

Guide to Literary Reference Center

What is Literary Reference Center? Literary Reference Center (LRC) is a comprehensive literary reference database that provides detailed information on the most studied authors and their works, along with a broad spectrum of reference information from antiquity to the present day. LRC is a completely full-text database that combines information from a variety of sources into one unique location for:

- Over 1,000 books and monographs, like selected editions of *Masterplots* and *Masterplots II* from Salem Press and numerous titles from the *Bloom* series from Chelsea House, edited by Harold Bloom.
- Major literary encyclopedias and dictionaries such as the *Cyclopedia of World Authors*, *Cyclopedia of Literary Characters*, and *Dictionary of World Biography*.
- Major literary reference works, including all of *MagillOnLiterature*. Plus, *Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature*, and *The Complete Russian Folktale* (6 volumes).
- Hundreds of literary journals, poems, short stories, and literary works from a wide range of publications, including *Modern Language Quarterly*, *Modern Language Review*, and the *Columbia Companion to the Twentieth-Century American Short Story*.

How do I access Literary Reference Center? From the Roberts-LaForge Library home page (<http://www.deltastate.edu/pages/177.asp>), use the “Quick jump to a database” drop down menu near the bottom of the page and select “Literary Reference Center” from the selection. If you are accessing LRC from off-campus, please consult the “Off-Campus Access” Guide available in Roberts-LaForge Library or available online at <http://www.deltastate.edu/pages/728.asp>



Figure 1 – Home page

How do I search in Literary Reference Center? Figure 1 shows the home page for LRC where you will begin your search. You may choose to search by entering your search terms into the **Find:** field and then clicking “**Search**”. From the home page you may also browse a compiled list of the 1,000 authors most studied at the high school and college level (**Browse Most Studied Authors**) or a list of most studied works (**Browse Most Studied Works**). You may also browse Authors or Works alphabetically.

Literary Reference Center also offers a link to help you carry out an **Advanced Search**. This option is located just above the Basic Search field. You can use field codes to create a more refined search by scrolling down the page to locate the type(s) of limiting fields desired. Here you

can combine fields such as Author, Subject, or Title with unique fields like Author’s Cultural Identity, Literary Locale, Movement, and Time of Work. Use Boolean Operators (and, or, not) to find a search that yields the best results for your needs. Click on “**Search Tips**” to learn more about Boolean Operators and developing a search strategy.

The range of unique **Limiters** tools in the Advanced Search screen can help narrow down search results. Document types can be limited to a variety of formats, including *Masterplots* (a series of plot summaries and critical essays in world literature), Interviews, Literary Criticism, or Poems/Stories. A **Literary Author** search can be narrowed through options such as Gender, Cultural Identity, National Identity, Lifetime, or Name. A specific **Literary Work** search can be limited by Character, Genre, Title, or Publication Date.

Figure 2 – Advanced Search

How do I navigate the Results List? Once you have filled in your search criteria and clicked on “Search”, you will be presented with a list of the available records that fulfill your query. Each record is automatically sorted by Relevance, but you can use the drop down box next to “Sort by” to change the view according to title, date, author, or source. Above the “Sort by” feature is a link to “Add this search to folder” which allows you to save your search results to view at a later time. “Display link to this search” provides you with the URL link to return to this exact page in LRC at a later time. Also, by creating a personal “My EBSCOHost” account, you can log into that account before beginning a search and save desired results to this personalized account folder for later retrievals.

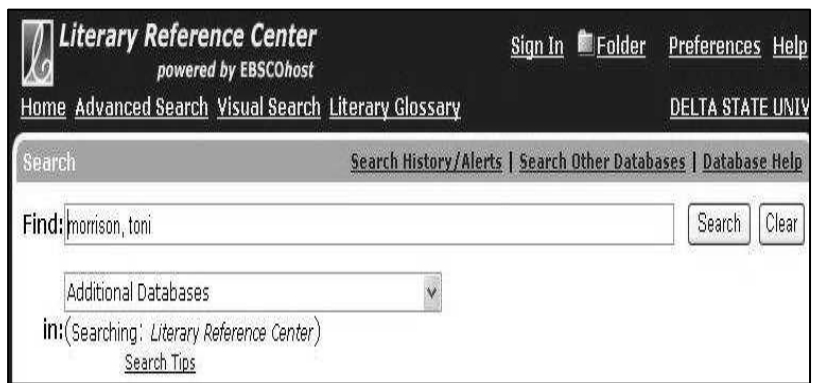


Figure 3 – Results Page

The Tabs at the top of the Results Page (see Figure 3) allow you to view all search results. The tabs also allow you to limit your search results to one of the following: Biographies, Literary Criticism, Reviews, Reference Books, or Periodicals, or Poems. From the Results Page you can identify the type of document by looking at the end of the citation (Item #1 is an article and item #2 is a bibliography).

