

## ABLE Course 11: Basic Reference Sources

### Slide 1

Our thanks to the Ohio Library Council for granting permission to use portions of the Ohio Reference Excellence Web-Based Training (ORE on the WEB).

This course was produced and updated through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Library Services Technology Act.

### Slide 2: WELCOME!

The ABLE course is designed for members of the library community who have no formal library training.

In this course, you will explore the steps for evaluating reference sources. Other courses in the Public Services module cover information relating to the reference interview, evaluating reference sources, and ethical issues in public services.

This course will take approximately 2 ½ hours to complete. However, your learning style and previous knowledge will also be a factor in the length of time to complete the course. If you need to stop working on the course, click exit. When you re-enter the course, you will be asked if you wish to resume where you left the course.

After the final survey, you will have an opportunity to print a Certificate of Completion for your continuing education records.

### Slide 3: Course Objectives

The course will acquaint public services staff, including reference librarians, with basic reference sources. However, the information may also serve as a tool for collection development. Each resource includes a definition and purpose, plus an annotated list of recommended sources.

In this course, you will learn:

The type and purpose of each reference source.

Recommended titles in each category.

## **Slide 4: Course Sections**

The course sections include:

- Guide to Reference Materials
- Bibliographies
- Serials Guides, Indexes and Abstracts, LiLI Databases
- Dictionaries, Thesauri
- Almanacs, Factbooks
- Encyclopedias
- Directories
- Biographical Sources
- Maps, Atlases, Gazetteers
- Idaho Reference Sources
- Reference Websites

You may click on any section to begin the course. However, it is recommended to go through the courses sequentially so you don't overlook any category. When you have explored all 11 sections click on "Complete Final Survey and Print Certificate" link.

## **Slide 5: Section 1. Guides to Reference Resources**

When investigating reference materials to purchase, first check Books in Print, Amazon or Barnes & Noble, either print or online, for ISBNs and prices. On the webpages of publishers, booksellers and Google Books, you can view sample pages, tables of contents, or chapters.

While it is important for librarians to be knowledgeable about basic reference tools and their use, some resources discussed in this course will be too expensive for a small or medium-sized library's collection. Nevertheless, many resources listed are priced under \$100 and

even under \$50, or can be accessed free through a website.

Library staff and residents of Idaho also have access to a variety of reference materials via Libraries Linking Idaho. Explore the links on this page before advancing to the next slide.

### **Slide 6: LiLI Databases**

Through LiLI (Libraries Linking Idaho), the Idaho Commission for Libraries with support of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, has made available to all Idaho citizens a suite of electronic databases. This online service provides full-text articles from magazines, professional journals, newspapers, and reference ebooks free to all Idaho citizens. To access this database resource check with your local Idaho public or school library.

These databases include thousands of online resources, such as ebooks, evaluated Web sites, images, and full-text reference resources. The databases are indexed and abstracted services which provide selective full-text coverage to the periodicals they index.

There's something for everyone: K-12 students, researchers, and consumers!

If you're not a resident of the state of Idaho, check with your local, regional or state library to discover similar database offerings they may provide.

Click on the link to further explore this resource.

### **Slide 7: Basic Guides**

The Introduction to Reference Work and Reference and Information Services are two print resources which tell how and when to use both print and electronic reference tools including: bibliographies, indexes, encyclopedias, almanacs, yearbooks, handbooks, directories, biographical sources, dictionaries, geographical sources, and government documents.

While these are two of the best-known textbooks written for college and graduate school reference classes, the information is quite accessible and useful for anyone working in a library. For example, you can consult them to locate the titles of standard works within a discipline.

These tools are highly recommended, if you want to expand your reference skills and knowledge.

### **Slide 8: Quiz: Guide to Reference Materials**

### **Slide 9: Section 2. Bibliographies**

A bibliography is a systematic listing of various resources: books, journal articles, book chapters, and websites.

Librarians use bibliographies for identification and verification of citations and to provide patrons with suggestions for reading. Bibliographies can provide information about where an item may be found: a specific library and/or where it can be purchased or rented. Some bibliographies are intended for selection purposes, with recommended materials listed by age levels, subject areas, or authors. Patrons can use bibliographies for further study on many levels, from school reports to professional research.

### **Slide 10: Parts of Bibliography Entries**

A bibliographic entry contains:

- Author, editor, or compiler
- Title
- Publisher, producer, or responsible party
- Date

Depending on its purpose, the entry may also include:

- Location of resource
- Price, ISBN/ISSN (for purchase)
- Annotations (for recommended reading or research)

## Slide 11: Bibliographies

This slide lists some of the best-known bibliographic reference sources used in libraries. You should be aware of these books, even though most may be too expensive for a small library. Click on each resource to discover how it can assist in the collection development aspect of your reference section. When you are done move on to Children's Bibliographies.

### Guide to Reference Books

Edited by Robert H. Kieft ~ American Library Association, 2008

*Guide to Reference Books* is available as an online subscription. This reference book is one of the best-known within the library community. It lists two or three authoritative references in every discipline and field of knowledge. Annotated entries are arranged by subject/Library of Congress classification number. The updates are irregular.

### Recommended Reference Books for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries and Media Centers

Edited by Bohdan S. Wynar ~ Libraries Unlimited, Inc.

*Recommended Reference Books for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries and Media Centers* is an abridged version of American Reference Books Annual (ARBA) which contains about a third of the reviews. Each entry includes the type of library (academic, public, school) for which the books are appropriate. The full edition of ARBA is available in print and as an online subscription.

