

# Database Exploration Activity

Instructors can use this worksheet to guide students through Purdue Archives' primary source databases.

## Instructions

Keeping your research topic of interest in mind, explore the three resources available through the Purdue Archives. Follow the prompts and answer the questions. This activity is intended to encourage you to explore the various features and information provided in each database. Students are encouraged to take their time to explore.

## Section 1: Purdue e-Archives

Purdue e-Archives is the Purdue Archives' digital collections database.

Visit [Purdue e-Archives](#) to view digital and digitized collections.

### Collections (Home)

Locate one collection related to your topic of interest by navigating through the collections listed on the home page.

Answer the following questions using the data in e-Archives about your collection.

1. List the collection you chose
2. Who created/collected the collection (i.e., person/org name)?
3. What time period is the collection from?

Using the filters on the left-hand side of the database, answer the following:

1. What subjects are listed in this collection that you're interested in?
2. Name a few formats/genres (e.g., photograph, letter, etc.) present?
3. Are there any other creators listed?

From the collection you chose, use the search function or filters to locate specific documents related to your topic within your chosen collection. Your documents should include the following:

1. Items from two different decades. List the document and the decades.

2. An item produced by a source that is not your person/organization (if available). List the document and the source.
3. At least two items related to your topic. List the documents and the topic.

### Advance Search

Using the advanced search function, perform a search for records related to your topic. If your search returned more than 1,000 results, use an additional search term or filter to narrow your search.

Answer the following:

1. Did you need to try multiple search terms? What were they?
2. Did you use the advanced search fields only or the filters on the results page?

From your search results, find documents that include the following:

1. Two items related to your topic in two different formats. List the documents and formats.

Using two of the documents you selected, do the following:

1. Open each item
2. Conduct a keyword search within the record
3. Using the metadata fields located underneath the image **cite the two documents**. Links to relevant citation resources can be found in e-Archives under [Citation](#).
  - a. Citation:
  - b. Citation:

### Audio/Video

Locate an audio or video recording.

1. List the item you chose:
2. Find the transcript (if available)
3. Play the recording.

## Section 2: Purdue Exponent

The Purdue Exponent is the Purdue student newspaper. It has been in operation since 1889.

You can view the Purdue Exponent and other historic newspapers at [Historical Newspapers](#).

## Search

Navigate to the search tab. Click the Advanced Search icon , and do the following:

1. Conduct a basic search using terms related to your topic.
2. Conduct the same search but use synonyms or like terms in place of the terms you used.
3. Use boolean operators such as AND, OR, NOT; use "quotation marks" for exact phrases to make your search more specific
4. Are there any tags listed that will help you narrow your search? Click them.
5. Narrow your results by decade

Locate one article you're interested in and open it. Answer the following:

1. List the item you chose
2. When it is from?
3. Who wrote it?
4. What page of the newspaper issue is it on?
5. Cite it, clip it, and save it. Include citation below.

## Dates

Navigate to the Date tab. Choose a newspaper issue by date that you think may have information related to your topic.

1. Open it.
2. Look on the first page. Is there an article that continues on a following page? If yes, find the rest of the article.
3. Skim the issue

Find the following:

1. Why did you choose that date?
2. Find one article that interests you and read it. What are some terms you could use to find more related articles?
3. Find an advertisement that interests you. What did you learn from reading the advertisement?

## Section 3: Primary Source Databases

Choose one database from the list of [Archival, Historical, Primary databases](#) offered through the Purdue libraries.

1. List the database you chose.

Conduct a keyword search for your topic and locate three records of interest.

1. List the three records you chose.
2. What search features are available?
3. Conduct a keyword search for Purdue. If your search retrieved any results, list one you found interesting and why.
4. What is one thing that you can use this database for your research?

## Section 4: Discuss

Split into groups. Discuss the following with the others in your group:

- Discuss one item that you found interesting. Why was it interesting?
- What challenges did you encounter when searching in the databases?
- Which metadata fields did you find helpful?
- What was missing that you wish was included? Where else might you find this information?

The instructor should bring the class back together and talk about the discussion questions.