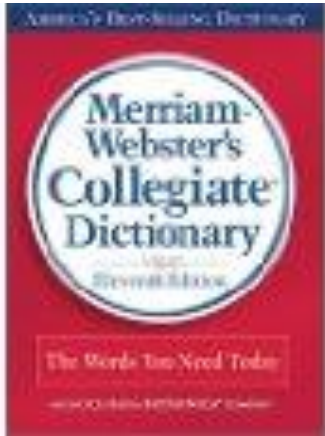


Quick Tips: Searching Gale Virtual Reference

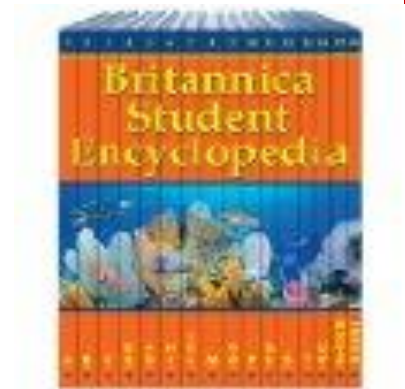
This lesson will show you how to find information in the Gale Virtual Reference database.



Before we begin, here's a brief explanation of reference information and how it can save you time.

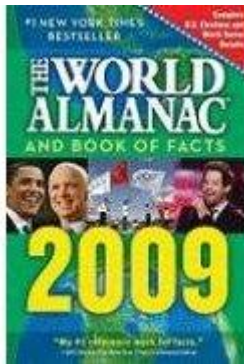
Traditionally, reference information was published in the form of reference books:

Dictionaries ♦ Directories ♦ Encyclopedias
Almanacs ♦ Manuals ♦ Handbooks

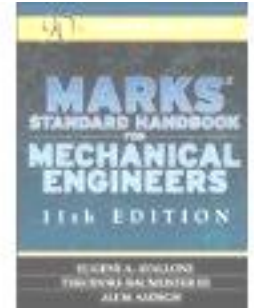
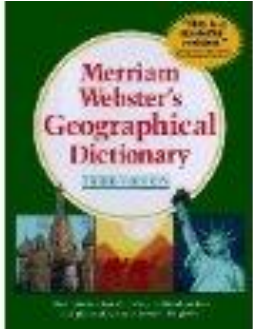


The books pictured on this page are *general reference* books. They all have two things in common:

- They are not intended to be read from cover to cover. They contain succinct factual articles that can be referred to (thus the name “reference”) for a quick explanation of an unfamiliar concept.
- They are all general interest sources. They cover a wide variety of topics of interest to the general public.

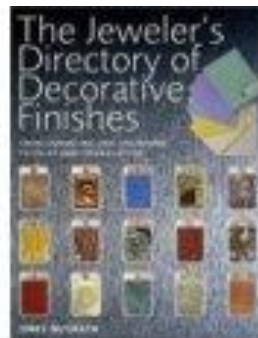


As you move into your academic degree program, whether it be education, criminal justice, environmental studies or any other discipline, you will find *specialized* reference material as well. Specialized references books fall into the same categories as general reference sources (encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc) and, again, you will see some pictured on this page.