### Wilson Standard Catalogs

Wilson Standard Catalogs are annotated lists of titles; all but the Fiction Catalog are arranged by Dewey Decimal numbers.

## Idaho Commission for Libraries

---

It cannot be overemphasized how valuable these catalogs can be to the small library. They are useful for book selection, weeding, and as readers' advisory tools; the books have been carefully chosen by librarians using specific evaluative criteria. Author, title, and subject indexes are included.

All have main volumes and are published every five years, with annual updates. The Wilson catalogs are affordable for all but the smallest libraries. They are available both in print and online by subscription and include:

Children's Core Collection: fiction and nonfiction, with story collections, picture books and magazines for readers preschool through sixth grade.

Middle and Junior High Core Collection: for grades 5-9, includes fiction nonfiction, CD-ROMs, curriculum support materials and professional aids for library staff.

Senior High Core Collection: for grades 9-12; type of materials covered are the same as Middle and Junior High Core Collection.

### Books in Print

Books in Print (also known as BIP) is the most comprehensive source for books published in the United States. Records include author, title, publisher, date of publication, price, LC card number, and ISBN.

BIP, published annually in 7 volumes, is used to obtain complete ordering information or to verify titles. While it is a time-honored, reference tool in the library world, small libraries should be able to get the ordering information they need from an Internet bookseller's site such as amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com. BIP is available in print, on CD-ROM, and online by subscription.

In addition to the main BIP set, the series includes:

- Subject Guide to Books in Print: an index to BIP by subject.
- Children's Books in Print and Subject Guide to Children's Books in Print.

- El-Hi Textbooks and Serials in Print: textbooks, serials, teaching aids and AV materials for K-12.
- Large Print Books and Serials: materials on varying levels, printed in 14-point type or larger.
- Forthcoming Books: a bimonthly publication of soon-to-be published titles.
- Public Core Collection: Nonfiction: contains recommended adult nonfiction, largely those works published in the United States.
- Fiction Core Collection: lists exclusively fiction for adults; especially useful for readers' advisory services.

### **Slide 12: Bibliographies of Children's Materials**

These reference materials are suitable for elementary or junior high school libraries. Guides for children's materials are important because the titles are often not listed in other resources. They are useful in selecting, ordering, weeding, and advising young readers on good books for information and enjoyment.

The following publications are good reference sources for juvenile materials:

Middle and Junior High Core Collection is published every five years with annual supplements. Annotations to more than 4,000 titles include evaluative statements from published reviews. The resource is available in print and online.

Children's Core Collection is published every five years with annual supplements. The annotated citations for recommended books for preschool through sixth grade are arranged by Dewey classification number. The resource is available in print and online.

School Library Journal is published monthly during the school year. Although a journal, this is a good selection tool as it includes reviews for

books, audiovisual materials, and electronic products. Most reviews are for circulating materials, but the May issue includes "Reference Books Roundup." Reviews from the current print issue are available online at [www.schoollibraryjournal.com](http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com). Click on the URL listed to view articles and regular columns in School Library Journal.

### **Slide 13: Library Catalogs**

The library's catalog is a bibliography as well as the portal to the library's collection. The automated catalog or online public access catalog (OPAC) provides several access points: the traditional author and related responsible persons, title of individual works or series, standardized subject headings, plus keyword access to all parts of the record.

The OPAC can be used to identify whether your library, or another library, owns a particular book, as well as a resource for answering reference questions. If you are searching for books on a particular topic, a keyword search or a search of subject headings will produce a list of titles. To search for additional or related titles, use the subject headings assigned to the books you have already identified.

A catalog which contains the holdings of many libraries is known as a union catalog - that is, in addition to including standard catalog records, it shows which libraries own each item. WorldCat and Library of Congress are primary examples of a contemporary union catalog.

### **Slide 14: WorldCat**

OCLC is the world's largest bibliographic utility, containing the merged catalogs of thousands of libraries worldwide; WorldCat is the end-user catalog and has 70+ million records which contain traditional catalog data and information about item contents.

Think of WorldCat as a library catalog; use it to identify items not in your library and to verify information about books and other items. Like other



catalogs, you can search by multiple access points such as keywords in the author, title, and subject fields.

WorldCat includes records for websites and other electronic resources as well as books. Many recent records include a short annotation. WorldCat identifies the name of libraries owning each item.

If Idaho libraries own an item, their names are always displayed at the top of the holdings list. Entries are not complete MARC records; however, they do show subject headings, Dewey, and Library of Congress classification numbers. WorldCat is available at no charge to Idaho residents through the LiLI Unlimited Catalog. Click on the links to further explore Libraries Linking Idaho, otherwise known as LiLI.

### **Slide 15: Library of Congress Online Catalog**

The Library of Congress Online Catalog is another tool to access bibliographic information. Before the advent of bibliographic utilities such as OCLC, a number of printed union catalogs existed, which were an outgrowth of the printed Library of Congress Catalog. These are collectively known as the National Union Catalog (NUC).

These catalogs are arranged by main entry (usually author), and the pages contain reproductions of the catalog cards. Each multi-volume NUC set takes up a number of shelves, and together they occupy significant amounts of shelf space. Although seldom used today, the NUC played a defining role in resource sharing and shared cataloging.

To further explore the Library of Congress, click on the URL.

### **Slide 16: Final Notes on Bibliographies**

While the bibliographic resources previously mentioned are comprehensive, you may also encounter a bibliography at the end of a journal or encyclopedia article, in a section of a book, on a website, or on a

flyer or brochure.