You may also select the “Add” links on the right hand side of each record to put items into a temporary folder. This folder will hold items long enough (generally for one database research session) to be printed, to be saved to an e-mail account, or a USB device. This temporary folder will not save items for long term storage; you must save items to your created “MY EBSCOHost” in order for items to be retrieved at a later date.

To further analyze a search result, click on the first blue link in the citation. This will take you to the Full Display page of the selected result (See Figure 4). Each result contains a full citation, brief abstract of the document, and full text where available. Sections of the result are clearly labeled, i.e. authors, subject terms, etc.

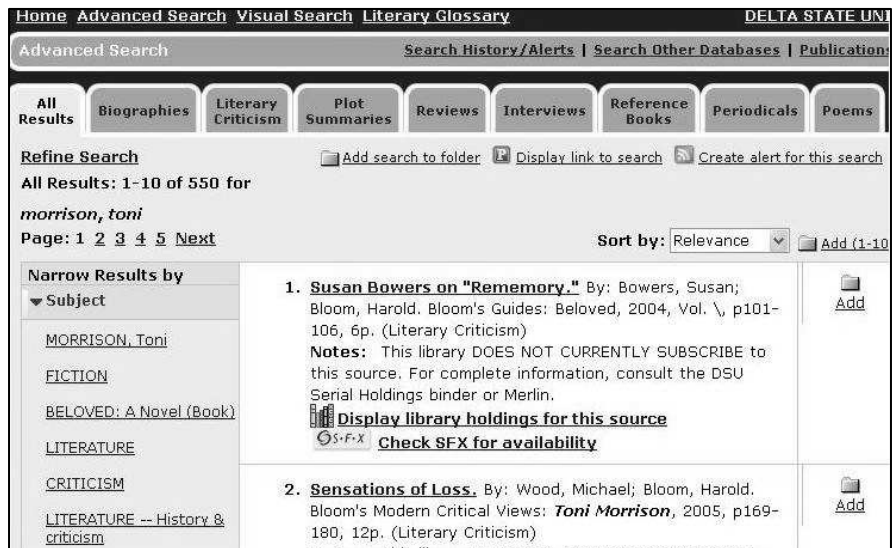
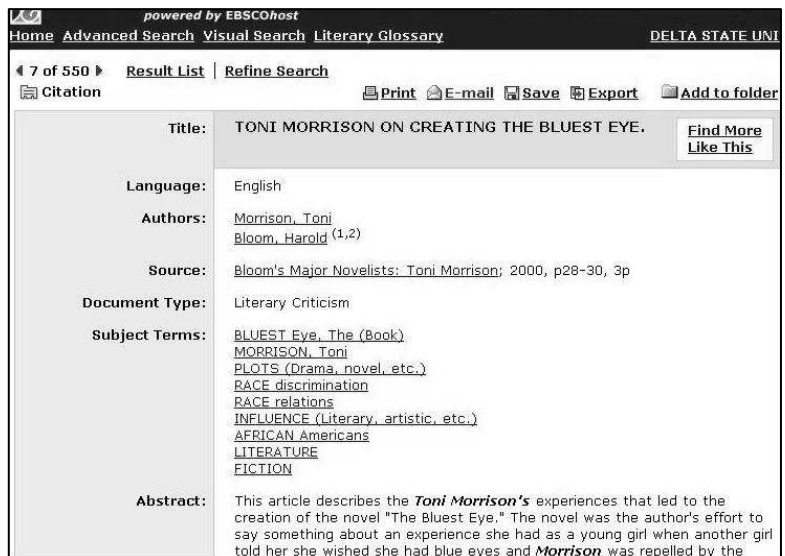


Figure 4 –Full Display Result

You can access the **full text** of a document or article by clicking either the **HTML Full Text** link or the **PDF Full Text** link found on both Figure 3: Results Page and Figure 4: Full Display Result. If an article is not available full-text, utilize the “**Check SFX for availability**” link at the bottom of the citation and follow the instructions for ordering the article through Document Delivery. Information concerning Document Delivery can be located at: <http://www.deltastate.edu/docs/library/SFXGuide.pdf>

At any time during a search session, you can use the “Back” button to return to the previous page. You may also use the “Result List” link to go from the full display of one record back to the result list, or click on “Refine Search” link to modify your search.



