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LIBRARY RESEARCH TASKS FOR THE HISTORY MAJOR

MODULE ONE: FINDING A POSSIBLE RESEARCH PROJECT – Engaging the Beginning History Major

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This is the initial module (lesson) in a five-part online competency-based learning program for our History 301: Methodology class that serves as a gateway course to the upper-division major coursework. These modules were developed to introduce students to the terms, concepts, and research methods of historians.

This module aligns with the following learning outcomes:

DQP2.0 – Specialized Knowledge:

- Construct a summative project, paper, performance or application that draws on current research, scholarship and techniques in the field of study, of which one critical step is demonstrating fluency in research tools of the field at the *bachelor's level, novice researcher*

Draft History DQP – American Historical Association (revised) – Devise Research Strategies:

- Develop a methodological practice of gathering evidence

CSULB History Programmatic Outcomes – Research Skills:

- Demonstrate the ability to conduct research, using library tools

History 301 Course-Level Learning Outcomes – Mechanical Skills – *Students will*

-- Demonstrate an organized system…of research
-- Locate and retrieve appropriate sources relative to a historical topic
-- Master computer skills appropriate to the discipline

LESSON ONE: FINDING A POSSIBLE RESEARCH PROJECT

Professional historians are interpreters of the human past. Some of us study American foreign policy in the 1970s, while others are specialists in urban American history, the history of pirates in the Atlantic world, or medieval European gender history. We teach in schools and colleges. We work as archivists and museum directors. Some historians go on to work in corporations, non-profits, and government. But no matter what our individual occupations, we all have one thing in common: *We are highly trained in research skills.*

Here at Long Beach State, your undergraduate education in history really starts with History 301: Methodology. Past students have called it "History Boot Camp." More than any other course you've taken so far, this course will introduce you to the skills you need to succeed as a history major. What are those skills? Research skills.

By ***research skills***, we don't just mean how to find a book or an article or an original source on the internet or in the library. This module will introduce you to some of the basics of historical research: methods, concepts, research terms, and pitfalls.

Research is an ***iterative process***: It involves the act of identifying a problem, posing a question, looking for sources, analyzing those sources, and then drawing conclusions to answer your research question. Along the way, you will likely refine your original research question based on the sources you find. It's a back-and-forth - not a linear - process. You should be asking questions about your topic even as you search for data (sources) to answer those questions. As you analyze your sources, you will be *interpreting* them. But first, you will need to find a suitable research topic and pose a manageable research question.

Click here to see an example of an *iterative process* in daily life.

Now that you know a bit about what an *iterative process* is, let's practice it with some real examples in this module, which consists of ten discrete research tasks. This module is a form of ***competency-based learning***: You must complete each module successfully before you may move on to the next. Once you have completed these tasks successfully, you will be able to practice them with your own interests as you engage in the *iterative process* of research to find a good History 301 research project.

If you have ever studied a musical instrument or played a sport, you have already engaged in this type of learning. You will start with a basic task and then move to progressively more challenging tasks. Imagine how *competency-based learning* is employed when you learn to play the guitar: the first task you must master is to learn the parts of the guitar, like the neck, the strings, and so on. The next task (skill) you will learn is how to correctly hold the guitar. Then you will learn how to fret the strings, next how to strum or pick the guitar strings to play a note (or sound), then how to create new chords and so on.

There are ten tasks in this module. Let's get started.

But first, estimate the time (in minutes) it will take you to complete this module: _____

Now, to keep track of your research time, click start on this stopwatch widget

http://www.online-stopwatch.com/analog-stopwatch/ [**THIS WIDGET ALLOWS STUDENTS TO TIME THEIR WORK, thereby reinforcing the concept that research takes time and effort; it is not an activity that brings immediate results**]

You have decided that you would like to write your History 301 research paper on World War II. You know a little about World War II but don't have a specific topic in mind. Let's practice the *iterative process* of identifying a suitable research topic.

Task 1: Use Google or another commercial search engine. Type in **World War II**.

Read about World War II from at least three websites that are listed as "results" then take the quiz below:

Quiz Group

Value: 1

When did World War II begin?

- **a.** December 7, 1941
- **b.** September 1, 1939
- **c.** August 2, 1934
- **d.** August 23, 1939
- **e.** December 13, 1937

Value: 1

The United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union were allies throughout most of World War II.

