

FINDING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

When you are beginning research on a topic, your first need is for background information. This is particularly important if you are not very familiar with the subject or if you are not sure which aspect of it you want to emphasize. The purpose of this Study Guide is to bring to your attention those reference books in the library that are useful for finding background information. By consulting them, you will find:

1. **an overview of your topic**
2. **ideas on how to limit your topic to focus on an aspect of it that interests you**
3. **related terms, facts, names, and dates you may use to locate additional information**
4. **lists of recommended sources for further reading about your subject**

WHERE TO START?

Encyclopedias are very useful sources of information for the following reasons:

- a) **They provide a simple overview of almost any topic - places, personalities, historical events, and many others.**
- b) **They often include references to other important sources of information, thus saving you valuable research time.**

There are both general and specialized encyclopedias listed in this Study Guide. Whatever encyclopedia you choose, be sure to consult its **index volume**, to find all the references related to your topic.

If your topic is new, controversial, or subject to change, a news digest or periodical article may turn out to be more helpful to you than an encyclopedia or other reference book. See **STUDY GUIDE #5 - FINDING INFORMATION IN NEWSPAPERS AND NEWS DIGESTS** and **STUDY GUIDE #4 - FINDING ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS** for directions on locating these resources.

The following list includes a sampling of the reference sources in the library's collection. Should you have any difficulty finding information on your subject, please ask a reference librarian for assistance.

GENERAL ENCYCLOPEDIAS

R
031
Ac11A1

Academic American Encyclopedia. 1997.

Gives accurate facts and reflects current scholarship.

R
031
En19A

Encyclopedia Americana. 2005.

A good, comprehensive encyclopedia for general use. Particularly strong in its information about American towns and cities.

R
032
En1B3

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica. 2007.

This edition of the Britannica is arranged differently from most encyclopedias. The "**Propaedia**" is a single volume outline of human knowledge. The 12 volume "**Micropaedia**" set gives brief, ready reference information and serves as an index to the larger set. The 17 volume "**Macropaedia**" contains long, scholarly articles on major subjects.

HUMANITIES

Art

R
703 D561D

Dictionary of Art. 1996.

R
703
En19E

Encyclopedia of World Art. 1983.

Literature

R
809.3
B353B

Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction. 1996.

R
803
C272E2

Cassell's Encyclopaedia of World Literature. 1973.

R
803
En19E2

Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century. 1999.

R
809.2
M178M2

McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama. 1984.

Music

R
780.3
G919D5

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. 2nd ed. 2001.

R
781.6403
G948G

The Guinness Encyclopedia of Popular Music. 1995.

R
781.773
N42N

New Grove Dictionary of American Music. 1986.

R
782.1
N42N1

New Grove Dictionary of Opera. 1992.

Philosophy

R
170
En19E

Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics. 1998.

R
174.2
En19E

Encyclopedia of Bioethics. 1995.

R
103
En19E

Encyclopedia of Philosophy. 2006.

Religion

R
230
En19E **Encyclopedia of Christian Theology. 2005.**

R
296.03
En19E **Encyclopaedia Judaica. 2007.**

R
203
En19E3 **Encyclopedia of Religion. 2005.**

R
203
H279E **Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. (no date)**

R
203
N42N **New Catholic Encyclopedia. 2003.**

Sports

R
796.03
En19E **Encyclopedia of World Sport: From Ancient Times to the Present. 1996.**

R
796.082
In8l **International Encyclopedia of Women and Sports. 2001.**

R
796
F776F **Sports: The Complete Visual Reference. 2000.**

SOCIAL SCIENCES

General

R
303
En19l **International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. 1979.**

R
364
Sa18S **The Sage Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods, 2nd Ed. 2008.**

Business

R
657.03
B568B **Blackwell Encyclopedia of Management. 1997.**

R
338.0973
En19E **Encyclopedia of American Industries. 2005.**

R
650
En19E **Encyclopedia of Business. 1995.**

R
332.63
In811 **International Directory of Company Histories.** 1988- .

R
332.03
N42N **New Palgrave Dictionary of Money and Finance.** 1992.

Criminal Justice

R
364.03
En19E **Encyclopedia of Crime and Justice.** 2002.

R
346
En19E **Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment.** 2002.

R
362.29
En19E **Encyclopedia of Drugs and Alcohol.** 1995.

R
365
En19E **Encyclopedia of Prisons and Correctional Facilities.** 2005.

R
364.16
En19E **Encyclopedia of White Collar & Corporate Crime.** 2005.

Culture

R
973.927
En19E **Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History.** 1995.