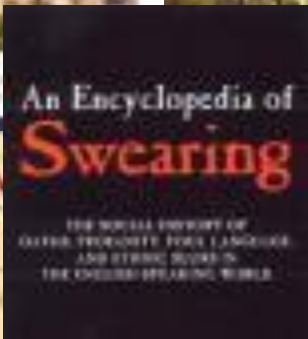
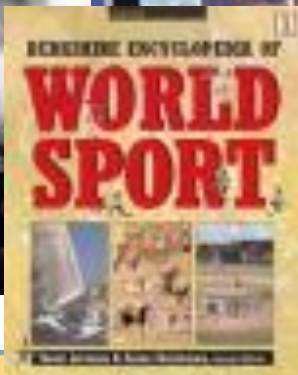
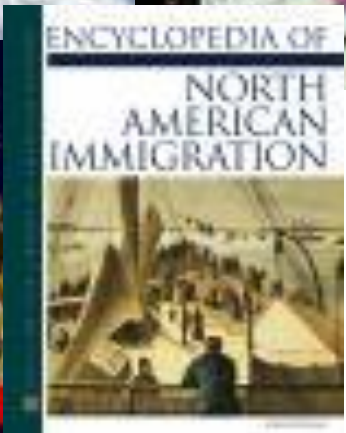
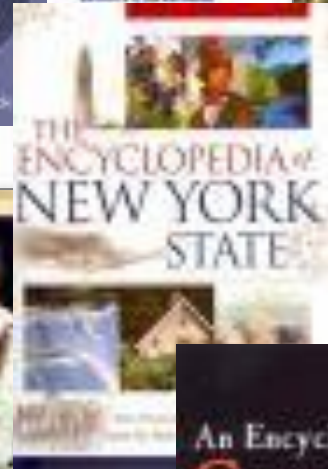
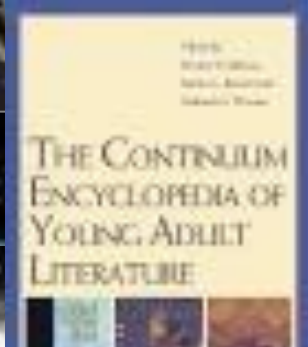
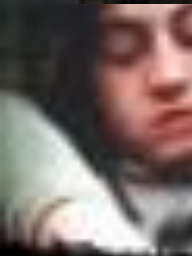
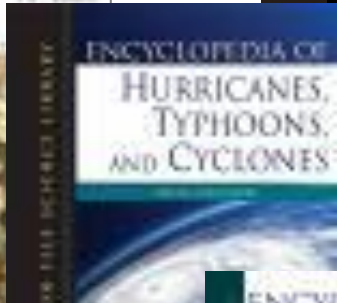
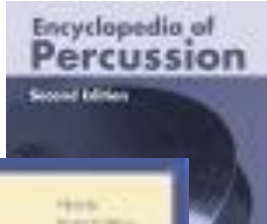
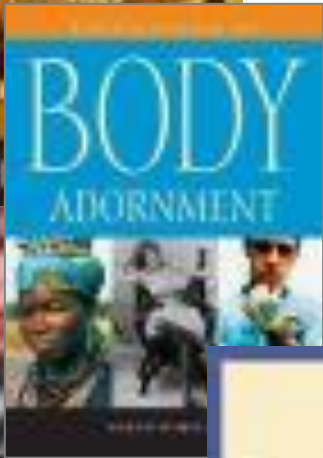
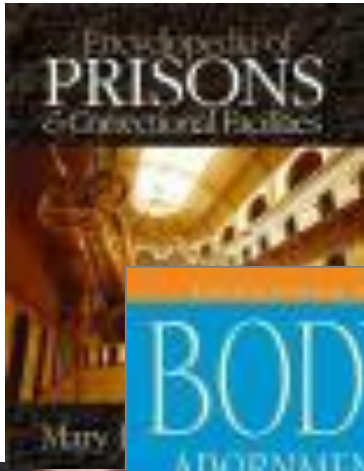


For college level writing this type of material is highly recommended to help you with the all-important topic development part of a writing/research assignment.

Getting your topic focused at the beginning of the process can save hours of frustration later on, *and* help you write better papers.



There are thousands of specialized reference books published. As academic libraries go, the TC3 library is quite small. Yet even in this small library we have over 500 specialized encyclopedias, everything from the *Encyclopedia of Hurricanes* to *The Anime Encyclopedia*, and even an *Encyclopedia of Body Adornment*.



Here's a tip:
Don't think of
consulting reference books
as extra work.
Think of it as a shortcut.

If you have a general topic in mind
reference books will *quickly* suggest to you
any number of directions you can take. They may identify

- ✓important issues,
- ✓leading experts,
- ✓seminal publications, and
- ✓key historical events.

Having the background in place first
can save you hours
of fishing through articles
trying to make sense of an issue.

The Gale Company, a highly respected publisher of reference books, has gathered a few hundred of its books into the Gale Virtual Reference Library, allowing you to electronically “flip through” all of them at once. Read on for a demonstration search.

Quick Tips: Searching Gale Virtual Reference

This lesson shows a series of screen shots in Gale Virtual Reference showing you how to do a search.

On each slide look for a

red box with white type

describing the search,

and a red circle highlighting the **important part** of the screen.