- True
- False

Value: 1

The nation that suffered the greatest loss of lives, as a percentage of its total population, was

- **a.** the Soviet Union
- **b.** Japan
- **c.** Poland
- **d.** Germany
- **e.** China

Value: 1

In the Pacific, the battle of Midway Island marked a turning point in the war with victory by the Japanese.

- True
- False

Value: 1

Mexicans contributed to the Allied efforts in the war by

- **a.** enlisting in the U.S. military
- **b.** forming Mexican Air Force fighter squadrons
- **c.** going to the U.S. to work in factories and fields under the Bracero Program
- **d.** declaring war against Germany and the Axis Powers
- **e.** all of the above

Task 2: Think about all the information you found about World War II from reading these websites.

Self Check

Value: 1

Describe in at least three words or phrases how you feel about what you learned about World War II from these websites:

Task 3: Now that you know a bit about World War II, let's think about the accuracy and reliability of the websites you examined.

In the days before the Internet, history students relied on published sources such as bibliographies, encyclopedia, dictionaries, and textbooks to learn more about the background of potential research topics. Those kinds of sources were generally vetted by scholars before they were published. That is, publishers employed fact-checkers and editorial staff whose jobs it was to ensure that information was accurate, well written, and in dialogue with the work of other historians.

But today, powerful search engines like Google or Metacrawler make researching a topic easier -- you can do so at any time of the day and night, in comfort -- but also much more difficult, because there is so much material available. Thus, largely because of the sheer volume of information available online, one must evaluate carefully the source of that information.

As you answer the following questions, you may refer to the websites you examined:

Quiz Group

Value: 1

For historians, a website's "reliability" is measured by which of the following factors:

- **a.** the inclusion of timelines on the site
- **b.** accuracy of information provided
- **c.** the degree to which the information presented tells a compelling story
- **d.** inclusion of primary sources
- **e.** the education of the author

Value: 1

One can tell from the URL extension of the website -- i.e., does the URL end in .org, .com, .edu, .gov -- whether or nor a website is reliable.

- True
- False

Value: 1

One way to estimate reliability of an online source is to determine who produced (i.e., wrote) the information and for what purpose. Authorship, thus, is an important variable. On the wikipedia "World War II" website, find the authors of the page. How many authors were there for the "World War II" entry?

- **a.** Just one, a distinguished professor of military history at the U.S. Naval Academy
- **b.** Two -- Dr. David Kennedy, professor of History at Stanford University and Dr. A.J.P. Taylor, professor of modern history at Oxford University
- **c.** Unknown -- It was written anonymously by a team of historians and journalists
- **d.** Is is a "corporate author" -- a group of employees at Wikipedia create all entries for this "world's free encyclopedia."
- **e.** Almost 7,400 distinct but unnamed authors.

Value: 1

The wikipedia entry for "World War II" is reliable as a source for a History 301 paper because the bibliography is extensive and thus, we can assume that the information is accurate.

- True
- False

Value: 1

Wikipedia must be a reliable source. After all, authors use these entries to create books!

- True
- False

Task 4: As we've seen, there is a lot of information out there on the Internet. It's not always clear whether information on any individual website is accurate or whether it is reliable from a historian's perspective. Let's try a different approach -- this is part of the process of research. As a history student, you decide that given the information out there on the Internet, you will try to limit your searches just to those sources that seem to be accurate and reliable -- that is, where it appears that the information has been verified and on which authorship of articles is clear. From the Google results page, let's focus on two websites in particular: The *Encyclopedia Brittanica* website and the website from the History Channel. Take a few moments to read around in them and get a sense of the focus of each website. Then check your knowledge, below:

Quiz Group

Value: 1

The material available on the Encyclopedia Brittanica site can BEST be characterized as

- **a.** an informative and comprehensive in its discussion of all aspects of war
- **b.** interesting, but having a narrow focus on battles, military strategy and political considerations
- **c.** mostly written by the eminent British historian John Graham Royde-Smith
- **d.** not very reliable because there are no citations or footnotes to other historical sources cited
- **e.** written entirely from a European point of view, as there is almost no discussion of the war outside of that continent

Value: 1

If I wanted to know more about the experience of troops from India who surrendered to the Japanese at Singapore, this site is a great place to find more information.

