

The Digital Public Library of America is a collaborative effort combining the collections of a multitude of libraries and museums using metadata and thumbnail images to provide free access to a stunning collection of digital resources. Available on the site at <https://dp.la/> one can find photographs, manuscripts, books, letters, and notes, for a start, fully digitized and freely available. Should a user require a physical copy of an item, the contributing institution is provided for easy contact. While DPLA is happy to answer questions about the collection and/or the technology involved, they do not provide comprehensive reference services as would be available in a local public library. However, the site is a wealth of resources for librarians, teachers, researchers, and even the casual user.

The main page of the site provides a clear collection search function front and center, as well as a link to an index of the collection by topic for browsing. New users can quickly find information providing suggestions for use, research guides, and answers to frequently asked questions. Scrolling down the main page, a user will encounter:

- A highlighted resource (in this case, an enhanced ebook of the recently released Mueller Report)
- Selected Online Exhibitions and a link to view all exhibitions
- A section of Primary Source Sets and a link to view all the sets
- User and Research Guides and the link to the full list of guides
- Current news pertaining to the DPLA, a subscription form, and further informative links for the site
- Prominently placed donation buttons to allow public support of services

Of note, the section of Primary Source Sets is a fantastic resource for both K-12 teachers and higher education professors. The DPLA staff has collected a large number of digital copies of primary resources into topic sets, providing the sources, additional resource links, and also a teaching guide for each set providing discussion questions related to the items in the set, and suggestions for activities for the classroom. These sets provide an easy reference for teachers and professors and the lesson plan is practically written for them. The sets and teaching guides are the result of the work of the Education Advisory Committee organized by the DPLA as a part of their professional networking services. They not only provide resources for teaching specific topics, but also provide a valuable experience in the use and variety of primary sources themselves.

In addition to the main collection site, DPLA maintains a professional site at <https://pro.dp.la> providing a portal for networking and resources for members of the DPLA Hub Network and contributing institutions. Education outreach is a major activity of the DPLA organization, working with institutions to provide initiatives and content to schools and colleges across the country. They support research and professional development opportunities, as well as forming the Educational Advisory Committee to create the Primary Source Sets project.

The Hub Network provides content for the DPLA collection and facilitates the interaction of contributing institutions. Institutions can contribute as a Service Hub or a Content Hub member. Service Hub members are responsible for “metadata remediation, aggregation, governance, and outreach” with responsibilities shared among many members. Service Hub members also provide technical resources, such as repositories or delivery systems to help support those members who do not have the existing

capability or the ability to provide it. (<https://pro.dp.la/prospective-hubs/becoming-a-service-hub>, 2019)  
Content Hub members share content and make a commitment to maintain and update shared content.

As the DPLA is built in open source code, the organization interacts heavily with the software development community, exchanging code and repositories to the benefit of all participants. Another service offered by DPLA is their e-content marketplace, where they have organized contributing libraries to facilitate the acquisition of both open and licensed ebook materials. In addition to the exchange, DPLA has contributed to the development of a free ebook collection and provides a forum for discussion within the ebook community.

The Digital Public Library of America is a simply designed and elegant, easily navigated site containing a wealth of resources for anyone requiring access to digital photos, books, and documents. It is almost underwhelming in its visual impact until you realize the volume of content available. The site easily facilitates the delivery of digital content from hundreds of institutions to the fingertips of any and all who come seeking. If you are a teacher, a researcher, or merely curious about something, you will find it here. And if what you find is simply the tip of the iceberg of your project, DPLA provides plenty of information to lead you directly to the sites and resources of contributing institutions across the country.