Slide 1: ABLE 6: Introduction to Subject Headings

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Slide 2: Welcome

The course is designed for members of the library community who do not have formal library training. It will help you understand the basic information about assigning and using subject headings. If you have not already done so, you may want to take Unit 5: Introduction to Technical Services and Cataloging, as it covers material that would be helpful for taking this course.

This course is divided into 8 sections, which include information, links to explore and a self-evaluation test. The course takes approximately 3 hours to complete. You can stop and re-enter the course at anytime.

During the course, you will be prompted to explore links to external websites. If you click on one of these, a new window will open. When you are ready to return to the course, just close that window.

Click on the Attachments tab to download a Word file providing Course Examples that will be used during this unit. You may want to print this document to have on hand for your reference as you complete the course.

After you complete the final examination, you will be prompted to access a course survey which will allow you to print your own certificate of completion for the course.

Slide 3: Course Objectives

In this course, you will learn about:
- The purpose of subject headings
- How subject heading lists are organized
- The terminology for Library of Congress Subject Headings
- The different types and forms of subject headings
- How subdivisions are used in subject headings
- How to use the Library of Congress Subject Headings list to assign subject headings
- How and where to place subject headings in the cataloging record, and
- The additional access points to include in a cataloging record

Slide 4: Course Sections

This course contains the following sections:
- The Purpose of Subject Headings
- Library of Congress Subject Headings
- Types of Subject Headings
- The Form of Subject Headings
- Using Subdivisions
- Assigning Subject Headings
- Cataloging with Subject Headings
- Additional Access Points

Use the links to navigate to the next section you need to complete. Once you have successfully completed all eight sections, then click on "Complete Final Survey and Print Certificate."

Slide 5: Section 1. The Purpose of Subject Headings

In the previous course, the basics of cataloging records were covered, including the reason why libraries maintain catalog records. These records

are created to provide access for library patrons and staff to the materials located in a library collection. One way of providing access is through the author, who is usually listed at the top of the cataloging record. Another type of access is the title, which is also noted near the top of the record.

These different ways of finding information in the catalog are called access points. Access points can easily be used by patrons who remember a favorite author or a suggested title, and would like to see if the library has that item.

Library patrons and staff also need to find information by topic. Subject headings are a third type of access point found in library catalogs. These three basic types of access -- author, title and subject -- have been the way of locating information in traditional library card catalogs. These three types, plus variations such as illustrator, editor, photographer, subtitle, and series title, are generally the most common ways library patrons find information in a library catalog.

The use of computer programs has opened up additional options, such as keyword searches, ISBN number, publisher, call number, type of format, and others. The range of access points in a computerized catalog may vary considerably, depending on the computer software being used.

Slide 6: Subject Headings and Subject Classification

Materials have been arranged by subject in libraries for centuries, but subject arrangement is not a complete answer to locating materials by topic. Using the Dewey Decimal System, library materials are organized on the shelf by topic. This type of system can limit access to the collection when trying to access the material by subject. An item that deals with more than one aspect of a topic, or two related topics, can only be placed in one spot. The question then arises of how to provide access to the additional information an item contains information that may be of interest to a library patron.

For example, a library item that contains information about agriculture in a specific country may be shelved with other information about that country, but someone interested in agriculture may want to be able to find that item by the topic of agriculture. If that person only browses the section relating to agriculture, he or she will not find the item.

Another subject access concern in libraries deals with non-book materials. These are often shelved by title or by an accession number assigned to the item when it is added to the collection. Browsing non-book materials can be very tedious if this is the type of organization being used. Having access to the subject of a non-book item in the library catalog enables patrons to see a list of the possible titles and to more easily find the materials.

Slide 7: Subject Heading Lists

Access problems, such as those previously mentioned, have spurred the use of subject headings that indicate the topics covered by materials in the library. Consistency of terms is an important issue when providing access to information in a library catalog, which has led to the development of several comprehensive and regularly updated subject lists for use in libraries.

The two most commonly used lists for public, academic, and school libraries are Sears List of Subject Headings and Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). These lists cover most known topics in a consistent manner, enabling libraries to provide access to materials on similar subjects by using consistent terminology.