- True
- False

Value: 1

The "What Can you add to this article?" feature is really important because with the power of the Internet, it allows veterans and others who lived through the war from all across the world the opportunity to share their experiences and be witnesses to history.

- True
- False

Value: 1

The History.com site, part of the History Channel franchise, provides information on many aspects of World War II, including all of the following EXCEPT the

- **a.** experiences of American military nurses who were captured by the Japanese in the Philippines early in the war
- **b.** capture of a Japanese "zero" plane in the Aleutian Islands
- **c.** biographies of important Nazi leaders like Rommel
- **d.** experiences of tens of thousands of Japanese internees on the Hawaiian Islands

Task 5: As a student researcher, you've decided to try to narrow your search for a manageable and appropriate paper topic down by going to the Library. For this task, you will need to open another window and go to the University Library's search engine, COAST, and type **World War II.** Survey the results carefully. Pay particular attention to how the results are organized. Then answer the questions below:

Quiz Group

Value: 1

The COAST search is much more useful, as all of the results are relevant to a history paper on World War II.

- True
- False

Value: 1

The book, "A Pocket Guide to France," by the Army Information Branch of the Army Service Forces (United States Army), was originally published in what year?

- **a.** 1916
- **b.** 1940

- **c.** 1944
- **d.** 1988
- **e.** 2008

Value: 1

How many items with the keyword "World War II" and that were published in 2001 does the Library COAST catalog list?

- **a.** 0-50
- **b.** 51-100
- **c.** 101-150
- **d.** More than 150
- **e.** There is no way to tell.

Value: 1

The item "Finding Information on Personal Participation in World War II" gives instructions on how to find the records of individual members of the military by using online sources only.

- True
- False

Value: 1

Which of the following items published in print in 2001 and published online in 2013 is advertised as "being written by more than 140 specialist contributors from Italy, Germany, and Japan, as well as the allied nations..."?

- **a.** World War II Inter-Allied Conferences
- **b.** The Official Chronology of the U.S. Navy During World War II
- **c.** The Oxford Companion to World War II
- **d.** World War II Navy Vessels in Private Hands: the boats and ships sold for recreational and commercial purposes under the American flag

Value: 1

As you look at the results list for a COAST search, the way to tell if an item is available online through the LIbrary is that it lacks specific call number, location, and status notations.

- True
- False

Task 6: Now that you know more about the Library's COAST search engine and how it functions, let's learn more about narrowing a focus using the COAST system. For the sake of this exercise, let's assume that you have decided that you would like to focus on the experiences of women during World War II. You've noticed that there are some results from your original "World War II" search that list women's names in the title, like "Rosie the Riveter" or "Nancy Love." Examine the results for these names and then take the quiz below to check your observational powers and your skills in research!

Quiz Group

Value: 1

Nancy Love was a

Value: 1

One of the best ways to narrow your search is to look at a result page, then examine the "Subject Categories" on the individual item page. Unlike keywords, which a user types in, subject categories are officially defined by the Library of Congress and are used by every academic library in the U.S. For the item, "Nancy Love and the WASP Ferry Pilots of World War II," which of the following is NOT listed as a subject category?

- **a.** Love, Nancy Harkness -- 1914-1976.
- **b.** United States. Army Air Forces -- Transportation.
- **c.** Air pilots -- United States -- Biography.
- **d.** Women Airforce Service Pilots (U.S.) -- Biography.
- **e.** World War II, 1939-1945. United States -- Women pilots.

Value: 1

Once you identify a subject category that might help you narrow your topic, you can click on it to see if it brings up more items. For this question, click on the subject category "Women Airforce Service Pilots U.S. -- Biography." How many distinct individual items are listed?

Value: 1

One good way to find more information is to look at the COAST subject category "Nearby Subjects" results page.

- True
- False

Task 7: For this task, let's practice further the *iterative process* of historical research. For this task, let's assume that you are intrigued by the story of Nancy Love, the WASP pilot. Go to the quiz group to see if you are engaging in an iterative process as we try to uncover more about Nancy Love and other WASP pilots. Note how the subject categories **disambiguate** the more general subject of a keyword search -- that is, they clarify a general category by dividing it up into many parts, and thus produce more defined result lists.

