the "File type" box to find a PowerPoint presentation on your topic. Click on "any format" and select "Microsoft PowerPoint".

ALWAYS REMEMBER TO ASK A LIBRARIAN IF YOU NEED HELP:

- Developing a search strategy appropriate to your assignment and thesis.
- Evaluating your sources and finding additional research options.
- [Citing sources](#)