What are other features available in Literary Reference Center? Even though you are searching on the LRC database, you can still link to other EBSCOhost databases by clicking the “Search Other Databases” link. This allows you to search multiple databases simultaneously. **LRC** also offers several useful features on the home page including a Reference Shelf, Literary Glossary, Content Spotlight, and Book Highlight.



Figure 5 – Reference Shelf

Literary Historical Timeline displays in chronological order significant dates in world literature from antiquity to present day. Displays date of event, a description of what happened on that date, and the country or continent in which it occurred.

Encyclopedia of Literature *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature* is an excellent and comprehensive resource providing information about all of the world’s literature. Features include offering vocabulary, phrases, and plot

summaries in an easy to use dictionary-encyclopedia format, as well as including pronunciation information, etymologies of literary terms and listings of literary prizes. The text provides over 10,000 entries and includes 250 illustrations.

Dictionary The LRC provides a complete electronic version of the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, fourth edition*.

Research Guide provides virtually all the information you will need to effectively conduct literary research and write research papers. This research guide begins with a lesson on plagiarism and is followed by a step-by-step approach to writing research papers. There are also guides about how to deal with the “worst case scenario”, evaluating information sources, and critical reading. The Guide concludes with a research glossary.

Figure 6 – Book Highlight

Literary Reference Center includes the full-text to over 1,000 books and reference works that are highlighted on a rotating basis. Of special interest is the *Understanding Literature Series* from Whitston Publishing, which contains hundreds of literary essays written by scholars from around the world exclusively for the Literary Reference Center. When selecting a book from this section, you will find a brief highlight of the work, then a searchable table of contents. You may also search within the publication using a keyword search.

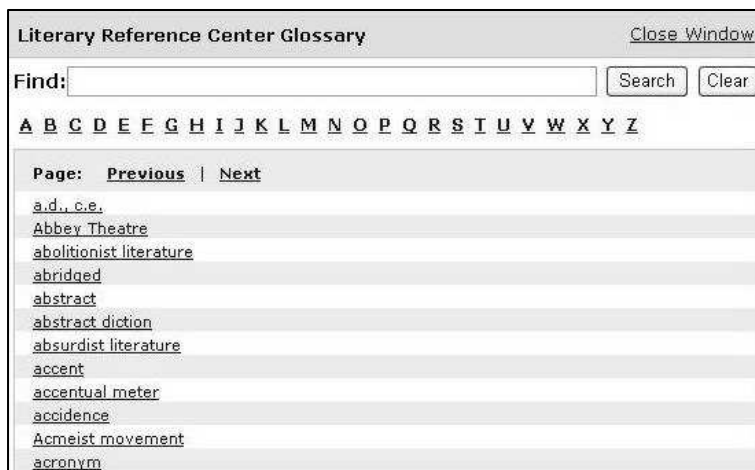
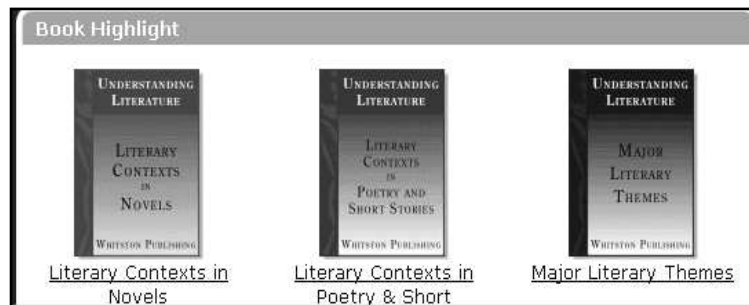


Figure 7 – Literary Reference Center Glossary

The Literary Reference Center Glossary is available on the home page next to the “Visual Search” option. The Glossary can be used to look up words and phrases commonly associated with world literature. You can enter a specific term or browse each page alphabetically. Searching for *allegory* or *American Renaissance*, for example, produces brief explanations of the terms and alternative subject headings for developing a search strategy.

Have a question? Ask a Librarian.