Quiz Group

Value: 1

The best way to learn more about Nancy Love, the WASP pilot, would be to read the book by Sarah Rickman

- True
- False

Value: 1

World War II WASP pilots like Nancy Love are worthy of historical inquiry because

- **a.** their contributions to the war effort were essential
- **b.** most Americans don't know much about the experiences of women pilots during World War II
- **c.** their work helps us understand how the military began to integrate women into the service ranks
- **d.** even the U.S. government didn't officially recognize the contributions and sacrifices of WASP pilots until much later
- **e.** all of the above

Value: 1

Since the Library has only a few books on women pilots during World War II, it's probably not a good topic for a History 301 paper.

- True
- False

Task 8: In your initial "exploratory" research about the WASP pilots, you noted that many of the WASP pilots were ordered to fly airplanes from Long Beach to other places around the country, like Alabama and Texas. This is intriguing because you are wondering why this might be the case.

Here's a self check to practice developing research ideas!

Test Yourself

Value: 1

Take a moment to write down three research ideas about WASP pilots. Make sure that one also addresses the "local angle" -- Long Beach. And rank them for interest.

Task 9: You have decided to write about WASP pilots during World War II. You have done some research and now have many sources, listed within the next exercise. Some are "primary" sources while others are "secondary" sources. Remember, "primary" sources are generally defined as those produced during the time period

under study, or by participants and/or observers of the time period; these "primary sources" (and those who produced them) ***have a relationship to the past****, to the period or issue under study.* Historians classify "secondary" sources as those produced by scholars who use "primary" sources to construct a narrative of the past. Identify these sources (listed) as either "primary" or "secondary."

Test Yourself

Value: 10

Match the items.

The task is to match the lettered items with the correct numbered items. Appearing below is a list of lettered items. Following that is a list of numbered items. Each numbered item is followed by a drop-down. Select the letter in the drop down that best matches the numbered item with the lettered alternatives.

a. Secondary source

b. Primary source

1. Sarah Rickman, Nancy Love and the WASP Ferry Pilots of World War II

2. Laurel Ladevich, Fly Girls

3. Yearbook, 318th A.A.F.F.T.D. Class of 43-W-4 and 43-W-5

4. Ann B. Carl, A Wasp Among Eagles

5. Gail Gutierrez, Forgotten Wings

6. Doris Brinker Tanner, "We Also Served," American History Illustrated, 1985

7. Barbara Poole, "Requiem for the WASP," Flying, vol. 35, no. 6, pages 55-56+

8. Melissa Jordan, "Flying Bombers in World War II"

9. Michelle Neale, "The Guinea Pig Class of 43-1," M.A. Thesis, CSU Northridge

10. Valerie Moolman, Women Aloft

Task 10: This is the final task for this module. In the following space, think about your own ideas for a History 301 paper. You may start with a general topic (most likely) or a very specific topic (less likely).

Using the methods you've learned from this module, outline your research steps. Be sure to print out and bring to class this outline!

Remember, ***research is a process.*** If you start from a very specific topic, you may find yourself reversing the steps if you cannot find appropriate primary and secondary sources on your topic.

Be aware of issues of access: Can you get the sources you want quickly, this term, at Long Beach State? (Note: Original unpublished sources are generally not available

for borrowing.) If you can get the sources, do you have the skills to use them productively? (Note: Many primary documents are written in languages other than English and may not be available in translation.)

Self Check

Value: 1

Using the methods you've learned from this module, outline your research steps. What research activities do you think will be most fruitful to you? What will you do if you cannot find information or sources on your topic? (If you find it helpful, make your outline in flowchart form, number the steps, or draw a cognitive map to help you organize your thoughts.)

Answer Rubric: Students must select the correct answer before being allowed to move on; correct answers are reinforced with explanations.

When did World War II begin?

b. September 1, 1939

Right! Most historians believe that the formal start of war occurred on September 1, 1939, when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. **This question introduces the idea of <u>periodization</u>.**

Points scored this item: **1**

The United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union were allies throughout most of World War II.

True

Right! The Soviet Union joined the "Allied Powers" in June 1941 (after the Nazis invaded their country) and the United States joined in December 1941 (after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor).

