

Finding Primary Sources and Archives Worksheet

Sample topic: *I need to find a range of primary source and/or archival material on the early history of schools for orphans in Australia.*

Step/Search Tip	Suggested strategy for sample topic	Strategy for your own topic
<p>1. Read the background to your topic</p> <p>Check subject specific encyclopaedias for overviews</p> <p>Search library catalogues and databases to find published secondary sources (books and journal articles)</p> <p>Look through books on the broader subject area - scan the tables of contents and indexes (and also the bibliographies for other sources)</p> <p>Use all the above to help you establish names of relevant people/organisations, key dates, terminology etc. and also to help place events/issues in their historical context</p>	<p><i>Look up Australian education and history encyclopaedias in Library</i></p> <p><i>Search UOW Library Catalogue, databases (A+Education, APAFT, Family). Try keywords such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>orphan* and histor*</i> - <i>children and institution* and histor*</i> - <i>school* and histor* and australia*</i> <p><i>Look through tables of contents and indexes in books for any mention of specific schools, orphanages, charities, welfare groups, etc.</i></p>	<p>Note: Refer back to the search terms you compiled on your <i>Search Strategy Keywords Worksheet</i></p>
<p>2. Identify the scope of your topic</p> <p>Compile a list of what types of records, what years, which regions etc. you are interested in</p>	<p><i>What types of records? - school administrative records and annual reports, government reports, autobiographies or letters from pupils and teachers</i></p> <p><i>What time period? - approx. 1850s-1910s</i></p> <p><i>Which regions? - Sydney and surrounding areas (eg. Randwick, Parramatta)</i></p>	
<p>3. Consider possible sources for archival records</p> <p>Think about who (which organisations or people) might have been involved in activities which produced relevant records at the time? and Where might these records be kept now?</p>	<p><i>Who? - government departments responsible for education and welfare, charities and churches running orphanages</i></p> <p><i>Where? - NSW State Library, State Records NSW, individual charity or church organisations</i></p>	

Step/Search Tip	Suggested strategy for sample topic	Strategy for your own topic
<p>4. Check for references or guides to related primary sources/archives</p> <p>Search library catalogues to check for published copies of historical primary sources, as well as archives web sites for any digitised online collections</p> <p>Search for contemporary newspaper or magazine/journal articles written around the relevant time period</p> <p>Check if anyone has published a guide to archival records on the subject area, or compiled a listing as part of a bibliography</p> <p>Note: For quick links and search tips consult the following guides on the UOW Archives web site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Finding Historical Primary Sources</i> - <i>Finding Historical Newspapers</i> - <i>Finding Archives (around Australia)</i> 	<p><i>Look in bibliographies in books or articles for mention of related primary sources such as gov't reports about schooling/child welfare. Check if copies held at UOW Library (search title details on Library Catalogue and also look for them in Parliamentary Papers series if needed)</i></p> <p><i>Search old newspaper indexes held in Library around key years</i></p> <p><i>Search UOW Library & NSW State Library Catalogues. Try keywords such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>educat* and histor* and biograph*</i> - <i>school* and australia* and source*</i> <p><i>Search collections of UOW Archives & Wollongong City Library Local Studies</i></p> <p><i>Search other archives catalogues on Finding Archives web page for mention of useful archives held in Sydney (eg. at State Library or at State Records NSW)</i></p>	<p>Note: Refer back to the search terms you compiled on your <i>Search Strategy Keywords Worksheet</i></p>
<p>5. Plan ahead when you visit libraries or archives</p> <p>Check on the organisation's access/usage conditions and ask how long it will take to retrieve material. Allow yourself ample time to read through records (making copies might not be permitted)</p>	<p><i>Check UOW Archives, NSW State Library and State Records NSW web sites for their opening hours. Find out if need to make an appointment or tell them in advance what I want to look at, what proof of ID to bring etc.</i></p>	
<p>6. Consult library and archives staff for their help</p> <p>Over time staff can build up extensive personal knowledge of the material held in particular collections</p>	<p><i>Discuss with UOW Archivist and Education / Arts Faculty Librarians where I've searched and what I've discovered so far about orphan schools. See if they have further suggestions</i></p>	