Beware of the patron who confuses the terms "bibliography" and "biography." A bibliography is a list of books and other materials on a specific subject. A biography is the life story of an individual. Few things are more disheartening as to locate or print out the complete list of books by Mark Twain ("a bibliography of Mark Twain books") when the story of his life (a biography) is what the patron wanted.

### **Slide 17: Quiz: Bibliographies**

### **Slide 18: Section 3. Serial Guides, Indexes, Abstracts**

A serial is a publication issued in parts, at intervals. Periodicals, journals, magazines, annuals, and irregular serials are all types of serials.

A periodical is a type of serial published with a fixed interval between each issue. Journals and magazines are types of periodicals. Journals are scholarly, while magazines appeal to the average consumer and are found on newsstands.

Annuals are serials published once a year, such as a yearbook or almanac.

Irregular serials are not published at regular intervals. Examples of irregular serials are directories or conference proceedings.

### **Slide 19: Serials Guides**

(Use the buttons on the slide to navigate through this portion of the course.)

### **Slide 20: Indexes & Abstracts**

Information in magazines and journals is only as useful as your ability to find it. Because your library's catalog does not list the titles of the articles in all the periodicals the library owns, you need an index to identify those article titles and retrieve the information they contain.

A periodical index is a print publication or electronic database that shows the contents of journals and magazines in a particular organized fashion. For example, print indexes offer access to periodicals by author, title, or subject.

Electronic databases are primarily available online, although some are still produced on CD-ROM. They provide access points, such as keywords in periodical titles, abstracts, or full text. In fact, the introduction of keyword searching has reduced (although not eliminated) the need for subject headings.

It is good to point out to your customers that keyword and subject searches complement each other. Keywords are handy for looking up new terminology; subject headings can narrow a search for words that are commonly used.

A frequent companion to indexing is the abstract: a short descriptive paragraph summarizing the content of the article, book, or other item. Abstracts are helpful when searching electronic databases; they are keyword-searchable and provide article overviews which indicate whether or not articles are worth pursuing. A word used in an abstract is often more likely to be related to the subject of the article than the same word in the full text.

### **Slide 21: Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature**

The H. W. Wilson Company is probably the best known publisher of general indexes; even staff in the smallest libraries should be familiar with

Wilson's Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.

The Readers' Guide indexes about 400 general interest magazines from the United States and Canada, and includes a separate section for book reviews. It remains the best source for identifying old articles.

The superb indexing and use of subject headings, begun in 1900, is one reason why this index is the first choice of many librarians. It is published semi-monthly with quarterly and annual cumulations. Additional features such as keyword searching, abstracts, and full text are available in the online versions.

An abridged version of the print edition of Readers' Guide, more affordable for the small and school libraries, indexes approximately 70 magazines and is published monthly, September through May.

### **Slide 22: Other Wilson Indexes**

In addition to Readers' Guide, Wilson publishes a number of other well-known indexes, which are available in both print and electronic formats. Examples include:

Essay and General Literature Index: indexes more than 300 collections per year; covers the entire range of the humanities and social sciences, including literary works, art history, drama, and film.

Short Story Index: indexes (by author, title and subject) stories that appear in both books and periodicals.

Applied Science and Technology Index: covers leading trade, industrial, professional and technical society publications.

## **Slide 23: Book Review Digest**

Book Review Digest: indexes and provides excerpts of reviews to more than 8,000 English-language fiction and non-fiction books each year. Not intended as a selection tool, but valuable when you need to justify keeping a book in your collection if it is challenged.

As mentioned earlier, electronic databases not only index articles and provide abstracts, but include full-text articles from many journals. EBSCO, Gale Group, H. W. Wilson, and ProQuest are among the major companies offering electronic access to indexing, abstracts and full-text articles. Click on the buttons to further explore the offerings of these companies.

## **Slide 24: Quiz: Serials Guides, Indexes & Abstracts**

## **Slide 25: Section 4. Dictionaries & Thesauri**

The primary use of a dictionary is to access definitions, spelling, and pronunciation of words. In addition to the general English language dictionary, there are other types of dictionaries, including: foreign language, historical, geographical, slang, and synonyms.

Dictionaries contain features such as: signs and symbols, historic documents, style manuals, and gazetteers. Some dictionaries include charts, tables, and illustrations embedded in the entries.

A thesaurus lists synonyms for words and is a useful tool for writers. Many desk, or collegiate, dictionaries have electronic equivalents with an added thesaurus. (By the way, remember your word processing program includes a thesaurus.)

### Slide 26: Evaluation of Dictionaries & Thesauri

When evaluating dictionaries and thesauri, consider the following questions:

- What do the entries include?
- Is the information easy to understand?
- How easy is an electronic version to use?
- Does a thesaurus provide enough synonyms to meet the writer's needs?
- How current is the material? While currency is important for dictionaries, you don't have to purchase a new one every year. Your library should have at least one collegiate dictionary that was published in the past five years. Thesauri do not demand the same level of currency, but it is helpful to have one published within the last 20 years.
- Is the source authoritative? Authority is as important in dictionaries as in any other reference source. Being able to recognize major dictionary publishers is the easiest and most reliable way to tell which dictionaries you want to trust. Because the Webster name has become synonymous with dictionaries, it is used by a number of publishers to capitalize on the familiarity of the name. However, Merriam-Webster is the largest and most reputable of the U.S. dictionary publishers, regardless of the type of dictionary (general, geographical, biographical, or a thesaurus).