Points scored this item: **1**

The nation that suffered the greatest loss of lives, as a percentage of its total population, was

c. Poland

Right! Historians estimate that Poland suffered a loss of nearly 18% of its total population during the war. War losses include civilian casualties, military deaths, and those Poles murdered in the Holocaust. However, many historians argue that because of the nature of record-keeping as well as the vast destruction of historical records during and after the War, casualty figures should be considered approximate. **This question introduces the issue of historical uncertainty (given lack of complete records).**

Points scored this item: **1**

In the Pacific, the battle of Midway Island marked a turning point in the war with victory by the Japanese.

False

Yes! The United States was victorious in the battle of Midway, leading to more military defeats of the Japanese navy elsewhere in the Pacific. Military historians generally attribute the American victory at Midway in 1942 as an "Allied turning point." **This question introduces the idea of <u>contingency</u> and subtly builds on the idea of periodization.**

Points scored this item: **1**

Mexicans contributed to the Allied efforts in the war by

e. all of the above

Right! Mexico had a history of complicated relationships with Germany, but declared war on the Axis powers in 1942. The Bracero Program was enacted in that year, and was originally designed as a guest worker program to allow skilled Mexicans to work in American defense plants, but later became primarily a temporary program for farmworkers. Mexican citizens enlisted in both the U.S. and the Mexican military, the latter of which included their air force.

Points scored this item: **1** **Quiz group score: 5 / 5**

Task 2: Think about all the information you found about World War II from reading these websites.

Describe in at least three words or phrases how you feel about what you learned about World War II from these websites:

SUBJECTIVE, but better answers will note overwhelming emphasis on facts and description, and lack of explanation and interpretation.

Task 3: Now that you know a bit about World War II, let's think about the accuracy and reliability of the websites you examined.

In the days before the Internet, history students relied on published sources such as bibliographies, encyclopedia, dictionaries, and textbooks to learn more about the background of potential research topics. Those kinds of sources were generally

vetted by scholars before they were published. That is, publishers employed fact-checkers and editorial staff whose jobs it was to ensure that information was accurate, well written, and in dialogue with the work of other historians.

But today, powerful search engines like Google or Metacrawler make researching a topic easier -- you can do so at any time of the day and night, in comfort -- but also much more difficult, because there is so much material available. Thus, largely because of the sheer volume of information available online, one must evaluate carefully the source of that information.

As you answer the following questions, you may refer to the websites you examined:

For historians, a website's "reliability" is measured partly by which of the following factors:

b. accuracy of information provided

Correct! "Reliability" is measured primarily the accuracy of the information presented -- for instance, can you verify the information using other sources? Are those sources listed, as in a bibliography? Are any biases clearly acknowledged?

Points scored this item: **1**

One can tell from the URL extension of the website -- i.e., does the URL end in .org, .com, .edu, .gov -- whether or nor a website is reliable.

False

Correct! While it is more likely that a website hosted by, for instance, a federal institution (i.e., the Smithsonian Museum) with the URL ending in .gov will provide reliable information, this is not always true. Some commercial sites, like The History Channel website, whose URL ends in .com, are also reliable sources of background information.

Points scored this item: **1**

Another way to estimate reliability of an online source is to determine who produced (i.e., wrote) the information and for what purpose. Authorship, thus, is an important variable. On the wikipedia "World War II" website, find the authors of the page. How many authors were there for the "World War II" entry?

e. Almost 7,400 distinct but unnamed authors.

Right! Most wikipedia entries are authored jointly by ordinary people; no author needs to have academic "credentials" (like a graduate degree or work experience in the field) to participate in writing the entry.

Points scored this item: **1**

The wikipedia entry for "World War II" is reliable as a source for a History 301 paper because the bibliography is extensive and thus, we can assume that the information is accurate.

False

Yes, but this is a tricky statement! It is generally permissible to survey wikipedia entries to get a general sense of the history of a topic. But it is not acceptable to use wikipedia entries as the basis for writing the paper itself! Wikipedia is a popular -- not scholarly -- source, despite its long bibliography. Wikipedia is thus often just the first, preliminary step in identifying an appropriate research topic.

Points scored this item: **1**

Wikipedia must be a reliable source. After all, authors use these entries to create books!

