Finding books by and about an author

To access the Library’s online catalog, click on the “Library Catalog” link from the Library’s homepage

http://library.tctc.edu

Finding Works Written BY an Author

Enter the name (in any order) of your author in the search box. Ex. Albert Camus (French author) would be entered as Camus Albert or as Albert Camus.

Finding Works Written ABOUT an Author

If you want to find books ABOUT an author, such as critical analyses and interpretations, biographical information, study guides, etc., click on the down arrow to display a list of search options and select subject as the type of search that you want to perform. The author is the subject, or topic, of your search.
Getting started:

What is the title of your book?
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Is there a book review of the title? Is it helpful in describing the plot? What happens in the story?
_____________________________________________________________________________________

What subject headings might be helpful?
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Do you need a copy of the novel? Are there any books about the author or the subject in the library? If so, write down the titles and call numbers here. If the book is not located at this campus, make a note of that so you can have it sent to you.

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Finding Literary Reference Sources Online:
The four step Research Process Guide for this assignment will be invaluable as you work on this research paper from home.

http://library.tctc.edu/nonamerican

Step Two, titled “Find Critical Interpretations of Your Book”, has links to databases containing literary criticism. The database “Artemis Literary Sources” has links to many sets of literary reference books that will be immensely helpful.
There is a step-by-step guide for this assignment on the library’s web page:

http://library.tctc.edu/nonamerican

After choosing the literary work, you can use the steps in the Process Guide to do your research online.

Here is Step Two: Find Interpretations of Your Book.

There are other helpful sources on the library’s Literature page:

http://library.tctc.edu/literature

Step Three uses sources from the library’s Countries and Cultures page and the library’s History page:

http://library.tctc.edu/countries

http://library.tctc.edu/history

These two web pages are explained in more detail on the following pages of this handout.
Literature Sources

See the library’s Literature page at http://library.tctc.edu/literature

Our literature databases contain thousands of critical analyses, peer-reviewed journal articles, and examples of literary criticism, all of which will be immensely helpful when writing about an author’s works, times, and culture. The databases below focus specifically on literature.

We recommend starting your research in the “Artemis Literary Sources” database, which searches several collections of literary information. You may search for an author’s name or the title of an individual work. The popular “… for Students” titles are here, such as “Novels for Students.”

Now, answer these questions:

When does the story take place? ________________________________________________

Where does the story take place? _____________________________________________

What issues drive the action in the plot? Some possibilities might be women’s roles, some kind of division in the society, the role of the government in people’s lives, traditional family structure, or political conflict such as a war.

Are there any other items of major importance? For example, religion might be one of the main topics.
Researching Cultural Information:

A major aspect of your multicultural paper is the comparison of the country’s culture as it is presented in the literary work and the way the culture actually exists, or existed, in the past. Cultural issues encompass a wide range of subjects, such as the treatment of women, food and holidays, family structure, religion, and distribution of wealth. The sources you use for this part of your research will depend in part on when your literary work takes place. If it is set within the last fifty years, you will probably focus on the “contemporary settings” sources. If it takes place more than fifty years ago, the “historical sources” (following pages) sources may be the best place to begin.

Contemporary Settings

In the library catalog, try a title search for “culture and customs of” to bring up a list of more than 200 titles about what life is like currently in various countries. This set of books is also available in a database on our “Countries” page. Look for it in the “Culture & Customs” tab:

Each title has information on many aspects of life in this country. Just click on the appropriate chapter.

Don’t see a chapter on your topic? Look it up in the index.

You can send an entire chapter to yourself with an email link.
Specialized Country Profiles

The library provides a collection of sources about various social issues. These are in print on the library shelves and also online. From the library’s “Countries” page at http://library.tctc.edu/Countries

Click the “Culture and Customs” tab. You can access sources on the particular cultural issue that drives the plot in your novel here.

Each of these links connects to a list of reference sets on the topic. As you read your novel, keep in mind what kind of social issues you can research to assess the accuracy of the novel. For example, if the female characters in your novel are expected to lead a certain kind of life that is vastly different from the lives the male characters are expected to lead, make notes of the specific incidents in the story and periodically go to the “Marriage, Family, and Gender” link in the list above. It will be helpful to note on what page of the novel you found the incident.

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Start by choosing the name of the country from the list. It will connect you to the appropriate country information in the encyclopedia.
**Historical Settings**

In the library catalog, try a title search for “daily life” to bring up a list of more than 100 titles in the “Daily Life” series about how everyday people lived in a particular time period and geographic area.

This information is also available in a database on the “Culture And Customs” tab of our “Countries” page.

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**Using Daily Life Through History**

Geographic regions of the world are in the “Contents” on the left side, then links to periods in that region’s history appear.

Keep in mind that the initial display you see, regardless of which format the information appears in, will likely be an “overview” or an “introduction”. Find more specific information in the Table of Contents on the left.

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A *database* article’s table of contents is on the left, and a *eBook’s* table of contents is on the right. Both formats provide links to information more specific than what is in the overview.
**Historical Sources**

See the library’s History page at [http://library.tctc.edu/History](http://library.tctc.edu/History) 7/21/2016

**Other historical sources**

These links are from the History page. If you are researching a novel written by a Native American author, the database “U.S. History in Context” will be helpful. Other settings will be in the database “World History in Context”.

The collection of encyclopedias in the “Gale Virtual Reference Library” will be helpful for all settings. Just click the “History” link.

**What is the main historical event in your novel?**

There are some great historical titles in the Gale Virtual Reference Library as well as on the shelves of the library. If you don’t see your region, try the following encyclopedias not available online:

- Encyclopedia of Mexico (REF F1210 .E63 1997)
- Encyclopedia of African History (REF DT20 .E53)
- World Conflicts & Confrontations (REF D860 .W64 2000)

There is almost certainly a reference book that covers the history of your novel’s setting. Click the image of the encyclopedia to search in that particular title in the Gale Virtual Reference Library.

Please **contact** us if you need help:

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