

## Guide to Effectively Using the Library Media Center

### Reference Materials

- Almanac
  - An annual reference book of dates, facts and statistics. It usually is composed of various lists, tables, and often brief articles relating to a particular field or many general fields.
- Atlas
  - A book or bound collection of maps, sometimes with supplementary illustrations and graphic analyses.
- Catalog
  - A list of items such as books, periodicals, maps and/or videos arranged in a defined order. The list usually records, describes and indexes the resources of a collection, a library or a group of libraries. The OPAC is the ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOG.
- Dictionary
  - A book which defines the terms of a language, profession, discipline, or specialized area of knowledge. The terms are arranged in alphabetical order. Usually, a language dictionary will give the spelling, pronunciation, and meaning of each word.
- Encyclopedia
  - A work containing factual articles on subjects in every field of knowledge, usually arranged alphabetically. A SUBJECT ENCYCLOPEDIA is a similar work on a single field of activity or a single subject. An encyclopedia can be one volume or many volumes, depending on the amount of material included.
- Periodical
  - A publication that is produced at regular intervals, or "periodically", under the same title and is intended to appear indefinitely. Generally, the frequency is more often than annually such as weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.
- Thesaurus
  - The thesaurus is an alphabetical listing of the terms currently in use. The thesaurus will also show relationships between terms such as synonymous or related terms, hierarchical arrangements (broader terms, narrower terms), and provide references from terms not currently in use to acceptable terms, including older words or phrases that are no longer used. A book of synonyms and near-synonyms in a written language, usually arranged conceptually, although dictionary arrangement is not uncommon

## The Internet

- Internet
  - The internet is a network of networks. A network is a group of computers that are connected so that they can share information. The internet allows people on one network share information with people on another network.
- Domain Names
  - A domain name describes part of the web site's address. The domain name consists of the body of the basic address and the end of it. A sample domain name is google.com. The end of the domain name (anything after the ".") is called the Top Level Domain (TLD). Below is a basic guide for TLDs.
    - .com – generally for commercial purposes
    - .gov – reserved for a government agency
    - .edu – generally for educational purposes such as schools and colleges
    - .k12 – used for elementary/secondary schools
    - .mil – reserved for a military organization
    - .net – generally for a network
    - .org – generally used for other types of organizations, oftentimes a not-for-profit
- Web Address
  - Each web page has its own address on the Internet. The address is the Uniform Resource Locator (URL).
- Web Page
  - A document connected to the World Wide Web (www) and viewable by anyone connected to the internet. A web page is identified by an address which is a Uniform Resource Locator (URL)
- Web Site
  - A web site is a group of linked Web pages installed on a server. A home page is the starting point of the web site.
- World Wide Web
  - The most popular way to search for information on the internet. The Web uses hypertext links to travel through Web pages located on different computers around the world. Hypertext links allow the user to jump from page to page with a click of the mouse.
- Search Engine
  - A software program that searches a database and gathers and reports information that contains or is related to specified terms. A website whose primary function is providing a search engine for gathering and reporting information available on the Internet or a portion of the Internet. Some popular search engines are: Google, Bing, Yahoo, Ask and AOL. A Meta-search engine is another type of search engine, which searches the databases of individual search engines and provides you with "top results". Some meta search engines are Dogpile, Clusty and ZapMeta.
- Internet Directories

- Tools for finding web pages arranged by subjects. Unlike search engines, sites are recommended by people in the Internet community to be included in the Directories. Some subject Directories are: Yahoooligans, Kid Info and LookSmart.
- Virtual Libraries
  - Collections of Internet resources that are evaluated, selected, organized and described by librarians. Some virtual libraries are: The Internet Public Library, Kidsclick, and Librarians' Index to the Internet.

## How to Use the Dewey Decimal System

The Dewey Decimal System organizes information into 10 broad areas, which are broken into smaller and smaller topics. Different topics are assigned numbers, known as "call numbers." For example, "Animals" are given the number 599. To see what books the library currently has in on animals, go to the nonfiction shelves and find the books that have a 599 as part of their call number. A list of some of the information you can find in the different Dewey Decimal areas, appears below.

You can learn more about the Dewey Decimal System and how it works in the book *The Dewey Decimal System* by Allan Fowler. The call number for this book is: J 025.431 Fo.

- 000 General Knowledge
  - Almanacs, Encyclopedias, Libraries, Museums, Newspapers ...
- 100 Psychology and Philosophy
  - Death & Dying, Ethics, Feelings, Logic, Making Friends, Optical Illusions, Superstitions ...
- 200 Religions and Mythology
  - Amish, Bible Stories, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Quakers, and other world religions; Greek, Roman and other myths...
- 300 Social Sciences and Folklore
  - Careers, Customs, Environment, Families, Folktales, Government, Manners, Money, Recycling ...
- 400 Languages and Grammar
  - Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Sign Language, Spanish. Includes dictionaries...
- 500 Math and Science
  - Animals, Biology, Chemistry, Dinosaurs, Fish, Geology, Insects, Physics, Planets, Plants ...
- 600 Medicine and Recreation
  - Computers, Cookbooks, Engineering, Farming, Health, Human Body, Inventions, Manufacturing, Nutrition ...
- 700 Arts and Recreation
  - Architecture, Crafts, Drawing, Games, Jokes, Music, Puppets, Songbooks, Sports ...
- 800 Literature
  - Children's Literature, Plays, Poetry, Shakespeare, Writing ...
- 900 Geography and History
  - Biographies, Countries, Native Americans, States, Travel, Wars ...

## The Five W's of Web Site Evaluation

- Who
  - Who wrote the pages and are they an expert?
  - Is a biography of the author included?
  - Is there identification of the host institution?
- What

- What does the author say is the purpose of the site?
  - What else might the author have in mind for the site?
  - What makes the site easy to use?
- When
  - When was the site created?
  - When was the site last updated?
- Where
  - Where does the information come from?
  - Where can I look to find out more about the host institution?
- Why
  - Why is this information useful for my purpose?
  - Why should I use this information?
  - Why is this page better than another?