Some of the additional reliable American publishers are Oxford University Press, Random House, Macmillan, and Houghton-Mifflin. Because dictionaries are published for both American English and British English, be sure you know which you have or need.

After exploring the links, move forward to the next slide.

### Slide 27: Dictionaries

Let's review some of the more popular dictionary and thesauri resources:

The Free Dictionary, a comprehensive word lover's website, provides definitions from the 4th edition of the American Heritage Dictionary; access to good quality dictionaries of medical, legal, and financial terms; acronyms and idioms; and dictionaries in ten different languages. Free access to online edition.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary is a definitive unabridged dictionary of the English language, originally published in 1961 and contains more than 450,000 words. Print and electronic versions have added about 25,000 new words. The online edition is available by subscription.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary is based on the unabridged third edition and features more than 225,000 definitions. It includes biographical and geographical names, abbreviations, foreign words, and phrases. The CD-ROM version (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary & Thesaurus) contains audio pronunciations and can be installed on your computer's hard drive for easy access. The web version may be accessed at no cost; it has a clear design and is user friendly.

Click on the links to further explore these resources, then move forward to the next slide.

### Slide 28: Dictionaries, continued

Random House Unabridged Dictionary was the first serious competitor to Webster's unabridged. It contains over 315,000 definitions, a new-words section, along with illustrations and maps.

A subset of the Random House Unabridged is the Random House Webster's College Dictionary. It contains more words than any other major

desk dictionary and since it is updated annually, it is a good source for new words. Both the abridged and unabridged editions are available with a CD-ROM providing audio pronunciations.

American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language is highly regarded and known for the number and clarity of its illustrations. The print edition is available with a CD-ROM.

No discussion of dictionaries would be complete without mentioning the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the accepted authority on the evolution of the English language. While this 20-volume set is too costly for smaller libraries, all library staff should be aware of its value in tracing the meaning, history, and pronunciation of virtually all English words, past, and present. Several supplementary volumes have been added over the years. The Second Edition of the OED is currently available in a print edition, CD-ROM, and online by subscription.

### **Slide 29: Thesaurus & Children's Dictionary**

Roget's II: The New Thesaurus is the most accessible and easy-to-use thesaurus available. This thesaurus includes 35,000 synonyms, alphabetically arranged and fully cross-referenced, with all the features that have made Roget's a trusted name for over 100 years. Check out the online version, which has a hyperlinked category index, by clicking the URL on the slide.

Macmillan Dictionary for Children is written for grades 2 through 6 with about 35,000 entries and 3,000 illustrations. It contains simple definitions with clarifying phrases and sentences, and includes maps and other supplementary material.



## **Slide 30: Quiz: Dictionaries & Thesauri**

## **Slide 31: Section 5. Almanacs & Factbooks**

Requests for simple facts are common at most reference desks. Known as "ready reference questions," these requests are generally for a single fact or a short answer. Often, these questions will begin with "who," "what," "where," or "when."

Examples of a ready reference question include:

"Who won the Academy Award for Best Actor in 1952?"

"What is the highest point on the North American continent?"

If you have taken time to become familiar with your ready reference sources, the answers can be found quickly by consulting one or two standard reference tools, such as almanacs, factbooks, directories or encyclopedias.

Designed for browsing, almanacs are annual publications of facts compiled for the user who wants a brief amount of information on a specific topic. Almanacs, a good source of statistical information, contain current and retrospective information about countries, personalities, and events.

When evaluating almanacs, check for accuracy and currency of content, not just a recent date of publication. Examine the index; does it appear complete and easy to use? Are there cross-references?

For an almanac to be useful, you need to purchase a new one every year; keep old almanacs as a record of previous years' events.

## **Slide 32: Almanacs**

The two best-known almanacs for general reference are TIME Almanac and World Almanac.

TIME Almanac with Information Please is published annually and is available on the web.

World Almanac and Book of Facts is published annually.

Both books contain current and retrospective information and are arranged by topic. The index is in the front, followed by sections on recent events; there are color photographs of notable events during the past year. Because each book contains material not found in the other, and because the prices (especially paperback) are low, you should consider purchase of both almanacs. A children's version of each one is available.

### **Slide 33: Statistical Abstract of the United States**

Statistical Abstract of the United States, published annually, is the "standard summary of statistics on the social, political, and economic organization of the United States. It is designed to serve as a convenient volume for statistical reference and as a guide to other statistical publications and sources .... [It] includes a selection of data from many statistical publications, both government and private." Most of the statistics furnished are at a national or state level.

The current edition is divided into 30 topical sections, including:

- Population
- Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Divorces
- Law Enforcement, Courts and Prisons
- Elections
- State and Local Government Finances and Employment
- Income, Expenditures, Poverty, and Wealth
- Agriculture
- Natural Resources
- International Statistics

Appendices include references to the sources which provided the statistical information, and links to statistical abstracts published by individual US

states and foreign countries.

Every library staff member should learn how to use Statistical Abstract, as this is the single best source available for all kinds of U.S. statistics. Formats include print, CD-ROM or website. Click on the URL to further explore this resource.

### **Slide 34: The World Factbook**

The World Factbook, published annually, outlines essential facts about each of the world's countries. It gives a geographical, historical, and political overview of each country in three or four pages, along with a color representation of the flag and outline map with the major cities indicated.

One appendix lists international organizations and their members. The print edition includes a section of maps at the back; two large wall world maps, political and physical; plus a smaller map of the time zones.

This volume is available in print and on the web. Click on the URL to further explore this resource.

