

HONORS U.S. HISTORY

First Quarter Research Project – Literature Search

When researchers consider a question to explore, whether an scientific experiment or social science question (history, political science, sociology, etc), they begin with a literature search. A literature search is an effort to find and become familiar with the previously published work by others that touches directly or indirectly on the question being considered. This is an essential step in the process, so that time and energy not be spent on questions that have been thoroughly explored already, and to help provide direction to further research.

For this project, you will engage in a literature search on a historical question of your choosing. Your question must be about the United States within the time frame of 1870 to 1950. Bear in mind that even though your question is limited to those years, your literature search must include prior years, as far back as is relevant, to understand the underlying causes. For example, if your question is about the Great Strike of 1877, it is important to research the history of labor in the United States as far back as the earliest attempts at organization.

Your completed product will not be not a report, or a thesis paper, or a research paper. It will be a completed Annotated Bibliography that satisfies the following requirements.

- No textbooks (online or print) of any sort may be included
- No encyclopedias (online or print) of any sort may be included
- An internet source is acceptable **ONLY IF**:
 - ✦ It is a primary document that may be seen as a facsimile (image) of the original, which is to be cited as the source in the bibliography
 - ✦ It is a an article from a reputable, reliable periodical or from a scholarly journal
 - ✦ It is from a book that existed or exists in print, with complete bibliographic information available; when facsimiles are available online, that information is to be provided.
- Your completed Annotated Bibliography must have **AT LEAST twelve (12)** sources and include **AT LEAST**:
 - ✦ **Four** primary documents, of which no more than one may be an image
 - ✦ **Three** articles from scholarly journals (*Journal of American History*, *William and Mary Quarterly*, *American Historical Review*, etc), two of which must be from peer-reviewed journals (one list of History Journals is at <https://www.questia.com/library/t3051/history-journals>; there are others)
 - ✦ **Three** books, *with the specific relevant pages noted* in the bibliographic entry
- The bibliographic entry must comply with MLA formatting
- The annotations **may not be merely summaries**, although some description of the relevant information should be included. The annotations should include:
 - ✦ Assessment of the author’s credentials/bias/personal involvement. Was the author a participant? The descendant of a participant? A journalist? A supporter or an adversary? etc.
 - ✦ The context of the source in time and if that is relevant, what should taken into consideration.
 - ✦ Subsequent understanding of the source: Did later investigation find some errors or additional information that helps understand the source in a different light?
 - ✦ The credibility of the source, and how possible distortions can help understand the context.
 - ✦ The relative importance of the source. This can only be done after most of the sources have been collected, because it is not possible to know how much the source will contribute until then.

DUE DATES

- Thesis question due 9/15
- Part 1 9/25
 - 1 primary source
 - 1 article
 - 1 book
- Part 2 10/12- additional to above
 - 2 primary sources
 - 1 article
 - 1 book
- Completed AB
 - 10/31 additional
 - 1 primary source
 - 1 article
 - 1 book

NOTE:

The list of sources for each date is a *minimum* for that date. If you do not add at least two additional sources by October 31st, you will not have the twelve required for full credit.

Literature Search Rubric

	4	3	2	1
Primary Sources	4, all correctly identified	3 – may have one additional misidentified as primary	2 – may have one or two additional misidentified as primary	Fewer than two actual primary sources
Articles*	3, including 2 scholarly	3, but only 1 scholarly	3, none scholarly	Fewer than 3
Books*	3 books	2 books	One book	No books
Additional (over minimum)	More than 2 (total more than 12)	2 additional sources (total 12)	One additional (total 11)	Ten or fewer sources
Citation format	Complete, Correct, only one or two minor errors	May include 1 or 2 incomplete, may include some errors in formatting	Some citation are incomplete and/or contain many errors	Citations incomplete and/or incorrect.
Annotation	Complete, demonstrates understanding of source, its validity and bias	Incomplete; may indicate lack of understanding of some sources, their validity and/or possible bias	Does not demonstrate understanding of the source material, its relevance or credibility	Not present DEDUCT 10 POINTS
Punctuality	On time	One day late	More than one day late	

* Annotations should prove the sources' relevance to answering the thesis question.