[Future Students](#)

[Current Students](#)

[Counselors/Parents](#)

[Faculty/Staff](#)

[Alumni/Visitors](#)



[Academics](#)

[Library](#)

[Athletics](#)

[TC3 Global](#)

[CollegeNow](#)

[TC3.biz](#)

[Campus Tech](#)

[Student Services](#)

[TC3 News & Events](#)

[On campus housing availability](#)

[About the College](#)

[College Profile](#)



The library at The TC3 Learning Commons

Research

Guides & Help

How Do I...?

Services

About the Library

What's New?

Great Reads: Current Bestsellers

The library has set aside some current bestsellers on the display table near the Service/Circulation desk. Drop by to pick up one of these or other bestselling books.



[The Bridge: the Life and Rise of Barack Obama](#) by David Remnick
[E908 R46 2010]

GETTING TO THE DATABASES:

1. [TC3 Home Page](#): Click [Library](#)
2. [Library Page](#): Click [Research](#)

Find

Or use the full [TC3 Library Catalog](#) or [SUNY Libraries](#) or [Libraries world wide](#)

Articles and Databases

Databases for Finding Articles:

- [Databases A to Z \(alphabetical list\)](#)
- [Databases by Subject](#)
- [General Multi-Subject](#)

Other Databases

- [Encyclopedias and Reference Books](#)
- [Newspapers](#)
- [Video](#)

GETTING TO THE DATABASES:

1. [TC3 Home Page](#): Click [Library](#)
2. [Library Page](#): Click [Research](#)
3. [Research Page](#): Click [Articles and Databases](#)
4. [Database Page](#):
Click [Encyclopedias and Reference Books](#)

*Note: Journals, newspapers, and magazines are also known collectively as periodicals or serials. Paper copies are usually shelved in reading area near the elevator on



► Research

• Articles and Databases

[Newspapers](#)

[Encyclopedias and Reference Books](#)

[Databases A to Z](#)

[Databases by Subject](#)

• Books and Media



► Research

• [Articles and Databases](#)

[Newspapers](#)

[Encyclopedias and Reference Books](#)

[Databases A to Z](#)

[Databases by Subject](#)

• [Books and Media](#)

• [E-Journals by Title](#)

Articles and Databases

Encyclopedias and Reference Books

[Gale Virtual Reference Library](#)



Over 250 academic reference encyclopedias, almanacs, and specialized reference sources for multidisciplinary research.

GETTING TO THE DATABASES:

1. [TC3 Home Page](#): Click [Library](#)
 2. [Library Page](#): Click [Research](#)
 3. [Research Page](#): Click [Articles and Databases](#)
 4. [Database Page](#):
Click [Encyclopedias and Reference Books](#)
 5. Choose [Click Gale Virtual Reference Library](#)
- [American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition.](#)

This is the main search screen, with a search started for information about alternative energy.

Currently searching *Gale Virtual Reference Library* with 1,304,695 documents.

Advanced Search

Select index(es) and enter term(s) to search (*indicates a browsable index)

	Document Title (ti)	<input type="text" value="alternative energy"/>
And	Keyword (ke)	<input type="text"/>
And	Entire Document (tx)	<input type="text"/>

[Add a Row](#)

Search

Clear

limit results:

to document with images

by publication date(s) All Dates Before On After Between

<input type="text" value="*Day*"/>	<input type="text" value="*Month*"/>	<input type="text" value="*Year*"/>	and
<input type="text" value="*Day*"/>	<input type="text" value="*Month*"/>	<input type="text" value="*Year*"/>	

by publication title: [Browse](#)

to subject area:

- *None selected*
- Arts
- Biography
- Business

to target audience

- *None selected*
- Academic

Notice that there are three different ways to search. The Document Title search finds all the articles that have the search term in the title. This is the most restricted search.



Currently searching *Gale Virtual Reference Library* with 1,304,695 documents.

Advanced Search

Select index(es) and enter term(s) to search (*indicates a browseable index)

	Document Title (ti)	alternative energy
And	Keyword (kw)	
And	Entire Document (tx)	

[Add a Row](#)

Search

Clear

limit results:

to document with images

by publication date(s) All Dates Before On After Between

Day	*Month*	*Year*	and
Day	*Month*	*Year*	

by publication title: [Browse](#)

to subject area:

- *None selected*
- Arts
- Biography
- Business

to target audience

- *None selected*
- Academic



[Back to previous page](#)

Search

alternative energy

within these results

Narrow Results:

by:

Limit to: 25 50 100

[Topic overview \(4\)](#)

Results for Advanced Search TI (alternative energy)