A reminder: it is especially important to become familiar with your ready reference tools, as giving a quick answer requires that you have a general knowledge of what you will -- and will not find in each tool.

### **Slide 35: Quiz: Almanacs & Factbooks**

### **Slide 36: Section 6. Encyclopedias**

While an almanac is a good source for quick facts, an encyclopedia is the source for more detailed information. A general encyclopedia gathers information from all branches of knowledge and arranges it alphabetically for ready reference.

The purpose of an encyclopedia article is to give an overview of a subject;

the article's bibliography will provide the user with sources for additional information. If possible, a library will want to have more than one encyclopedia in its collection and will replace them in alternate years.

When consulting an encyclopedia, search the index as well as the alphabetically arranged articles. Much information embedded in articles can be found only by using the index.

When evaluating an encyclopedia, check entries to determine currency of content. A recent publication date will not guarantee the content is up-to-date.

The authority (that is, the qualifications of the contributors and editors, and the reputation of the publisher) is also important to consider. World Book, Britannica, Americana, Grolier, and Funk & Wagnall's are a few of the well-known and respected names associated with encyclopedias.

Most encyclopedias are available in one, two or three of the following formats: print, CD-ROM or online. Electronic versions often include dictionaries, thesauri, almanacs and/or atlases.

### **Slide 37: Britannica & Americana**

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica is the oldest, most scholarly, and best known of all general encyclopedias. A 12-volume Micropaedia has ready reference information, while the remainder of the set, the Macropaedia, offers detailed articles in alphabetical order. Britannica is also available in a variety of electronic formats.

The Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite, in both DVD and CD-ROM, offers reference tools for all age and reading levels, including three encyclopedias, Merriam-Webster dictionaries and thesauri, atlases, and timelines. The online version is no longer free.

Encyclopedia Americana is published by Grolier. Suitable for junior and

senior high school students as well as adults, the Encyclopedia Americana contains 45,000 articles in all academic fields and curriculum topics. The last print edition was published in 2006. The subscription-based web version is updated quarterly on a selective basis.

Click on the URLs to further explore these resources.

### **Slide 38: World Book**

World Book Encyclopedia is always a favorite of librarians because of its simple, clear explanations, World Book is appropriate for the elementary grades through high school, for general use in the home, and in nearly all types of libraries.

It contains more than 17,000 signed articles and numerous cross-references; the last volume has a research guide and detailed index. World Book is known for extensive color illustrations and for its clear organization and logical arrangement of subject matter.

The DVD-ROM version includes animation, and audio and video clips.

### **Slide 39: New Columbia**

The New Columbia Encyclopedia, published by Columbia University Press, is generally considered the best of the one-volume encyclopedias. With a long and respectable history, it is written for adults but accessible to high school students.

The print edition is an oversize work - nearly 12 pounds - with a page layout in three columns and many black and white photographs. It contains an impressive amount of information augmented by helpful bibliographies for its longer articles.

The New Columbia Encyclopedia is available for free online (click on the URL to further explore). The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia is a

condensed version available at a lower price.

Idaho library staff should check out the encyclopedias and other reference materials available through Libraries Linking Idaho – otherwise known as LiLI.

### **Slide 40: Quiz: Encyclopedias**

### **Slide 41: Section 7. Directories**

Directories are lists of people or organizations arranged alphabetically, geographically, or by subject.

This ready reference tool is used to find names, addresses, and other contact information for individuals, organizations, and businesses. It may also include brief information about products and services. Because addresses and contact information can change frequently, you should keep your directories current.

In addition, you can use a good search engine such as Google for directory-type information located on organization websites.

While every library should have directories to meet the specific needs of their patrons, this section will focus on the most commonly used ready reference directories. Let's explore some of the more recognized directories.

## Slide 42: Resources

Encyclopedia of Associations is the most comprehensive directory of basic information on organizations in the United States. Each listing includes purpose, meeting dates and location and names of publications in addition to officers and contact information. Gale publishes a separate International Organizations and Regional, State and Local Organizations. The electronic format of the three titles is known as Associations Unlimited and is available on the web. Click on the Associations Unlimited link to further explore this resource.

Telephone books, the best known of all directories, should not be overlooked as a resource for reference work. The government (usually blue) pages can be very useful, as they contain separate listings for city, county, state, and federal agencies.

The yellow pages serve as an index to area businesses by type; in fact, this is a good source for identifying experts in your community. For example, a patron who wants to know the value of an old book can be referred to a used book store.

Telephone directories generally include additional useful information such as street maps, cultural attractions, and events calendars.

Today, out-of-area telephone directory information can be accessed via websites. Information offered includes names, addresses, and phone numbers of both business and residential customers. Additional information may include reverse look-up listings by phone number and address, maps, and driving instructions from one location to another.

Among the many web phone directories, three commonly used are Infospace, Switchboard, and AnyWho. Click on the live links to become familiar with the features of these directories.

## Slide 43: Polk City Directory

## Idaho Commission for Libraries

---

Polk City Directory, published annually by InfoGROUP, is available in print, online, and CD-ROM.

- The main section lists residents and businesses alphabetically.
- A business directory, arranged by business type, includes number of employees and key personnel.
- Two reverse directories list entries by telephone number and by street address.
- The section on detailed maps has a street map index.
- The last section is a demographic summary with information that can be difficult to find elsewhere. For example, income, household age, home values and other facts are broken down by zip codes and carrier route.

This directory is an excellent resource for marketing information for larger towns and their surrounding areas. Click on the URL to explore this tool.

