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## BRITANNICA ONLINE

### **Britannica Online Academic Edition** [<http://search.eb.com>]

Academic Edition offers access to 73,000 articles from Britannica and 28,000 short articles from Britannica Concise Encyclopedia. Content, features, and functionality are almost identical to those offered in the Reference Center portion of Britannica Online Public Library Edition (see below).

### **Britannica Online Public Library Edition** [<http://eb.library.com>].

Britannica Online Public Library Edition offers two interfaces: Reference Center and Britannica Kids.

In addition to articles from Encyclopaedia Britannica and Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, the Reference Center contains Britannica Online's collection of multimedia, Web links, magazine and journal articles from both EBSCO and ProQuest, and Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary and Thesaurus. Pop-up dictionary definitions have audio pronunciations. Research Tools include World Data Analyst (country maps and profiles); a collection of more than 4,000 quotations; and Gateway to the Classics, containing 225 selections of "the great ideas and writing of the Western World" as well as a time line and a Year in Review browse. Country comparisons sons (for any two countries); 200 full-length videos; the Britannica Blog (interviews with academics and discussions about history, politics, technology, and popular culture); and Contributor Browse are new features. Among the daily features are a biography and news from the New York Times and BBC News. (The Academic Edition adds Australia's SBS World News.) The Reference Center also has Merriam-Webster's Spanish-English Dictionary.

A quick search for Jamestown yields a mix of articles from Encyclopaedia Britannica and Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, media items, Web sites, and two sets of magazine articles: 81 from ProQuest and 140 from EBSCO. Naturally, not all of the results pertain to the Jamestown settlement, but it's relatively easy to identify relevant hits. The Jamestown colony article has links to a smaller but more relevant collection of articles and Web sites as well as a list of additional readings. Users can also browse by topic using the A-Z index or use the uncomplicated Advanced Search screen to combine some Boolean operators with content-type limiters. They can save what they find in the Workspace (which

requires registration). Citation information in both the MLA and APA formats is available.

From the Reference Center, the user can easily jump to Britannica Kids, which has content from Compton's and Britannica Elementary Encyclopedia. Its look, functionality, and features are very similar to Britannica Elementary (see below under Britannica Online School Edition) except that it does not include resources for teachers. A Jamestown search retrieves articles from both Compton's and Britannica Elementary along with the same Web sites (one of which is relevant), media items, and 140 EBSCO articles found in the Reference Center. The main Compton's entry on Jamestown comes from the Virginia article, and all related media, magazine articles, and Web sites are pertinent to Virginia (including Virginia Woolf). There is no advanced search.

The current version of Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Public Library Edition is very user-friendly. It is easy to search and find information at several reading levels. The Compare Countries feature, current news, and supplementary material from the Web and periodicals are useful for students and anyone preparing a presentation. A good resource for public libraries.