Books
(4)

limit to: with images

Sort by:

Mark All

◀ Previous 1 Next ▶

- 1. Alternative Energy**. Frank N. Laird.
 Mark *Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics*. Ed. Carl Mitcham. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. p56-59.
[Full-text with Graphics](#) | [4 PDF page\(s\)](#)
- 2. Alternative Energy Sources**. Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith.
 Mark *The Gale Encyclopedia of Science*. Ed. K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner. Vol. 1. 3rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2004. p140-143.
[Full-text with Graphics](#) | [4 PDF page\(s\)](#)
- 3. Alternative Energy Sources**. Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith.
 Mark *Environmental Encyclopedia*. Ed. Marci Bortman, Peter Brimblecombe, and Mary Ann Cunningham. Vol. 1. 3rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p41-42.
[Full-text](#) | [2 PDF page\(s\)](#)
- 4. Alternative Fuel and Energy**. Brook E. Hall.
 Mark *Mathematics*. Ed. Barry Max Brandenberger, Jr. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2002. p23-25.
[Full-text with Graphics](#) | [3 PDF page\(s\)](#)

◀ Previous 1 Next ▶

The Entire Document (text) search looks through every word of every document (about 1.3 million of them) in the database.



Currently searching *Gale Virtual Reference Library* with 1,304,695 documents.

Advanced Search

Select index(es) and enter term(s) to search (*indicates a browseable index)

	Document Title (ti)	alternative energy
And	Keyword (kw)	
And	Entire Document (tx)	

[Add a Row](#)

Search

Clear

limit results:

to document with images

by publication date(s) All Dates Before On After Between

Day	*Month*	*Year*	and
Day	*Month*	*Year*	

by publication title: [Browse](#)

to subject area:

- *None selected*
- Arts
- Biography
- Business

to target audience

- *None selected*
- Academic

This search returned 359 hits. That's too big!

Results for [Advanced Search](#) TX (alternative energy)

Books
(359)

limit to: with images

Sort by: Relevance

Mark All

◀ Previous 1 2 3 4 5 Next ▶

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Alternative Energy. Frank N. Laird.
<i>Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics</i> . Ed. Carl Mitcham. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. p56-59.
Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s) | Topic overview
100% relevant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Alternative Energy Sources. Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith.
<i>Environmental Encyclopedia</i> . Ed. Marci Bortman, Peter Brimblecombe, and Mary Ann Cunningham. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p41-42.
Full-text 2 PDF page(s) | Topic overview
82% relevant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Alternative Fuels and Vehicles. John Zumerchik.
<i>Macmillan Encyclopedia of Energy</i> . Ed. John Zumerchik. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2001. p66-69.
Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s) | Topic overview
64% relevant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Mills, James Ignatius.
<i>American Men & Women of Science</i> . Vol. 5. 23 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2007. p443-444.
Full-text 2 PDF page(s) | Article
61% relevant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Alternative Fuel and Energy. Brook E. Hall.
<i>Mathematics</i> . Ed. Barry Max Brandenberger, Jr. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2002. p23-25.
Full-text with Graphics 3 PDF page(s) | Topic overview
61% relevant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Alternative Energy Sources. Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith.
<i>The Gale Encyclopedia of Science</i> . Ed. K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2004. p140-143. | Topic overview
54% relevant |

Search

alternative energy

within these results

Narrow Results:

by: Document Type

Limit to: 25 50 100

[Topic overview \(133\)](#)

[Country overview \(18\)](#)

[Biography \(13\)](#)

[Excerpt \(7\)](#)

[International organi...\(7\)](#)

[Law overview \(6\)](#)

[City overview \(5\)](#)

[Legislation \(5\)](#)

[State overview \(3\)](#)

[Brief article \(3\)](#)

[Organization overvie...\(2\)](#)

[Disease/Disorder ove...\(2\)](#)

[Report \(2\)](#)

[Company overview \(1\)](#)

[Medical condition ov...\(1\)](#)

[Agency overview \(1\)](#)

[Brief biography \(1\)](#)

[Work overview \(1\)](#)

[Industry overview \(1\)](#)

The Keyword search looks for articles where the exact search term appears in the title or description of the article.



Currently searching *Gale Virtual Reference Library* with 1,304,695 documents.