### **Slide 44: Specialized Directories**

Other specialized directories that can be helpful in Idaho libraries include:

Idaho Library Directory, maintained by the Idaho Commission for Libraries, provides information for all types of libraries in Idaho, such as the director's name, library address, hours of operation, phone and fax numbers, e-mail address, and links to the website and catalog.

American Library Directory, published by Information Today, Inc., includes information on libraries in the United States and Canada, such as contact information, statistical data, and special collections. Arrangement in this annual publication is by state or province and then by city. It is also available online by subscription.

Literary Market Place: the Directory of the American Book Publishing



Industry, published annually by Information Today, Inc., is a useful tool for locating people or organizations that publish, review, edit, translate, illustrate, print, publicize, distribute, and export books. It is also available online by subscription.

Click on the URLs to further explore each of these directories.

### **Slide 45: Business & Education Directories**

Directories tend to be subject-specific. While the directories previously reviewed were general or library-oriented in nature, libraries also find certain types of subject directories useful.

Business or Product Directories:

Thomas Register can be found on the web and lists almost 175,000 manufacturers searchable by company name, brand name and product.

Hoover's lists company reports and can be found on the web. The main website provides information on a wide range of companies, and also publishes a number of print directories.

Education Directories:

Idaho Education Directory, published annually, provides a current listing of public school districts, schools, administrators, and school board members, plus Department of Education specialists and services.

Peterson's maintains a free online database listing U.S. and Canadian colleges and universities. They also publish printed guides for two-year, four-year, and graduate schools.

Click on the URLs to further explore these resources.

### **Slide 46: Quiz: Directories**

### **Slide 47: Section 8. Biographical Sources**

Biographical sources provide information about people who are or were well-known: their birth and death dates and descriptions of their lives and accomplishments.

There are two basic types of sources: sketches or essays containing biographical information and indexes which refer the user to other biographical materials.

Let's explore some of the more well-known biographical reference sources.

### **Slide 48: Resources**

Biography is the official site of the Biography television series and includes 15,000 names, with text taken from the Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia.

Marquis' Who's Who produces an entire family of biographical directories; all but Who Was Who in America contain brief records on national and international contemporary leaders from all fields of endeavor. Birth dates, family names, educational and career highlights, and current contact information are included in each entry. The cost will be a problem for smaller libraries. These titles are available by subscription on the web.

Current Biography is an excellent source for accurate, up-to-date biographies of the men and women who make today's headlines and tomorrow's history. This resource is available as an online subscription or a monthly print subscription; a cumulative Yearbook is published at the end of each year.

Contemporary Authors offers biographical information on more than 120,000 modern novelists, poets, playwrights, nonfiction writers, journalists and scriptwriters in the Contemporary Authors series. The series is available in print and by online subscription.

Click on the URLs to further explore these reference resources.

### **Slide 49: Resources**

Something about the Author, published by Gale, includes information about 10,000+ children's authors and illustrators. It is available in print volumes and in eBook format through the Gale Virtual Reference Library.

The next three resources are the most comprehensive biographical encyclopedias for American history:

- American National Biography, 24 volumes published by Oxford University Press in 1999, with supplements in 2002 and 2005.
- Dictionary of American Biography, 20 volumes plus index published by Scribner's in 1989.
- Concise Dictionary of American Biography, the 5th edition – 2 volumes published by Scribner's, contains all entries from the base set in an abridged form.

These resources cover men and women who have made significant contributions to American life from the time of the earliest European explorations up to the very recent past. American National Biography lists about 17,500 (plus 900 in the two supplements). The Dictionary of American Biography contains almost 20,000 entries.

Click on the URLs to further explore these reference resources.

## Slide 50: Resources

PolySearch – Biographies, created by Peter Jacso, is a free web site with a metasearch engine which allows the patron to run simple searches across several selected ready reference databases at once.

This site provides access to biographical information about famous and infamous historical figures, politicians, scientists, authors, artists and athletes. Since the biographical websites were selected by Jacso, an award-winning reference librarian, they can be relied upon for reasonably accurate information.

Biography Index contains biographical articles from more than 3,000 periodicals, current books of individual and collective biography, and biographical material in otherwise non-biographical books.

In addition to biographies and autobiographies, there are citations to interviews, obituaries, collections of letters, juvenile literature, and bibliographies. Indexing covers people from antiquity to the present. It is available in print and online subscriptions.

Click on the URLs to further explore these resources.

## Slide 51: Quiz: Biographical Sources

## Slide 52: Section 9. Maps, Atlases & Gazetteers

Geographical information is available in a variety of formats for all audiences.

A map is a depiction of certain boundaries of the earth; it may be a political map, showing boundaries for countries, states, counties, and cities or a physical map, which depicts geographical features such as mountain ranges and bodies of water, or route (road) maps, indicating highways, railroads, and the like. Most maps combine several features and provide a

good deal of information about a geographical area.

Atlases are bound collections of maps. They may focus on a single state, a country or region, or the entire world. Some atlases will focus on a theme, such as historical, economic, or social changes; the rest are considered general atlases.

Both maps and atlases are useful for showing the relationship of one place to another in geographic terms.

In addition to maps and atlases, there are other geographical reference tools, such as gazetteers. A gazetteer is a dictionary of place names, giving location information and, often, thumbnail historical sketches of the places described.

### **Slide 53: Mapmakers & Evaluation Criteria**

The federal government is a major producer of maps, many of which are developed by individual agencies, such as the Departments of Defense, Commerce, Agriculture, and the Bureau of Land Management. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is the largest and best-known of government mapmakers; their topographic maps show detailed physical features including elevation.

