

## Biography Pathfinder

Created by K.Roccanti for Aucilla Christian Academy  
October 2006

Biographical information can be found in almost every type of resource the library has: reference books, nonfiction books, online databases, and the Internet.

### **SEARCH TERMS**

When searching the card catalog (click on the Card Catalog icon on any library computer) or online databases, type the person's last name, followed by a comma, followed by the first name. When searching on the Internet, you can also search by placing the person's first and last name in quotation marks (ex.- "Harry Houdini"). *Beware of pseudonyms!*

You may also find information about your person by searching the card catalog for the field or category of information that they are known for. Just type in the subject (ex: Olympics, Presidents, cotton gin, etc.) to see books that also may contain information on your person.

### **REFERENCE BOOKS**

**Encyclopedias:** World Book, Compton's, Britannica, The Book of Knowledge  
**Specialized Biographical Dictionaries/Encyclopedias:** REF 920's and also look for these under their dewey subject number (ex: REF 610 Biographical dictionary of Inventors, REF 700 Dictionary of Artists, REF 973 Encyclopedia of the Civil War, etc.)

### **BOOKS**

**Collective Biographies:** 920's (Brief entries about many individuals in a particular category—ex: Presidents of the U.S., Famous Baseball Players, Famous Women, etc.).  
**Biographies:** 921's (These books are cataloged with a 921 followed by the first 3 letters of the last name of the subject. Ex: Harry Houdini is found under 921 HOU).  
**Subject Biographies:** Look under that dewey subject number (ex: 973's contain books on Women Spies of the Civil War, 600's contain books on inventors, etc.)

### **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

#### ***Electronic Encyclopedias:***

Encarta Reference: found on the library's computers, just click on the icon.

Online Encyclopedias:

Columbia Encyclopedia at <http://www.bartleby.com>

Concise Britannica at <http://concise.britannica.com>

Encarta at <http://encarta.msn.com>

#### ***Internet Resources*** (you can also search Google for others):

<http://www.biography.com>

<http://www.omnibiography.com>

<http://www.who2.com>

<http://www.infoplease.com/people.html>

<http://www.libraryspot.com/biographies/>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/>

\*Note: A caution about using Wikipedia—ask your teacher if you may use this as a source. Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that anyone can contribute an article to or even change an existing article. Since you cannot be sure that the person who wrote the article is an expert in that field, this is not a reliable resource to use for a research paper. Be cautious in using the Internet for a research paper. Anyone can create a web page saying anything they want. Their information may be untrue or biased. Stick to the above websites or ones from reliable sources like museums, government, educational, news, reputable organizations (like National Geographic), etc.

***Electronic Periodicals:***

You can find these by using the Florida Electronic Library's website at <http://flelibrary.org>. This is a digital library created for Floridians. To get into the database part where the periodicals are, you will need your Florida Public Library card number. Instructions to find periodical articles:

- Go to the website at <http://www.flelibrary.org>
- In the red box on the left, click on the link "Kids, Students & Families"
- In the search box entitled "Enter Your Library Card Number" type the number found on the back on your public library card and click on "Log in".
- Choose either the InfoTrac Junior edition or Student edition.
- Enter your subject's name (last name first) in the search box. You can also click the check box on magazines to limit your search to only magazines or periodicals.
- There may be several different versions of that name or several people with the same name, so look the list over carefully that comes up. I would choose to click on the "See Also" box next to "Subdivisions". This categorizes all the articles on your subject. There should be a category called "Biography". Click on this to get biographical articles on your subject. You may want to check out articles in other categories too like "Influence". Articles will be listed by title—click on the title to pull up the full article. To print the article, go to the bottom of the article, click on "Browser Print" then click on your print button. The name of the magazine, the date, page numbers, and the author information will be listed at the top of the article so you can do your citation for your Works Cited page.
- You can also use this database to find encyclopedia and newspaper articles too.

**Remember, if you need help, come see me. That is what I am here for—Mrs. Roccati**