Advanced Search

Select index(es) and enter term(s) to search (*indicates a browseable index)

	Document Title (ti)	alternative energy
And	Keyword (ke)	
And	Entire Document (tx)	

[Add a Row](#)

[Search](#)

[Clear](#)

limit results:

to document with images

by publication date(s) All Dates Before On After Between

Day	*Month*	*Year*	and	*Day*	*Month*	*Year*
-------	---------	--------	-----	-------	---------	--------

by publication title: [Browse](#)

to subject area:

- *None selected*
- Arts
- Biography
- Business

to target audience

- *None selected*
- Academic

This search returned 108 hits. That sounds just about right!

Well, actually it sounds like rather a lot to read and use. But it's a pretty good-sized list to skim through, looking at the titles to get ideas for narrower topics. As you focus your topic you may identify a few articles to read in depth.

Search
alternative energy
 within these results

Narrow Results:
by: Document Type
Limit to: 25 50 100
[Topic overview \(29\)](#)
[Biography \(5\)](#)
[Excerpt \(4\)](#)
[Law overview \(4\)](#)
[Legislation \(4\)](#)
[Brief article \(3\)](#)
[Organization overview... \(1\)](#)
[City overview \(1\)](#)

Books (108)

limit to: with images Sort by: Relevance

Mark All [Previous](#) 1 2 3 4 5 [Next](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Alternative Energy . Frank N. Laird. Mark <i>Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics</i> . Ed. Carl Mitcham. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. p66-59. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 100% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith. Mark <i>Environmental Encyclopedia</i> . Ed. Marci Bortman, Peter Brimblecombe, and Mary Ann Cunningham. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p41-42. Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 82% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith. Mark <i>The Gale Encyclopedia of Science</i> . Ed. K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2004. p140-143. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 54% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Alternative Fuel and Energy . Brook E. Hall. Mark <i>Mathematics</i> . Ed. Barry Max Brandenberger, Jr. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2002. p23-25. Full-text with Graphics 3 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 50% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Energy, Renewable . Bill Kovarik. Mark <i>Dictionary of American History</i> . Ed. Stanley I. Kutler. Vol. 3. 3 rd ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003. p214-215. Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 38% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Alternative Fuels and Vehicles . John Zumerchik. Mark <i>Macmillan Encyclopedia of Energy</i> . Ed. John Zumerchik. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. p88-89.	Topic overview

Each search result has a yellow menu on the left side. It allows you narrow the search down further by picking a type of article. Often the Topic Overview articles are a good place to start.

The best search terms and the best search strategies depend on your topic. Searching is always more effective if you're willing to play around and try a few things. As you read and learn about the topic, you can always come back to any tool and refine your search further.

Search

alternative energy

within these results

Narrow Results:

by: Document Type

Limit to: 25 50 100

Topic overview (29)

[Biography \(5\)](#)

[Excerpt \(4\)](#)

[Law overview \(4\)](#)

[Legislation \(4\)](#)

[Brief article \(3\)](#)

[Organization overview... \(1\)](#)

[City overview \(1\)](#)

Books (108)

limit to: with images

Sort by: Relevance

Mark All



◀ Previous 1 2 3 4 5 Next ▶

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Alternative Energy . Frank N. Laird. Mark <i>Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics</i> . Ed. Carl Mitcham. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. p66-59. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 100% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith. Mark <i>Environmental Encyclopedia</i> . Ed. Marci Bortman, Peter Brimblecombe, and Mary Ann Cunningham. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p41-42. Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 82% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith. Mark <i>The Gale Encyclopedia of Science</i> . Ed. K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2004. p140-143. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 54% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Alternative Fuel and Energy . Brook E. Hall. Mark <i>Mathematics</i> . Ed. Barry Max Brandenberger, Jr. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2002. p23-25. Full-text with Graphics 3 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 50% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Energy, Renewable . Bill Kovarik. Mark <i>Dictionary of American History</i> . Ed. Stanley I. Kutler. Vol. 3. 3 rd ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003. p214-215. Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 38% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Alternative Fuels and Vehicles . John Zumerchik. Mark <i>Macmillan Encyclopedia of Energy</i> . Ed. John Zumerchik. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2004. p88-89.	Topic overview

Let's take a closer look at a results list and the contents of some articles. The first entry on this list was written by Frank Laird. It appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics*, which was edited by Carl Mitcham and published in 2005 by Macmillan Reference. This article was on pages 56-59 of Volume 1. "Volume 1" indicates that this is a multi-volume encyclopedia.