Maps and atlases are also produced by a few well-known and reputable commercial publishers, including National Geographic Society, Rand McNally, and Hammond.

Prices for atlases can be considerable, however, there are many desk atlases in a smaller size that are reasonably priced. Interactive maps and atlases are available on CD-ROM and on the web.

When evaluating an atlas ask the following questions:

- Are the maps current? Check areas where recent major political changes have occurred.

- Are the maps legible?
- Is the print clear and easy to read?
- Are the maps easy to use?
- Is there a useful index?
- Does the atlas have the features you need?
- Do you need a particular type of map, such as topographic, economic, or historical?

Let's explore some popular resources for maps, atlases, and gazetteers.

### **Slide 54: Atlases**

Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World is generally considered the most complete of the atlases; published in Great Britain, it provides excellent coverage of all areas of the world. One strength is its thorough index, with references to latitude and longitude. A new edition is published every four to seven years. This is may be too costly for small libraries but is certainly worth knowing about.

National Geographic Visual Atlas of the World is an excellent atlas with world coverage through physical, political, and thematic maps. This atlas highlights the 850 UNESCO World Heritage sites. Features include a comprehensive index as well as brief articles on countries. Various maps can also be searched online.

Hammond World Atlas is appropriate for secondary school students and supplements the maps with a large thematic section and satellite photos. It includes a master index, reference guide, and a comprehensive guide to using the atlas.

Goode's World Atlas is a standard in schools and public libraries. It is revised on a regular basis. One of its strengths is the thematic maps that are useful for students.

Click on the links and URL to further explore these resources.

### **Slide 55: Atlases, continued**

Next we will explore some special atlases:

The Road Atlas: United States, Canada & Mexico is updated annually and probably the best-known road atlas. Maps for each state and Canadian province show distances between points. It includes inset maps of large metropolitan areas, a comprehensive index of places, road construction and road condition hotlines, state-by-state laws and regulations, mileage chart and mileage, and driving times. The low price makes it a good choice for libraries with limited budgets. Rand McNally also offers free online maps and driving directions.

MapQuest is a web-based atlas that produces road maps worldwide. Some useful features are driving directions (for the U.S. and Canada) from one address to another and a road trip planner.

Historical Atlas of the United States is a comprehensive historical atlas (there are more than 100 historical maps). Thematic sections (such as, the land and its people) are presented chronologically from 1400 to the present. The country's past is portrayed in a variety of ways, from the oldest maps to current demographic charts. This atlas is now out of print but second-hand copies are still available.

Click on the link and URL to further explore these resources.

### **Slide 56: Gazetteers**

Gazetteers complement atlases and are an important part of your reference collection. They contain lists of place names; additional information may include location (in relation to other places), population, and a brief history. They meet the needs of patrons who don't want to use a map or don't know where to start.

Columbia Gazetteer of the World is a comprehensive geographical encyclopedia with names, descriptions, and characteristics of places in the world. More than 170,000 entries include demographics; physical geography; political boundaries; industries; cultural and historical points of interest; longitude, latitude, and elevations; pronunciations; and changes to names and spellings. This is available on the web by subscription.

Columbia Gazetteer of North America is taken from its parent work, the Columbia Gazetteer of the World. It contains 50,000 geographical place names of both incorporated and unincorporated places in the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean along with special-purpose sites and physical features.

Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary contains 48,000 entries with geographical information about the countries, cities, and natural features of today's world. Features include population, size, economic data, historical notes, plus pronunciations, and a table of foreign terms used in English. This is a good choice for a smaller library in need of a world gazetteer.

Click on the links to further explore these resources.

### **Slide 57: Quiz: Maps, Atlases & Gazetteers**

### **Slide 58: Section 10. Idaho Reference Sources**

Any Idaho library staff member should be aware of the basic print reference sources on Idaho. The following are some of the often used and helpful resources:

The Idaho Blue Book is a biennial fact book which provides a profile of the state, historical and current, covering the different branches and levels of government, past and present elected officials, and contact information for state agencies, commissions and boards. It includes economic and



demographic statistics, plus information on education, the media, and outdoor recreation. This is definitely a book you need to know well, as it is one of the most useful Idaho resources available. To request a free copy for your library, e-mail the Secretary of State's Office.

Click on the link to further explore this resource.

### **Slide 59: Resources**

Idaho Place Names: A Geographical Dictionary is a handy reference for quick definitive explanations of the place names of Idaho. This gazetteer includes place location within the county, township and range, source of the place name, and, often, a brief history.

Idaho for the Curious: A Guide is a guide to Idaho's history "in a geographical context, not a guide to restaurants, motels, and campgrounds. Material has been arranged according to highway number." Examples of contents include cities and towns, early trails, contemporary roads and highways, Indian reservations, mines and ghost towns, bridges and dams, canyons, caves, and hot springs - all described with wit and appeal. This is a "don't-miss" for your Idaho collection.

### **Slide 60: Resources**

Idaho Atlas & Gazetteer includes topographic maps which depict in detail the physical features of an area, such as road and trails, bodies of water, elevation, and vegetation. This atlas of 46 Idaho topographic maps covers BLM public lands, campgrounds, fishing, hiking, and hunting information, historic sites and museums, national forests and recreation areas, and state parks. It is reasonably priced, helpful resource for Idaho outdoor information; you may want a second copy for circulation.

