American History
Primary Sources

Primary sources provide firsthand accounts of the past. Examples include letters, photographs, diaries, newspaper accounts, interviews, oral histories, and speeches. Official documents such as laws, court decisions, treaties, party platforms, and constitutions are also primary sources.

ONLINE DATABASES

American History Online includes over 10,000 primary sources from over 500 years of American history. Under search box, click on sources, then primary sources, to limit search.

FMG Archival Film & Newsreels Collection Find archival and historical films depicting wars, cultural phenomena, and government programs. Search options include keyword and time period. Limit video type to “Newsreel or Primary Source” or “Lecture or Interview.”

Heritage Quest Search through census records, wills, city directories, military records, immigration records and much more.

Issues & Controversies includes historic documents with a focus on more recent history. Search by title or year. Use advanced search to limit results to primary sources.

MICROFILM

The New York Times 1851 - 1900
1914 - 1919
1939 - 1945
1966 - present

Newsweek 1940 - present

Time 1923 - present

INTERNET

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers Project, 1936-1940
www.loc.gov/collections/federal-writers-project/about-this-collection

Life histories written by the staff of the Folklore Project for the U.S. Works Progress Administration from 1936-1940. Includes over 2900 documents.

A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875
memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw

One of the most complete collections of U.S. congressional documents in their original format. Includes journals, letters, debates, bills and resolutions, statutes, and the Congressional Record.

Digital Civil War Collection
www.lib.utk.edu/special/featured-collections/digital-civil-war-collection

Find diaries, letters, images, and military documents from the Civil War and Reconstruction.
Documents for the Study of American History
www.vlib.us/amdocs/

Includes maps, letters, constitutions, speeches, treaties, and much more. Search chronologically from 800 to the present.

Founders Online
http://founders.archives.gov


The Great Depression Interviews
digital.wustl.edu/greatdepression

Video clips and transcripts of interviews of people who lived through the Great Depression.

Making of America

Primary sources in American social history, a joint project of Cornell University and the University of Michigan.

collections.library.cornell.edu/moa_new/index.html
Access 267 books and over 100,000 journal articles from the 1800s, as well as Civil War documents.

https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moagrp/
Access 10,000 books and 50,000 journal articles from the 1800s.

National Archives
https://www.archives.gov/research/

The nation’s record keeper. Holdings include famous documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, as well as records of ordinary citizens. Documents range from slave ship manifests to military records to journals and photographs.

The Sixties Project
http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties

Includes the Sixties Personal Narrative Project and back issues of the Viet Nam Generation Journal as well as primary documents relating to the Vietnam War, Martin Luther King, Jr., the Black Panthers, SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), and much more.

Veterans History Project
www.loc.gov/vets/about.html

Personal accounts of American war veterans from World War I through the Iraq War. Includes personal narratives (audio- and video-taped interviews and written memoirs), correspondence (letters, postcards, diaries), and visual materials (photographs, drawings, scrapbooks).
ONLINE CATALOG

Search for books by author, title, keyword or subject in the Maple Woods Library online catalog at mcckc.edu/library/maple-woods/. A link on the library online catalog page connects to the shared library online catalog for MOBIUS, a network of academic libraries in Missouri that includes Maple Woods. The MOBIUS online catalog accesses over 29 million items. Request books online from other libraries at no charge.

Use LC subject search terms of corresponding; diaries; interviews; oral history; personal narratives; sources; speeches, addresses, etc.; and treaties, along with keywords relevant to your topic.

SELECTED REFERENCE BOOKS

REF 325.73 Us11p  U.S. Immigration and Migration
REF 328.73 L235  Landmark Documents on the U.S. Congress
REF 341.026 Am35  American Treaties and Alliances
REF 342.73 C738  The Complete Bill of Rights: The Drafts, Debates, Sources, and Origins
REF 815.08 In1  In Our Own Words: Extraordinary Speeches of the American Century
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REF 973 An7a  The Annals of America (18 volumes)
REF 973.099 B65n  The New York Times on the Presidency, 1853-2008
REF 973.7 C499w  The Civil War Chronicle: The Only Day-By-Day Portrait of America's Tragic Conflict as Told by Soldiers, Journalists, Politicians, Farmers, Nurses, Slaves, and Other Eyewitnesses
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815.08 G798a  Great American Speeches
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