

## **NOTES ON TYPES OF REFERENCE SOURCES**

### **Encyclopedia**

**Can be a College of Knowledge at your fingertips.** This is a set of books, usually 20 to 30 volumes, containing separate articles about people, places, things, events, and other branches of knowledge. The articles are arranged in alphabetical order.

The encyclopedia is an excellent reference source to begin researching for information because it gives you an outline and a general overview on the subject. It may also suggest other related articles. It usually has subtopics as well as maps, graphs, and related illustrations and photographs.

### **Dictionary**

This reference source is an alphabetical listing of most words in the English language. There are many levels and many kinds of dictionaries for general use. There are generally two types of dictionaries available at the library

1. unabridged -a dictionary that lists nearly all of the words in the English language.
2. abridged- a smaller dictionary that contains only commonly used words.

Both types of dictionaries can be used to check spelling, definitions and pronunciation of words. Some dictionaries also give information about the origin of a word, synonyms, antonyms and parts of speech.

### **Non Fiction Books**

These are reference sources that contain factual information about various topics in our world. These books are classified according their topic and arranged in the library by Dewey Decimal System.

### **The Almanac**

An almanac is a handy, desk-size volume packed full of brief facts, statistics, and miscellaneous information on many subjects of the past and present. The almanac tells about countries, states, governments, population, sports records and champions, academy Award winners, and many, many other bits and pieces of information known as trivia.

### **The Yearbook**

A yearbook is similar to an almanac, but it is more likely to be limited to one subject, such as government, or to a definite period of time, such as a single year (such as World Book's Year in Review or Science Year.

### **The Thesaurus**

A thesaurus is a special kind of dictionary which lists synonyms and related words. It is

especially useful when you are preparing a report or doing creative writing, because it helps you find just the right word.

### **The Atlas**

An atlas is a book of maps. An atlas will answer your questions about:

- **Location:** places in the news, rivers, mountains, continents, hemispheres, etc.
- **Physical characteristics of the earth:** altitude, vegetation, soil, minerals, forests, climate, etc.
- **Man-made characteristics:** cities and their population, national boundaries, capitals, roads and railroads, mines, crops
- **Historical facts:** locations of battles and campaigns, growth and expansion of countries and states, changing boundaries, for what the world looked like in the past for example: during the Roman Empire.

### **Electronic Resources**

#### **LAUSD's Digital Library**

The **best** place to do your internet searches. The Digital Library is a web based library that provides the same information that one can find in a real library, except much more. LAUSD's Digital Library has all the information and resources you will need to cover every California standard you will study for grades K-12. Also the Digital Library will provide information written at your grade level making it easy for your to understand.

#### **Some Alternative Search Engines:**

(Remember, search engines may go down or be deleted from the Internet depending on the company that owns them. Again you can go to LAUSD's Digital for a list of current engines or to resources on the LAUSD web site home page.

- About.com
- Aesop.com
- All4one
- All the Web, all the time
- Alta Vista
- ASK
- Ask for kids
- Directhit.com

- Dogpile
- EducationPlant
- EduHound
- Excite Netsearch
- eZ Find
- Find-it!
- GoTo.com
- Grokker