Business Directory of Idaho provides an online searchable directory of businesses covered by unemployment insurance in Idaho. It lists basic information such as name of the business, address, phone number,

industry classification and employment size by range. Only Idaho businesses that have granted permission are included.

Infogroup, contracted by the U.S. Department of Labor, provides a searchable directory of businesses in Idaho.

### **Slide 61: Resources**

Harris Directory is part of the Dun & Bradstreet which also publishes the Hoover's Company Reports. It covers manufacturing and non-manufacturing businesses throughout the state.

Additional valuable information about Idaho can be found on the Internet. If you are not familiar with the following websites, you will want to explore them. The Official Website of the State of Idaho is a good place to begin; it serves as a portal to Idaho government and provides links to the other websites listed.

The Official Website of the State of Idaho was created to make government less complicated and more accessible to the citizens and businesses of Idaho. After accessing the website, use the menu in blue on the left of the screen to discover features that are especially helpful for Idaho libraries which include:

- About Idaho – provides information about counties, cities, and other Idaho facts.
- Business – provides information for starting a business; running a business and online services for business
- Education – provides links to information about K-12 schools, universities, Department of Education resources and "just for kids."
- Government – provides a state agency index; links to the three branches of our state government, including laws and regulations; local government links.
- Health & Family – provides access to birth, marriage & death certificates, family and community services.

## Idaho Commission for Libraries

---

- Tourism & Transportation – provides information about visiting Idaho, outdoor recreation, and maps.
- Jobs & Labor – provides links to Idaho Works, labor law, employment and career information
- Online Services – provides one-click access to all current Idaho State government online services, such as professional licensing, citizen services, business services, and other e-government activities.

Librarians in public libraries, in particular, will want to become familiar with the content of this website; it will steer you to a treasure trove of Idaho information.

Click on the link to further explore this resource.

### **Slide 62: Idaho Information Websites**

Idaho Department of Labor provides information for job seekers, the unemployed, employers, Veteran services, and labor market information.

Idaho Department of Commerce website provides useful information for librarians and their patrons, especially for entrepreneurs and consumer travel. A helpful feature on this site is "Community & County Profiles" which contains summaries on more than 100 Idaho communities and all 44 counties, with information on demographics, labor force, community services, transportation, wages, communications, utilities, and education. Available at this site (under "Quick Links" to the right of the text) are two summary tables, arranged by county, that you may find helpful; one covers vital statistics, and the other land holdings.

Idaho Small Business Solutions is designed to assist in establishing or expanding a person's business in Idaho, this site's special feature is a "Business Wizard" which produces a customized checklist of local, state, and federal regulations that are likely to affect a business. It provides information on licenses, permits, and registering your business in Idaho. This site is the result of the combined efforts of more than 20 local,

state, and federal agencies in Idaho; it is maintained by the Idaho Small Business Development Center in Boise.

INSIDE Idaho, otherwise known as the Interactive Numeric & Spatial Information Data Engine, is hosted by the University of Idaho and is the official clearinghouse for Idaho geospatial data, including images, maps and data with a geographic component. The state's land management agencies, the Departments of Lands, Water Resources, Environmental Quality, and Transportation are the primary contributors to this site. It contains an atlas of printable maps, an interactive facility for creating maps, and links to other interactive mapping sites and data.

Click on the links to further explore each site.

### **Slide 63: Quiz: Idaho Reference Sources**

### **Slide 64: Section 11. Reference Websites**

For staff, especially those in libraries with a small materials budget, it is important to learn to successfully navigate the web and locate needed information. Because all websites are not equally dependable, a helpful shortcut to locating reliable sources is valuable when consulting selective web directories. These directories have been organized by librarians and other experts who have evaluated and selected each site for quality and ease of use.

Following are some of the best-known:

Internet Public Library is hosted by Drexel University, College of Information Science & Technology. All entries on this site have been selected for their quality and all have brief annotations. The "Reference Center" contains ready reference sources and is divided by type of product, such as almanacs, dictionaries, and encyclopedias. There is a search engine, in addition to links to information organized by subject, for both children and adults.

Michigan eLibrary, hosted by the Library of Michigan and known as MeL, is "an information gateway to selected Internet sources." This site is arranged by categories and covers all disciplines; a search feature is included. While there is an emphasis on Michigan, most of the information can be used by anyone. You will find ready reference links under the "Reference Desk" heading. All links have been selected and evaluated by librarians.

Refdesk has indexed quality internet sites and is a resource worthy of your attention. Because its arrangement is unusual, you will want to scroll down through the first screen or use the site map to get a sense of the range of topics covered. Refdesk is family friendly and does not link to sites with objectionable content.

Bartleby.com, hosted by Great Books Online, provides actual content - that is, it reproduces important reference and literary works. It claims to be the "preeminent Internet publisher of literature, reference and verse, providing students, researchers, and the intellectually curious with unlimited access to books and information on the web, free of charge." Among its fine reference sources are three quotation books: Columbia World of Quotations, Simpson's Contemporary Quotations, and Bartlett's Familiar Quotations.

Click on the links to further explore these sites.

### **Slide 65: Quiz: Reference Websites**

### **Slide 66: Final Exam**

### **Slide 67: Congratulations**

Click on the link to access the course survey. Completing this survey will allow you to print a personalized Certificate of Completion for your continuing education files.

## Idaho Commission for Libraries

---

Be sure to check the attachment “States Recognizing ABLE” to see if your state is on the list of recognizing ABLE as a continuing education credit for your state’s required library certification.

Thank you for taking the Evaluating Reference Sources course.