Encyclopedias: General encyclopedias have extensive information in many areas of knowledge such as Encyclopedia Britannica. Specialized subject encyclopedias focus on a specific field of study such as the Encyclopedia of American History.

Dictionaries: Specialized subject dictionaries include short entries about a person, event or term. The Historical Dictionary of the War of 1812 is an example of a subject dictionary.

Reference Databases: The library subscribes to several reference databases, which are similar to digitized reference books. They include...

◊ American National Biography
◊ History Database Center
◊ Britannica Online
◊ Salem History

All About Reference Sources: A good place to start...and finish

~ Most encyclopedias are arranged alphabetically, but some are by topic.
~ Might be a single volume or multi-volume set.
~ Articles and entries are authored by experts in the field.
~ Provide you with keywords that can help you search Biblion or one of the newspaper databases.
~ Articles usually end with a bibliography and/or “See Also” references.
~ Dictionaries might have extensive timelines or a lengthy bibliography at the end.
~ Other kinds of reference books include atlases, directories, and almanacs.
~ Many reference books include primary documents either in an appendix or an entire volume.

HELP! Try Texting your question to the help desk.
HELP! Did you know you can Chat online with a librarian?
HELP! Visit the librarian on-duty at the help desk on the main floor.
1. The *American Eras* series is a good place to start your research. Find it in the reference section; the call number is R 973.8 A5123.

   How are these volumes arranged?_____________________________________________________

   Where will you find information about the different Religions in the colonial era?____________

   You are interested in learning more about the Puritans. Look at pages 357-360. Can you tell who wrote the section on the Puritans?________________________Is there a bibliography?_________If so, does the library own any of these books?________________________________________________________

   _________________________________________________________________

2. During summer vacation you visited Fort McHenry in Baltimore, a War of 1812 site and you want to know more. Find the *Encyclopedia of the War of 1812* in the reference section.

   How is this set arranged?______________________________________________________________

   Are you able to tell who wrote the article?_______________________________________________

   Is there a bibliography? If so, does the library own any of these titles?____________________

   _________________________________________________________________

   Does this set contain primary documents? If so, is there one that might be useful for this topic?

   _________________________________________________________________

3. Using American National Biography Online, search for Elizabeth Cady Stanton. List some keywords that might help you search Biblion or a newspaper database for her._____________________________________________________

   _________________________________________________________________

4. *Use The Annals of America* to locate a primary source related to Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s involvement in the Woman’s Right Convention in 1848. Document Title:_____________________________________________________

5. Look through the *Historical Dictionary of the American Revolution*. List 3 things you did NOT expect to find in a dictionary._____________________________________________________

   _________________________________________________________________