

**BBC History.** Access: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/>.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is the largest broadcasting organization in the world. Its mission is to enrich people's lives with programs that inform, educate, and entertain. BBC History, which presents original content on a variety of historical topics, does just that.

BBC History's homepage features an interactive timeline divided into topical chapters, starting with "Roman Britain" (43 A.D.–410), "Vikings and Anglo-Saxons" (410–1066) and "Norman Britain" (1066–1154), extending through "Victorian Britain" (1837–1901), "World Wars" (1901–1945), and "Modern Britain" (1945 to the present).

"History for Kids" is a great resource for public librarians advising elementary and secondary school students on history projects. Should the question arise, "Who lived in Britain 2000 years ago?" BBC History answers with "Meet the Iron Age Celts." Sub-links include "Stories and Games" and instructions for working on age-appropriate Celtic crafts. Other options include "Children in Victorian Britain," "Burgh Life in Mary's Time" (an exploration of the city of Stirling during the Jacobean period), and "Hands on History" (which takes readers on a Norman journey).

Also on the homepage is "On This Day" in British History. On December 10, 2010, for example, "On This Day" featured the abdication of King Edward VIII (December 10, 1938). Another section of the homepage highlights "World Wars in Depth," a valuable resource for history students. In "World War I," visitors can take a virtual tour of a World War I trench network. "World War II" contains a wealth of information. For example, Opera-

tion Overlord includes interactive animation and recorded first-person accounts of D-Day. "Cold War" has sections on the Cuban Missile Crisis as well as the Cambridge Spies, the story of one of the most damaging spy rings in British history.

BBC History has an A to Z index and also a directory to other BBC sites. The material is particularly well suited for students in departments of education who need to create a teaching portfolio.—*Wendell G. Johnson, Northern Illinois University, wjohnso1@niu.edu*

### **Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection.**

Access: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/>.

As a prominent online map collection, the Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection (PCL) offers Web visitors a wide array of static maps in standard image and document formats, with few restrictions on their usage.

Representing 10 percent of the Perry-Castañeda Library's print collection, the site's 25,000 online maps are discoverable either by browsing by geographic location or by using the site search box. The first browsing links are part of a current interest section, which highlights countries and topics in the news. These lead the user to lists of scanned online versions of maps from the PCL print collection, as well as to maps from other sources (e.g., *The Economist*, *The New York Times*, the U.S. Census).

A general interest section presents a hierarchy of geographical choices, from world maps to maps of the City of Austin, Texas. Historical maps are indicated by a separate link, as are external, non-PCL map portals and collections.

Secondary pages are generally presented as alphabetical lists of links to maps or to further subcategories, meaning that continent/region maps are usually two clicks from the homepage, and country maps generally three. Links to maps are labeled with the map's type (e.g., political), year of publication, file type, and size in kilobytes. Additional attribution

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and subtitles are included where appropriate. Even relatively large maps load quickly and can be opened in full size with a left click.

The quality of images was generally high, though occasionally some minor “noise” was visible. Some maps were still hard to read clearly, even when viewing at maximum size, perhaps reflecting the limitations of the original print versions.

An easily found FAQ page indicates that most of PCL’s online maps are in the public domain, and those that are not are clearly labeled as copyrighted materials. PCL requests credit for reuse of maps from the site. The FAQ includes advice for viewing and printing online maps, information on use of the print collection, and links to other discovery sites and places to purchase maps. PCL is an extensive, online collection for both current and historical maps. Users will find it a convenient and robust alternative to print map collections and commercial map sites, particularly when using the site search box.

Users expecting interactive, dynamic maps will find only static maps within the PCL collection, but will be presented with numerous links to a wide and representative selection of the best map resources on the Web. PCL is updated frequently.—*Jeremy Donald, Trinity University, jdonald@trinity.edu*

**World Bank.** Access: <http://www.worldbank.org/>.

Nine tabbed links on the homepage of the World Bank Web site direct users to statistical data, project descriptions, country information, publications, news, and a comprehensive statement of the bank’s aims and objectives.

Describing itself as “a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world,” World Bank serves up extensive information for an audience that includes journalists, students, job seekers, and potential investors.

Although World Bank’s working language is English, the Web page can be viewed in multiple languages. In addition to English, French, and Spanish, parts of the Web site

may be viewed in Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and other languages.

The “Data” and the “Projects and Operations” tabs lead to two of the most substantial and potentially useful sections of the site. The “Data” tab provides detailed economic, demographic, and health data for more than 200 countries. From this tab, clicking on “Data Catalog” provides access to more than 2,000 indicators from the World Bank datasets. This information is available for simple downloads to Excel or CSV files. For more sophisticated users, customizable queries and the creation of charts from the data is possible. The “Projects and Operations” tab is the gateway to expanded information on the bank’s projects in various countries. One can search a country and or region to determine active or closed projects and their approval dates. The data can be exported to Excel or XML.

Librarians and library users will appreciate the “Publications and Documents” section of the Web site. According to data on the site, there are more than 80,000 free downloadable documents available in full text and in PDF.

There is also an online World Bank Library that requires a subscription.

Overall, the site is relatively easy to navigate, but there are sections that are more difficult to maneuver and the information presented is not always easy to find. The strength of the site is the wide variety of unique information it provides.—*Maureen James, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, mejames@ualr.edu* ¶

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(“Washington Hotline ...” *cont. from page 108*)

the public with the same quality of access to their educational and nonprofit content.

Moving forward, the ALA will look to the FCC to address these additional concerns and to provide long-term oversight and enforcement of the rule. In addition, ALA is preparing for significant Congressional activity on net neutrality as two bills seeking to prohibit the FCC from regulating the Internet have already been introduced, H.R. 96 and H.R. 166. ¶