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Alternative Energy . Frank N. Laird.	Topic overview
Mark	<i>Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics</i> . Ed. Carl Mitcham. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. p56-59.	
	Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	100% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith.	Topic overview
Mark	<i>Environmental Encyclopedia</i> . Ed. Marci Bortman, Peter Brimblecombe, and Mary Ann Cunningham. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p41-42.	82% relevant
	Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith.	Topic overview
Mark	<i>The Gale Encyclopedia of Science</i> . Ed. K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2004. p140-143.	
	Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	54% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Alternative Fuel and Energy . Brook E. Hall.	Topic overview
Mark	<i>Mathematics</i> . Ed. Barry Max Brandenberger, Jr. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2002. p23-25.	
	Full-text with Graphics 3 PDF page(s)	50% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Energy, Renewable . Bill Kovarik.	Topic overview
Mark	<i>Dictionary of American History</i> . Ed. Stanley I. Kutler. Vol. 3. 3 rd ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003. p214-215.	38% relevant
	Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Alternative Fuels and Vehicles . John Zumerchik.	Topic overview
Mark	<i>Macmillan Encyclopedia of Energy</i> . Ed. John Zumerchik. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2001. p66-69.	
	Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	31% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Energy and Energy Resources .	Topic overview
Mark	<i>Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students</i> . Ed. John Middleton. Vol. 2. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2002. p21-24.	31% relevant

It's likely that the fourth entry, appearing in a reference book called *Mathematics*, will have quite a different angle on alternative energy than the *Encyclopedia of Science, Technology and Ethics*. Farther down the list you'll notice the *Dictionary of American History and Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students*. The name of each book tells you something about the contents of the article.

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Alternative Energy . Frank N. Laird. Mark <i>Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics</i> . Ed. Carl Mitcham. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. p56-59. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	Topic overview  100% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith. Mark <i>Environmental Encyclopedia</i> . Ed. Marci Bortman, Peter Brimblecombe, and Mary Ann Cunningham. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p41-42. Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 82% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Alternative Energy Sources . Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith. Mark <i>The Gale Encyclopedia of Science</i> . Ed. K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner. Vol. 1. 3 rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2004. p140-143. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	Topic overview  54% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Alternative Fuel and Energy . Brook E. Hall. Mark <i>Mathematics</i> . Ed. Barry Max Brandenberger, Jr. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2002. p23-25. Full-text with Graphics 3 PDF page(s)	Topic overview  50% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Energy, Renewable . Bill Kovarik. Mark <i>Dictionary of American History</i> . Ed. Stanley I. Kutler. Vol. 3. 3 rd ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003. p214-215. Full-text 2 PDF page(s)	Topic overview 38% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Alternative Fuels and Vehicles . John Zumerchik. Mark <i>Macmillan Encyclopedia of Energy</i> . Ed. John Zumerchik. Vol. 1. New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2001. p66-69. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)	Topic overview  31% relevant
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Energy and Energy Resources . Mark <i>Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students</i> . Ed. John Middleton. Vol. 2. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2002. p21-24.	Topic overview 31% relevant

<input type="checkbox"/> Mark	<p>1. Alternative Energy. Frank N. Laird. <i>Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Ethics</i>. Ed. Carl Mitcham. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005. p56-59. Full-text with Graphics 4 PDF page(s)</p>	<p>Topic overview  100% relevant</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mark	<p>2. Alternative Energy Sources. Muthena Naseri and Douglas Smith. <i>Environmental Encyclopedia</i>. Ed. Marci Bortman, Peter Brimblecombe, and Mary Ann Cunningham. Vol. 1. 3rd ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. p41-42. Full-text 2 PDF page(s)</p>	<p>Topic overview 82% relevant</p>
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ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

The very notion that some sources of **energy** make up **alternative energy** demonstrates the way people impute normative values to technologies. For decades, proponents of **alternative energy** have done more than advocate particular technologies: They maintain that their proposed technologies are socially and morally better. These social and moral claims show that advocates regard **alternative energy** technologies as different in profound ways from existing conventional **energy** technologies.

Social Contexts

Alternative energy must be understood against a background of conventional **energy**. Conventional **energy** is not conventional just because it is in wide use. It is conventional in that it underlies the functioning and embodies the values of the conventional society. Thus

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