

Useful advice for Picking Your Archive for Inquiry 2

(For use only by students completing a Humanities Inquiry)

Before you begin your humanities inquiry you will need to spend some time deciding which cultural archive you want to use as your inquiry home base. Many of archives, particularly the “closed stack” libraries (meaning you must request items from librarians and cannot browse the shelves), may feel difficult to approach and a bit intimidating, but if you have done your homework before you go you can make your research trips productive and fun!

You have five options to choose from:

Blanton: the campus art museum with holdings in contemporary art, Latin art, European art and prints and drawings.

HRC: contains all variety of media, book, videos, costumes, puppets, private letters, manuscripts, closed stacks

PCL Map Room: in the basement of the PCL houses oversized and rollout maps.

LBJ: Lyndon Baines Johnson’s Presidential Library with all the papers from his administration, political memorabilia, and LBJ’s personal effects, closed stacks

Benson: a substantial collection of documents, rare books, maps, and personal papers dealing with Latin America, closed stacks

As you begin to choose your topic, please spend some time thinking about where your interests lie and what sort of objects you are excited about studying. **If you are having trouble coming up with an artifact or a topic, the best way to help yourself is by reading all of the skill modules and visiting the libraries’ webpages. Go visit the LBJ museum or walk through the Blanton and allow yourself to be inspired.** All of the textual archives have online finding aids, most of which you can browse by subject. You will need to familiarize yourself with the collections—they’re huge so no one, not even your UGTA or Dr Scala will be able to tell you everything they house! Good research *begins* online and then gets off the internet and into the library. Good luck, and happy research!