False

Right! Notice the "Create a book" link on the left sidebar on this page. You can create your own "book" by collecting any number of wikipedia entries and arranging them in a "book." There are even journals and publishing companies that will publish "your book" so that you can then sell them on Amazon! (Yes, people really do this!)

For more information on these publishers (called "vanity" or "open access" publishers), see the list collected by reference librarian Jeffrey Beall at the University of Colorado: www.scholarlyoa.com

Points scored this item: **1** **Quiz group score: 5 / 5**

Task 4: As we've seen, there is a lot of information out there on the Internet. It's not always clear whether information on any individual website is accurate or whether it is reliable from a historian's perspective. Let's try a different approach -- this is part of the process of research. As a history student, you decide that given the information out there on the Internet, you will try to limit your searches just to those sources that seem to be accurate and reliable -- that is, where it appears that the information has been verified and on which authorship of articles is clear. From the Google results page, let's focus on two websites in particular: The *Encyclopedia Brittanica* website and the website from the History Channel. Take a few moments to read around in them and get a sense of the focus of each website. Then check your knowledge, below:

The material available on the Encyclopedia Brittanica site can BEST be characterized as

b. interesting, but having a narrow focus on battles, military strategy and political considerations

Right! Most of the information on this site relates to the progress of war itself, as a military endeavor (with some discussion of politics that led to certain strategies and outcomes), not as an all-consuming event -- a WORLD WAR

Points scored this item: **1**

If I wanted to know more about the experience of troops from India who surrendered to the Japanese at Singapore, this site is a great place to find more information.

False

Right! "Chapter" (or webpage) 21 discusses the surrender of a mixed group of soldiers -- British, Australian, Indian -- allied with the British who surrendered at Singapore in February 1942. But this "Chapter" doesn't say much at all about the actual experiences of these Indian troops. We have no idea who they were, how they got to Singapore, or what kinds of conditions they faced there. Nor do we know what happened to them after they surrendered.

Points scored this item: **1**

The "What Can you add to this article?" feature is really important because with the power of the Internet, it allows veterans and others who lived through the war from all across the world the opportunity to share their experiences and be witnesses to history.

False

Good! In this case, reading the comments is a bit like reading the footnotes! It's necessary to get an idea of the sources and biases of the information. In this case, the "What can you add to this article?" comments are really a mixed bag of questions, opinion, and other non-scholarly postings.

Points scored this item: **1**

The History.com site, part of the History Channel franchise, provides information on many aspects of World War II, including all of the following EXCEPT the

d. experiences of tens of thousands of Japanese internees on the Hawaiian Islands

Yes, this is correct. The History Channel site has lots of information on all kinds of topics, presented in "sound-byte" style. The reason why the History Channel does not provide anything about the experiences of Japanese (and Japanese-American) internees in Hawaii is because in Hawaii, unlike on the U.S. mainland west coast, Japanese were not interned on a massive scale.

Points scored this item: **1** **Quiz group score: 4 / 4**

Task 5: As a student researcher, you've decided to try to narrow your search for a manageable and appropriate paper topic down by going to the Library. For this task, you will need to open another window and go to the University Library's search engine, COAST, and type **World War II.** Survey the results carefully. Pay particular attention to how the results are organized. Then answer the questions below:

The COAST search is much more useful, as all of the results are relevant to a history paper on World War II.

False

Correct -- you have noticed that all of the results simply have the words "world," "war," and "II" in the descriptor. And the descriptors may be title, subject, or keywords.

Points scored this item: **1**

The book, "A Pocket Guide to France," by the Army Information Branch of the Army Service Forces (United States Army), was originally published in what year?

c. 1944

Right! This is important information because it signifies that this book is what historians call a "primary source." That is, it was published during the time period under study (during World War II). Even if it was later republished, with a different title (in this case, "Instructions for American Servicemen in France During World War II"), it is still considered a "primary document." But be careful -- the new forward by Rick Atkinson is NOT a primary source!

Points scored this item: **1**

How many items with the keyword "World War II" and that were published in 2001 does the Library COAST catalog list?

b. 51-100

Great! Now take down a note to remind yourself how to sort the results by year of publication. (We hope you didn't count through ALL the results!) **This question addresses the skill of using search limits, in this case, year of publication.**

Points scored this item: **1**

The item "Finding Information on Personal Participation in World War II" gives instructions on how to find the records of individual members of the military by using online sources only.