R
903.21
En19E **Encyclopedia of World Cultures.** 1991-.

R
325.26
G131G **Gale Encyclopedia of Multicultural America.** 1995.

Economics

R
338.0973
En19E **Encyclopedia of American Industries.** 2005.

R
330.03
F779F **Fortune Encyclopedia of Economics.** 1993.

R
330
P175D1 **New Palgrave A Dictionary of Economics.** 1987.

R
332.03
N42N **New Palgrave Dictionary of Money and Finance.** 1992.

Education

R
370.3
En19E **Encyclopedia of Education. 2003.**

R
370.3
M757E6 **Encyclopedia of Educational Research. 1992.**

R
378.03
En19E **Encyclopedia of Higher Education. 1992.**

R
371.9
En19E **Encyclopedia of Special Education. 2007.**

History and Geography

R
960
Af83A **Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience. 2005.**

R
909.82
R35A **American Decades. Covers 1900 to 1999.**

R
940
Ea77E **Eastern Europe: An Introduction to the People, Lands, and Culture. 2005.**

R
973.03
D561D **Dictionary of American History. 2003.**

R
973.927
En19E **Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History. 1995.**

R
960.03
En19E **Encyclopedia of African History. 2005.**

R
973.927
En19E **Encyclopedia of the American Presidency. 1993.**

R
956.94
En19E1 **Encyclopedia of the Holocaust. 1990.**

R
959.704
En19E **Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War. 1996.**

Ready Reference
320.058
Eu75E **Europa World Year Book. Updated annually.**

R
970.004 **Native Americans: An Encyclopedia of History, Culture, and Peoples. 1998.**

P939N

R
973.003
En19E1 **Encyclopedia of the United States in the Nineteenth Century. 2001.**

R
903.21
W893W **Worldmark Encyclopedia of Nations. 2004.**

Law

R
342.732
En19E **Encyclopedia of the American Constitution. 2000.**

R
340.03
W529W **West's Encyclopedia of American Law. 2005.**

Political Science

R
327.73
En19E **Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy. 2002.**

R
320.973
En19E **Encyclopedia of American Political History. 1984.**

R
327.174
B937E **Encyclopedia of Arms Control and Disarmament. 1993.**

R
321.8
En19E **Encyclopedia of Democracy. 1995.**

R
328.78
En19E1 **Encyclopedia of the United States Congress. 1995.**

R
327.73
En19E1 **Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations. 1997.**

Psychology

R
150.3
En19E **Encyclopedia of Human Behavior. 1994.**

R
150.3
En19E2 **Encyclopedia of Psychology. 2000.**

R
616.89
C738C **Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, 7th ed. 2000.**

Social Services

R
364.03
En19E **Encyclopedia of Crime and Justice. 2002.**

R
362.29
En19E **Encyclopedia of Drugs and Alcohol. 1995.**

R
360.973
So13E **Encyclopedia of Social Work. 2008.**

Sociology

R
301.03
En19E2 **Encyclopedia of American Social History. 1992.**

R
303.48
En19E **Encyclopedia of American Social Movements. 2004.**

R
306
En19E **Encyclopedia of Marriage and the Family. 1995.**

R
301.03
En19E1 **Encyclopedia of Sociology. 2000.**

R
305.4
W842W4 **Women's Studies Encyclopedia. 1989-1991.**

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

General

R
503
G131G **Gale Encyclopedia of Science. 2008.**

R
503
M178M **McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology. 2007.**

R
503
V344V8 **Van Nostrand's Scientific Encyclopedia. 2008.**

Biology

R
574.5
En19E **Encyclopedia of Environmental Biology. 1995.**

R
576
En19E **Encyclopedia of Genetics. 2001.**

R
612.003
En19E

Encyclopedia of Human Biology. 1997.

R
616.079
R637E1

Encyclopedia of Immunology. 1998.

R
576.03
En19E

Encyclopedia of Microbiology. 2000.

R
616.925
W397E

Encyclopedia of Virology. 1999.

R
590
G929G

Grzimek's Animal Life Encyclopedia. 1972-1975.

R
590
G929G1

Grzimek's Encyclopedia of Mammals. 1989.

R
333.79
W646W

Wiley Encyclopedia of Energy and the Environment. 1997.

Chemistry

R
660.3
En19E3

Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology. 1991-1997.

R
546
En19E

Encyclopedia of Inorganic Chemistry. 1994.

R
540
M228M

Macmillan Encyclopedia of Chemistry. 1997.

Climate

R
551.5
En19E

Encyclopedia of Climate and Weather. 1996.

Rev. July 2008