

Enlighten the People Project: American History for Homeschoolers

“enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body & mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day.” - Thomas Jefferson to Dupont de Nemours, 1816 (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/334>).

The Internet contains voluminous information and interpretation on American history topics. Unfortunately, not all of it is reliable and accurate. This guide provides starting points for exploring the lives, ideas, and accomplishments of American individuals and society using rich, reliable, and relevant sources.

NOTE: Some retrieved items will not be relevant, so careful surveying of results is required.

1. Thomas Jefferson Portal (<http://tjportal.on.worldcat.org/>). - includes published and unpublished research, journal articles, manuscript, etc. Some full text items and images are available.
- When viewing an individual title, please click “View Description” to see more detail.

Sample Search: **“Abraham Lincoln” and “Thomas Jefferson” and freedom**

([https://tjportal.on.worldcat.org/search?](https://tjportal.on.worldcat.org/search?q=kw%3A%E2%80%99Cabraham+lincoln%E2%80%99D+and+%E2%80%99Cthomas+jefferson%E2%80%99D+&)

[q=kw%3A%E2%80%99Cabraham+lincoln%E2%80%99D+and+%E2%80%99Cthomas+jefferson%E2%80%99D+&](https://tjportal.on.worldcat.org/search?q=kw%3A%E2%80%99Cabraham+lincoln%E2%80%99D+and+%E2%80%99Cthomas+jefferson%E2%80%99D+&)

Tip: browse the first few dozen retrieved items and look for additional keyword terms to use

Tip: use the “facets” on the left side of the search retrieval screen to narrow results

2. Early American History Sites (<https://www.monticello.org/research-education/for-scholars/jefferson-library/jefferson-library-reference/early-american-history-sites-search/>). - Google Custom Search retrieving content in the websites of 41 major research institutions. Note: searches are not stable and must be re-entered.

Sample Search: **Thomas Jefferson westward exploration**

Tip: when a retrieved document is long, use the CTRL-F function to search the document

Tip: select from the 41 sites to focus search from one source

3. Virginia Heritage (<http://vaheritage.org/>). - manuscript and archival collections finding aids in Virginia.

Sample Search: **runaway slaves** (<https://ead.lib.virginia.edu/vivaxtf/search?text=runaway+slaves>).

Tip: be creative in choosing words to combine in your initial search; find relevant subject headings

4. Virginia Chronicle (<https://viriniachronicle.com>). - Library of Virginia digital newspapers.

Sample Search: **“Thomas Jefferson” and “James Madison” and Constitution**

(<http://viriniachronicle.com/cgi-bin/virinia?>

[a=q&hs=I&r=I&results=I&txf=txIN&txq=%22thomas+jefferson%22+%22james+madison%22+constitution-----en-20--I--txt-txIN-----](http://viriniachronicle.com/cgi-bin/virinia?a=q&hs=I&r=I&results=I&txf=txIN&txq=%22thomas+jefferson%22+%22james+madison%22+constitution-----en-20--I--txt-txIN-----)).

Tip: most content here will be localized, so add geographic location terms

5. Chronicling America (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>). - Library of Congress American historic newspapers, 1789-1922.

Sample Search: **Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton**

(<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/search/pages/results/?>

[state=&date1=1789&date2=1922&proxtext=aaron+burr+alexander+hamilton&x=0&y=0&dateFilterTy](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/search/pages/results/?state=&date1=1789&date2=1922&proxtext=aaron+burr+alexander+hamilton&x=0&y=0&dateFilterTy)

6. Digital Public Library of America (<https://dp.la/>). - 14 million items from libraries, museums, archives

Sample Search: **“Robert Fulton” and steam power** (<https://dp.la/search?>

[utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=+%22robert+fulton%22+and+steam+boats](https://dp.la/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=+%22robert+fulton%22+and+steam+boats)).

- *Jack Robertson, 9/27/16*

ADDRESS:

1050 Monticello Loop

Charlottesville, VA 22902

GENERAL INFORMATION:

(434) 984-9800