False

You're right. This item is just a start -- it provides excellent instructions on how to find sources on participation during the war, but much of the information can be found only through written records

maintained in archives and government offices. Many of those "repositories" (places where documents are housed) are not even in the state of California, so this might not be a very helpful resource for finding information on World War II for a History 301 paper. **This question introduces the concept of access to documents, especially in the Internet age.**

Points scored this item: **1**

Which of the following items published in print in 2001 and published online in 2013 is advertised as "being written by more than 140 specialist contributors from Italy, Germany, and Japan, as well as the allied nations..."?

c. The Oxford Companion to World War II

Right! It sometimes takes some searching to find a reliable reference source, and this is one. Often reference works with words like "Companion," "Dictionary," "Encyclopedia," or "Compendium" in the titles will be helpful in learning more about a topic as you attempt to narrow down the project to manageable proportions.

Points scored this item: **1**

As you look at the results list for a COAST search, the way to tell if an item is available online through the LIbrary is that it lacks specific call number, location, and status notations.

True

Right! Remember this point: If you need information or sources from the Library but are not on campus or the Library is closed, look for these items. You may be able to do some of your work online, with reliable and peer-reviewed books and reference resources. The Library has invested in many online resources for students.

Points scored this item: **1** **Quiz group score: 6 / 6**

Task 6: Now that you know more about the Library's COAST search engine and how it functions, let's learn more about narrowing a focus using the COAST system. For the sake of this exercise, let's assume that you have decided that you would like to focus on the experiences of women during World War II. You've noticed that there are some results from your original "World War II" search that list women's names in the title, like "Rosie the Riveter" or "Nancy Love." Examine the results for these

names and then take the quiz below to check your observational powers and your skills in research!

Nancy Love was a **pilot or WASP or WASP pilot**

Right! Good job!

Points scored this item: **1**

One of the best ways to narrow your search is to look at a result page, then examine the "Subject Categories" on the individual item page. Unlike keywords, which a user types in, subject categories are officially defined by the Library of Congress and are used by every academic library in the U.S. For the item, "Nancy Love and the WASP Ferry Pilots of World War II," which of the following is NOT listed as a subject category?

e. World War II, 1939-1945. United States -- Women pilots.

Right! You may have noticed that there are many subject categories for this particular item. This is not unusual, which means that when you do subject category searches, you may find the same items using different search terms.

Points scored this item: **1**

Once you identify a subject category that might help you narrow your topic, you can click on it to see if it brings up more items. For this question, click on the subject category "Women Airforce Service Pilots U.S. -- Biography." How many distinct individual items are listed? **Three**

Good job! Although there are four results listed, two of the items are the same publication -- one available in print and one available online. So there are only three distinct individual items. When you do subject category searches, you should be attentive to the results list. In some cases, the results might be the same.

Points scored this item: **1**

One good way to find more information is to look at the COAST subject category "Nearby Subjects" results page.

True

Yes, this is often a useful way to look for information related to your primary subject category search terms. But be aware that within more general subject categories, terms are organized alphabetically (not chronologically)!

Points scored this item: **1** **Quiz group score: 4 / 4**

Task 7: For this task, let's practice further the *iterative process* of historical research. For this task, let's assume that you are intrigued by the story of Nancy Love, the WASP pilot. Go to the quiz group to see if you are engaging in an iterative process as we try to uncover more about Nancy Love and other WASP pilots. Note how the subject categories **disambiguate** the more general subject of a keyword search -- that is, they clarify a general category by dividing it up into many parts, and thus produce more defined results lists.

The best way to learn more about Nancy Love, the WASP pilot, would be to read the book by Sarah Rickman

True

Yes! This book is online and access is immediate through the University Library. Rickman's book is published by a press affiliated with a university (The University of North Texas Press), so it is most likely to be a reliable source, authored by someone with expertise, and reviewed for accuracy before publication.

Points scored this item: **1**

World War II WASP pilots like Nancy Love are worthy of historical inquiry because

e. all of the above

Right! These are just some of the reasons why historians might be interested in the experiences of WASP pilots during World War II. It's not that women pilots are just "historical curiosities" -- their work had importance to the war and their experiences are meaningful as we try to understand how gender roles have changed during the 20th century, and as a result of war.

