Learning Outcomes:

- Locate background information on a literary work or author in order to be able to effectively discuss the work in a critical context.
- Learn to combine technical terms, format terms, and controlled vocabulary in order to effectively search for sources that contribute to a fully-developed argument.

Finding Background Information on Your Work and Author:

Before you begin to search for scholarly sources, you will need to find out more information about your author and your literary work. When was it published? Was it published early or late in the life or career of the author? Was it published during the author’s lifetime or posthumously? How was it classified (genre) and how was it received by critics when it was first published? Use the resources below to locate some of this information.

**Dictionary of Literary Biography**

This resource provides nearly 10,000 biographical and critical essays on the lives, works, and careers of authors from all eras and genres.

**Literature Criticism Online**

This is a searchable edition of Gale's Literary Criticism series presents excerpts from modern and historical criticism of works across region, genre, and period. Included are ten print series: Children's Literature Review, Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism, Contemporary Literary Criticism, Drama Criticism, Literature Criticism from 1400 to 1800, Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism, Poetry Criticism, Shakespearean Criticism, Short Story Criticism, and Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism.

4 Databases for Literary Research:

These are 4 databases that you will find useful for your research in EN210. Remember that these are not the only databases that contain relevant or useful information for you! The skills that you learn during your library day will be transferable to any of the other databases that you may find, and you should have the ability to seek out sources in other databases when you are working on your annotated bibliography.

**Scout:**

Scout searches the library's catalog, the library's digital archive, and a number of the electronic resources that the library subscribes to. It's a good place to start searching broadly for information.

**JSTOR:**

JSTOR is a repository for scholarly journals and contains a rich selection of literary criticism and reviews. The contents of JSTOR is not current-- the articles it contains are usually at least 3 years old. JSTOR contains historical articles and sources.
**Project MUSE:** Project MUSE is a repository for current and newer scholarly journals. The content is much like JSTOR, except more recently published (nothing older than 2000).

**MLA International Bibliography:** MLA International Bibliography is an index that contains records for scholarly publication in the field of literature and language studies. It includes records for books, book reviews, and scholarly journals. Many of the index records have full-text items attached, but not all of them. Sometimes, it will be necessary for you to locate an index record in MLA Bibliography, and then use that record to locate the item (usually a book) in another location.

**Bank of General Search Terms:**

Your search terms should include terms specific to your literary work (such as the name of your work or name of the author) and then a search term that represents the specific facet that you are examining, or the type of information you are looking for. The following list is not a comprehensive list-- it's merely a guide, or set of suggestions, to get you started.

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