

Terms to Know

Abstract: A summary or shortened version of an article or book.

Annotation: A note describing an item in a bibliography.

Anthology: A collection of literary pieces by more than one author.

Archive: A place in which public records or historic documents are kept.

Author: Usually the person or persons responsible for the creation of a literary work, article, movie script, etc. May be a government agency, a company, or other group responsible for a book or an article.

Bibliography: A list of citations usually at the end of a paper, article, chapter, or book.

Biography: A written history or account of someone's life.

Boolean operators: These are used in computer searching of databases and the Internet to combine similar or different concepts. The standard Boolean operators are:

AND narrows the search by connecting two or more words or phrases, requiring them both to occur in a record before that record is selected.

OR broadens the search by allowing the search to match any of the words or phrases

NOT (which excludes words or phrases from the search)

Browser: A software program used to access and view web pages, such as Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator.

Call Number: The number assigned to a book so you can find it on the shelf. In college libraries it is based on the Library of Congress and uses a combination of letters and numbers e.g. HV5458 .L3 1996

Catalog: In a library, this contains records for each item in the library – books, magazines, videos, DVDs, etc. The catalog can be searched by using fields such as author, title, subject, keyword, and call number.

Citation: A reference or footnote to a book, a periodical article, or another source. It contains all the information necessary to identify and locate the work, including author, title, publisher, publication name, dates, page numbers, volumes, etc.

Classification: A system organizing or arranging materials on the shelves by subject.

Copyright: Exclusive rights to publication or production of literary, musical, artistic, or electronic work as authorized by U.S. Law.

Database: An organized collection of information usually pertaining to a particular subject. Fields (author, title, etc.) make up records (books, films, etc.) which make up the database.

Fields: Fields are the individual pieces of a record in a database. In a library catalog, this could be the author and title field in a book record.

Full text: The full article is available in electronic format.

Hyperlink: A link, such as words or graphics in a document, that leads one to related text when they are selected.

Icon: A small symbol on a computer screen that represents a computer operation or data file.

Index: A list of names or topics usually found at the end of a publication, which directs you to the pages where the names or topics are discussed.

Index: A printed or electronic publication, which lists references to periodical articles or books by subject and/or author.

Information Literacy: The ability to know when one has a need for information and the ability to identify, locate, and effectively use information for the issue or problem at hand.

Interlibrary Loan: A service that allows one to borrow materials from other libraries through one's own library.

Internet: A global connection/collection of computers linked together transmitting pictures, sounds, text, and video. The computers can speak with each other through a common set of rules (protocols). Also known as "information superhighway", "cyberspace", and "virtual world".

Keyword: An important word from a title, text, or author's name of a document used to search for the document.

Magazine: A periodical containing popular articles and used when looking for current information. Usually magazines have pictures, short articles, and a variety of topics in one issue. Examples: Newsweek, People, Time.

Media: Term used for non-print materials such as films, videocassettes, CDs, DVDs, and audiotapes that require the use of special listening or viewing devices.

Metasite: Search engine that submits a specified search simultaneously to many different search engines.

Periodical: Works published regularly - magazines, journals, and newspapers.

Phrase searching: Puts words together for a search – often use quotation marks around the words.

Plagiarism: Is not giving proper credit to an author. This includes cutting and pasting information from a web site into your paper, taking a sentence or two directly from a book into your paper, or even rewording someone else's idea.

Primary Sources: Original resources that first report research, events, or ideas. Can be an eyewitness account, report of original research, an individual's creative work of art, etc.

Publisher: The company or person who prepares a work for public distribution.

Records: Represents a particular item in a database. In a library catalog, a record can be a book. In a periodicals database, it could be an article.

Reference Materials: Can include encyclopedias, glossaries, definitions, biographies of people, diagrams, timelines, statistics, and much more. Most useful when one needs background information, statistics, and definitions.

Scholarly Journal: A periodical published mainly for scholarly research or information in a special field – written by experts and practitioners of that field. Usually journals have few pictures, long articles, and references. Are most useful when researching a specific, focused topic. Also known as "scholarly", "academic", "peer reviewed", "refereed", or "professional". Examples: American Fiction Studies, Journal of the American Medical Association, Explicator.

Search Engines: Software that searches the web for information and retrieves web pages that meet the criteria in your search. Success requires matching words in the search with words in the web document. Examples are Google, Excite, and Altavista.

Subject Headings: A standardized word or group of words covering all materials dealing with a topic entered into a catalog or index. Many universities use the Library of Congress subject headings - also known as "controlled vocabulary", "descriptors", and "thesaurus"..

Thesaurus: A list of all subject headings (descriptors) used in a particular database, catalog, or index.

Title: The identifying name given to a book, article, artwork, film, CD, etc.

Transcript: The written words of a speech, movie, radio show, or television show.

Truncation: Search for root of a word and get various endings. Example: child* will get you children, childhood, etc.

URL: Uniform Resource Locator – the address for the web page. It identifies the computer, directory, and file where an item is located. Capitalization, punctuation, and spacing must be exact. Ex. <http://www.tcc.edu>