Points scored this item: **1**

Since the Library has only a few books on women pilots during World War II, it's probably not a good topic for a History 301 paper.

False

Right! It's too early to make this assumption. The Library also has journals and newspapers, and there may be relevant material on WASP pilots in those sources. Further, there may be other resources in the community or online that would be of value. More research is needed!

Points scored this item: **1** **Quiz group score: 3 / 3**

Task 8: In your initial "exploratory" research about the WASP pilots, you noted that many of the WASP pilots were ordered to fly airplanes from Long Beach to other places around the country, like Alabama and Texas. This is intriguing because you are wondering why this might be the case.

Here's a self check to practice developing research ideas!

Take a moment to write down three research ideas about WASP pilots. Make sure that one also addresses the "local angle" -- Long Beach. And rank them for interest.

SUBJECTIVE. Better ideas will address directly the local connection: Why a local connection (to aircraft manufacturing plants), possibility of resources in our area, possibility that WASP pilots once lived here and they or their descendants might still be in town.

Task 9: You have decided to write about WASP pilots during World War II. You have done some research and now have many sources, listed within the next exercise. Some are "primary" sources while others are "secondary" sources. Remember, "primary" sources are generally defined as those produced during the time period under study, or by participants and/or observers of the time period; these "primary sources" (and those who produced them) ***have a relationship to the past****, to the period or issue under study.* Historians classify "secondary" sources as those produced by scholars who use "primary" sources to construct a narrative of the past. Identify these sources (listed) as either "primary" or "secondary."

Match the items.

The task is to match the lettered items with the correct numbered items. Appearing below is a list of lettered items. Following that is a list of numbered items. Each numbered item is followed by a drop-down. Select the letter in the drop down that best matches the numbered item with the lettered alternatives.

A. SECONDARY SOURCES

1. Sarah Rickman, Nancy Love and the WASP Ferry Pilots of World War II

2. Laurel Ladevich, Fly Girls

4. Ann B. Carl, A Wasp Among Eagles

8. Melissa Jordan, "Flying Bombers in World War II"

9. Michelle Neale, "The Guinea Pig Class of 43-1," M.A. Thesis, CSU Northridge

10. Valerie Moolman, Women Aloft

B. PRIMARY SOURCES

3. Yearbook, 318th A.A.F.F.T.D. Class of 43-W-4 and 43-W-5

5. Gail Gutierrez, Forgotten Wings **(an oral history collection)**

6. Doris Brinker Tanner, "We Also Served," American History Illustrated, 1985 **(brief memoir)**

7. Barbara Poole, "Requiem for the WASP," Flying, vol. 35, no. 6, pages 55-56+

This categorization activity measures beginning research skills and resourcefulness, as well as ability to apply appropriate labels (primary v. secondary) to items. Most items are in the Library Catalog, or on LINK+ (a consortium Library catalog on our University Library site), or in a bibliography at the WASP Museum at the University of North Texas.

Points scored this item: **10**

Task 10: This is the final task for this module. In the following space, think about your own ideas for a History 301 paper. You may start with a general topic (most likely) or a very specific topic (less likely).

Using the methods you've learned from this module, outline your research steps. Be sure to print out and bring to class this outline!

Remember, ***research is a process.*** If you start from a very specific topic, you may find yourself reversing the steps if you cannot find appropriate primary and secondary sources on your topic.

Be aware of issues of access: Can you get the sources you want quickly, this term, at Long Beach State? (Note: Original unpublished sources are generally not available for borrowing.) If you can get the sources, do you have the skills to use them productively? (Note: Many primary documents are written in languages other than English and may not be available in translation.)

Using the methods you've learned from this module, outline your research steps. What research activities do you think will be most fruitful to you? What will you do if you cannot find information or sources on

your topic? (If you find it helpful, make your outline in flowchart form, number the steps, or draw a cognitive map to help you organize your thoughts.)

BETTER ANSWERS will note steps of research: Identify general topic → more defined topic → specific topic. BETTER ANSWERS will also note research skills development: Internet (where they all start) → Library catalog → LC subject headings → specific sources.

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 50.