

### Research Essay:

I have loved researching and learning about the life of Viola Williams while she experienced Chicago as a black woman. I used many different routes of researching to effectively study my character's life. I always began my research searching with the broad main points of the topic given to me. As I would continue to research, I would read abstracts or subjects headings, and thus my search statements would become more refined. Due to the refined search statements, finding articles and images that specifically pertained to my character's life became an easier task. I believe that when I found specific sources, and understood them, my project flowed and I was able to piece it together easily.

At the start of each project, I started with finding secondary sources as my top goal. Looking at and reading the secondary scholarly sources helped me better understand the area of topic and what my focus should be when research. I also looked at the bibliographies hoping to find primary sources related to my topic. I used the UW libraries system and Summit to find effective sources. My secondary sources ranged from scholarly articles to books. These sources covered all areas of different aspects of the topic, thus to fully comprehend the historical occurrence.

Searching for and finding textual primary sources were very engaging and fun. I loved reading about and looking at articles, newspapers, and advertisements from Chicago. I tended to focus on African-American authors who had lived or observed the black migration or the anti-lynching campaign during World War I. Reading from these authors, one can better connect with the events and emotions surrounding the two events. Also, I looked at the *Chicago Defender* to read about women and their lifestyle. I enjoyed the Women's Page in the newspaper because I could better understand the city events that appealed to the black women of Chicago. Researching the anti-lynching campaign, I focused on images, newspapers, poems, and political cartoons to better understand the overall mood of just not the black people, but America as a whole.

I found while researching that the UW Libraries System, *Reader's Guide Retrospective*, Summit, and the King County Libraries System were the best databases and places to start my research. For my first project I used search statements such as, "negroes and migration," or "negro and migration and Chicago,"—all confined with dates set between 1910 and 1920. I found many primary sources with these search statements. The sources I found were rich in information and were all different in the information they presented. I found statistics on northern jobs held by black women,

maps of the railroad systems in Chicago, opinionated newspapers by black men, and images of Chicago's black urban neighborhood.

Since I have taken this class, I have learned to enjoy researching and have come to realize there are amazing (and entertaining) sources out in the world. With my second project, I have found it easier to create search statements and pinpoint specific events during the time period. Researching for me was always a task, but now I have a growing appreciation for all that it beholds. I enjoy learning and seeing how people's lives were affected by the events that surrounded them. I especially enjoy being able to hold primary sources in my hands and to read the actual pages that people once read. When observing historical objects, the people, events, beliefs, and attitudes come alive, making it easy to see and feel the passion of history.