FINDING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

When you are beginning research on a topic, your first need is for background information. This is particularly important if you are unfamiliar with the subject or if you are not sure which aspect of it you want to emphasize. The purpose of this Study Guide is to bring to your attention examples of reference books in the library that are useful for finding background information. By consulting them, you will find:

1. an overview of your topic
2. ideas on how to limit your topic to focus on an aspect of it that interests you
3. related terms, facts, names, and dates you may use to locate additional information
4. lists of recommended sources for further reading about your subject

Encyclopedias are an excellent starting point because they provide the information listed above.

There are both general and specialized encyclopedias listed in this Guide. Whatever encyclopedia you choose, be sure to consult its index volume, to find all the references related to your topic.

If your topic is new, controversial, or subject to change, a news digest or periodical article may turn out to be more helpful to you than an encyclopedia or other reference book. See STUDY GUIDE #5 - FINDING INFORMATION IN NEWSPAPERS AND NEWS DIGESTS and STUDY GUIDE #4 - FINDING ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS for directions on locating these resources.

The following list includes representative resources that are available in King's College Library. If you have any difficulty finding information on your subject, please ask a reference librarian for assistance.

GENERAL ENCYCLOPEDIAS
(Selected)

Encyclopedia Americana
A good, comprehensive encyclopedia for general use. Particularly strong in its information about American towns and cities.

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica
This edition of the Britannica is arranged differently from most encyclopedias. The "Propaedia" is a single volume outline of human knowledge. The 12 volume "Micropaedia" set gives brief, ready reference information and serves as an index to the larger set. The 17 volume "Macropaedia" contains long, scholarly articles on major subjects.

The World Book Encyclopedia
A very popular, richly illustrated, publication that presents information in a clear, concise style. Articles begin with basic information and advance in depth as they progress.
## HUMANITIES

### Art

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### Literature

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**Philosophy**

- *Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics*
- *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*
- *Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society*
- *Encyclopedia of Environmental Ethics and Philosophy*
- *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

**Religion**

- *Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy*
- *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology*
- *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
- *Encyclopedia of Religion*
- *New Catholic Encyclopedia*
- *New Interpreter's Bible*
- *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
- *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*
SOCIAL SCIENCES

General

R 301.03 E19E1
Encyclopedia of Sociology, 2nd Ed.

R 303 En19I
International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences

R 364 Sa18S
Sage Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods, 2nd Ed.

Business

R 657.03 B568B
Blackwell Encyclopedia of Management

R 338.0973 En19E
Encyclopedia of American Industries

R 650 En19E
Encyclopedia of Business

R 174 En19E1
Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society

R 332.63 In8I1
International Directory of Company Histories

R 332.03 N42N
New Palgrave Dictionary of Money and Finance

Criminal Justice

R 364.03 En19E
Encyclopedia of Crime and Justice

R 346 En19E
Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment

R 364.36 En19E
Encyclopedia of Juvenile Violence

R 363.2 En19E1
Encyclopedia of Law Enforcement

R 363.2 E19E
Encyclopedia of Police Science
R 365
En19E

Encyclopedia of Prisons and Correctional Facilities

R 364.16
En19E

Encyclopedia of White Collar & Corporate Crime

R 363.25
F761F1

Forensic Science

**Economics**

R 338.0973
En19E

Encyclopedia of American Industries

R 330.03
F779F
R 330
P175D1

Fortune Encyclopedia of Economics

New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics, 2nd Ed.

R 332.03
N42N

New Palgrave Dictionary of Money and Finance

**Education**

R 372.2
Ea76E

Early Childhood Education

R 370
Un3U


R 370.117
En19E

Encyclopedia of Bilingual Education

R 375.0003
En19E

Encyclopedia of Curriculum Studies

R 370.3
En19E

Encyclopedia of Education

R 371.9
En19E

Encyclopedia of Special Education

R 371.15
H191H

Handbook of Educational Psychology

R 370.15
En19E

Psychology of Classroom Learning: An Encyclopedia
History and Geography

R 960 Afr83A

Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience

R 909.82 R35A

American Decades (Covers 1900 to 1999)

R 973.03 D561D

Dictionary of American History

R 940 Ea77E

Eastern Europe: An Introduction to the People, Lands, and Culture

R 973.927 En19E

Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History

R 960.03 En19E

Encyclopedia of African History

R 973.927 En19E

Encyclopedia of the American Presidency

R 956.94 En19E1

Encyclopedia of the Holocaust

R 973.003 En19E1

Encyclopedia of the United States in the Nineteenth Century

R 959.704 En19E

Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War

Ready Reference 320.058 Eu75E

Europa World Year Book. (Updated annually)

R 970.004 P939N

Native Americans: An Encyclopedia of History, Culture, and Peoples

R 903.21 W893W

Worldmark Encyclopedia of Nations

Law

R 342.732 En19E

Encyclopedia of the American Constitution

R 340.03 W529W

West's Encyclopedia of American Law
Political Science

- Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy
- Encyclopedia of Democracy
- Encyclopedia of the United States Congress
- Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations
- Oxford Companion to Politics of the World

Psychology

- Encyclopedia of Human Behavior
- Encyclopedia of Positive Psychology
- Encyclopedia of Psychology
- Encyclopedia of Social Psychology
- Salem Health: Psychology and Mental Health

Sociology

- Encyclopedia of American Social Movements
- Encyclopedia of Marriage and the Family
**Encyclopedia of Social Work, 20th ed.**

**Encyclopedia of Sociology, 2nd ed.**

**Women’s Studies Encyclopedia**

**GENERAL**

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Biology**

**Encyclopedia of Environmental Biology**

**Encyclopedia of Genetics**

**Encyclopedia of Human Biology, 2nd ed.**

**Encyclopedia of Immunology, 2nd ed.**

**Encyclopedia of Microbiology, 2nd ed.**

**Encyclopedia of Virology, 3rd ed.**

**Grzimek’s Animal Life Encyclopedia**

**Grzimek’s Encyclopedia of Mammals**

**Wiley Encyclopedia of Energy and the Environment**
Chemistry

Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology, 4th ed.

Encyclopedia of Inorganic Chemistry

Macmillan Encyclopedia of Chemistry

Climate

Encyclopedia of Climate and Weather

Encyclopedia of Global Warming and Climate Change

Health Sciences

Cecil Medicine

Encyclopedia of Drugs, Alcohol, & Addictive Behavior, 3rd ed.

Encyclopedia of Sports Medicine

Essentials of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Mosby’s Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, & Health Professions, 8th ed.

The Oxford Illustrated Companion to Medicine, 3rd ed.


Revised, Oct. 2010