THE SEARCH PROCESS

Construct a search strategy
- Define your topic
- What question do you want to answer?
- Identify key words and phrases: (style, region, historical period, century, genre, descriptors)
- Brainstorm alternate spellings, related terms, broader terms, or narrower terms.
- Identify the subject area or areas which your topic might fall under.

Test your search
- Test out keywords or phrases in the databases you've identified as relevant to your subject area. Much like driving a car, while each database may look slightly different, the underlying functionality (what's under the hood) is much the same. (SAVE/EXPORT RESULTS)
- If you don't come up with what you're looking for right away, start plugging in some of the alternate terms you selected. You can also use the following tricks to refine your search.
  - Phrase searching: "John La Farge" “children in art”
  - Truncation: child*
  - Boolean AND:  child* and art* (or just omit AND….automatic in most databases)
  - Boolean OR: art* or portrait*
  - Boolean NOT: art* NOT portrait*
  - Complex searches: (art* or portrait*) and child*

Refine your search
- Once you find a book or article that is on target, use it to help further refine your search, or to locate potential new sources.
- This may involve Subject Searching and/or Citation Searching.
- Use the bibliographies and footnotes in scholarly articles and books to locate primary and secondary sources beyond what you have in hand.
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- Use Google Scholar to find cited sources based on the book or article.

Search again and locate your sources

Document sources found: Full citation and call number so you can locate them again.

Sample Citations in Chicago Manual of Style format at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Evaluate Sources
FIND AN ART ENCYCLOPEDIA TO GET STARTED: (caveat: encyclopedias can be dated)

- **Oxford / Grove Art Online**
  - The best place to start for researching artists, styles, and historical art topics.
- **American National Biography Online**
  - An ESSENTIAL source for researching major 19th century American artists, with well-researched, comprehensive biographies, location of primary sources, and links to more info.

FIND ARTICLES AND OTHER SCHOLARLY MATERIAL:

- **America: History and Life**
  - Provides article abstracts on the history and culture of the United States and Canada from the prehistoric era to the present, drawn from international periodicals dating back to 1954; link to full text articles if owned by Colby
- **American Periodicals**
  - This database contains periodicals published between 1740 and 1940, including coverage in general literature of art topics, reviews, biographies and obituaries of artists in the 19th century. (Hint: primary sources)
- **Art Full Text**
  - Indexes and provides full text content to over 200 journals, yearbooks and museum bulletins in the fields of archaeology, architecture, art and art history, crafts, photography published from 1984 to the present.
- **Art Index Retrospective**
  - An index to articles from periodicals covering all aspects of the visual arts, as well as reproductions of works of art that have appeared in indexed periodicals, from 1929 to 1984. Includes citations only.
- **Bibliography of the History of Art**
  - From the Getty Research Institute, a comprehensive index (1975-2007) to art books, periodical articles, essays on art, conference proceedings, & dissertations. International in scope, covering all historical periods and cultures. Includes abstracts.
- **JSTOR**
  - JSTOR is a full text archive of over one thousand leading scholarly journals across the humanities, social sciences, and sciences, as well as select monographs and other materials valuable for academic work. The entire corpus is full-text searchable, offers search term highlighting, includes images, and is interlinked by citations and references.
- **Proquest Arts**
  - Searches for journals and newspaper articles across multiple arts-related databases, as well New York Times (complete), American Periodicals Series (19th and early 20th century); also searches for doctoral theses via Dissertation Abstracts.
LOCATE PRIMARY SOURCES

Examples:

- art works themselves, illustrations, prints, etc.
- letters
- interviews
- lectures
- diaries
- photographs
- autobiographies
- exhibition reviews of the time period
- newspapers or articles of the time period
- manuscripts
- facsimiles
- ephemera (e.g. posters, broadsides, advertisements)
- other original creative works (poetry, drama, music, fiction, etc.)
- government documents
- oral histories / transcripts
- travelogues

HOW:

- Look in the Library Catalogs or World Cat
  - Search by Artist (last name, first name), look for formats above
  - Search by keyword Artist, and add a keyword term from above list.

USE THESE ONLINE PRIMARY SOURCE DIGITAL COLLECTIONS AND DATABASES

- American Periodicals Series
  - This database contains periodicals published between 1740 and 1940,
- HarpWeek (Harper's Weekly Online)
  - America's leading 19th century illustrated weekly magazine.
- Index to 19th Century American Art Periodicals
- Readers Guide Retrospective
  - Index to American periodicals from 1890-1982
- America's Historical Newspapers (Online)
- Proquest Historical Newspapers (full text)
USE THESE DIGITAL ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS FROM OTHER MUSEUMS AND RESEARCH COLLECTIONS

- American Memory Project, Library of Congress
- Archives of American Art (Smithsonian)
  - Excellent source for locating primary sources, records, letters about American Artists.
- Terra Foundation Digital Collection (Archives of American Art)
  - Digital documents about American artists, including some in the Lunder collection
- Digital Collections from the Metropolitan Museum of Art