Specialized lists have been created that deal only with areas such as medical or agricultural information. These lists contain detailed breakdowns of the information area, appropriate to the more detailed level of coverage found in special libraries. These specialized lists have usually been created under the auspices of a knowledgeable, respected institution, such as the National Library of Medicine and the National Agricultural Library, or by large organizations or database creators dealing with a specific topic.

Slide 8: Subject Heading Lists

Whichever type of subject heading list is appropriate to your library, the important thing is to select one list and use it consistently throughout the collection. The lists provide access to the collection by using subject terms that describe the content of the items in the library. Using a subject list means that all library materials concerning a particular topic will be gathered together under one designated term in the library catalog.

Using a subject heading list streamlines the process for the patron who is seeking all information available on a specific topic. Also, the main subject heading applied to an item will correspond with a call number (or classification number) that determines where the item will be located on the library shelves. This helps a patron browsing the shelves for a particular topic. Any additional subject headings used to describe an item provide more access points to that item in the library catalog.

The important job for the cataloger is to determine the necessary terms for any given item. Assigning subject headings to a library item is not a difficult process, but there are basic guidelines that must be understood on how to use these lists that will make the job of selecting subject headings easier for the library staff.

Please take the following quiz and then proceed to the next section.

Slide 9: Quiz: The Purpose of Subject Headings

Slide 10: Section 2. Library of Congress Subject Headings

This section will review how information is organized in a subject heading list. For this course, we will be looking at the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), which was developed by the Library of Congress. This tool is intended for larger libraries with fairly comprehensive collections. Many smaller libraries or school libraries have used the Sears List of Subject Headings, which incorporates layman's or common terms, is simply

organized, and is only one volume.

In contrast, LCSH is more detailed and tends to use complex terminology in describing subjects. The list fills five very large volumes and provides more ways of listing topics that are interrelated. The reason the LCSH list is used for this course is that many libraries are downloading or purchasing their cataloging. Most cataloging available online or for purchase uses the LCSH when creating the records. For this reason many smaller libraries have moved to LCSH for their in-house cataloging as well.

Note: all of the following examples are from the Library of Congress Subject Headings, 28th edition.

Slide 11: Introduction

The first step in using the LCSH list is to review the introductory pages located in the first volume. This material explains how the subject headings in the book are organized and how to use them in a cataloging record. These introductory pages explain the terminology and abbreviations used in the actual lists.

Subject heading books contain an alphabetical listing of suggested subject headings. Under each heading there are usually several terms and/or abbreviations with additional information to aid the cataloger in using the lists. This additional information may include any or all of the following:
- Scope Notes
- Subject Divisions
- Free-Floating Subdivisions
- Pattern Headings and
- Important Abbreviations.

Slide 12: Scope Notes

A scope note is a note under the subject heading that explains and clarifies what is meant and what is not meant in the definition of the term and in its use as a subject heading.

Here is the scope note for the subject heading "Actresses."

The (May Subd Geog) indicates that the subject may be further subdivided by specific geographic areas. The [PN2205-PN2217] on the next line are the Library of Congress classification numbers that are most often used for this subject area. The scope note begins below these numbers. Notice that the scope note gives very specific information about how this subject heading interacts with others and how it is to be used in specific situations.

Slide 13: Subject Subdivisions

Subject subdivisions are words or phrases that can follow a subject heading, and they are listed below the subject heading and indicated by a dash. These words or phrases are used to make the subject more specific. Subdivisions may be topical, a physical form indicator, a geographical indicator, or chronological.

Slide 14: Sudvisions example

Here is part of a page from the LCSH, showing some of the subdivisions for the City of Boston, Massachusetts. Valid subdivisions are marked in bold letters. Primary subdivisions are preceded by a single dash. Secondary subdivisions, that is subdivisions of subdivisions, are preceded with a double dash. For subdivisions that are not to be used, the acceptable subdivision is given. For example, instead of using the subdivision "Description," the cataloger is told to use "Description and travel." We will discuss this in more detail shortly.

Slide 15: Free-Floating Subdivisions

The Library of Congress publishes a separate alphabetical listing of various subdivisions that can be used after any listed subject heading unless otherwise specified. This publication -- Free-floating Subdivisions: An Alphabetical Index -- is a useful tool for libraries, indicating the various subdivisions which can be used. Subdivisions can be an effective way to add specificity to a subject heading, and if library staff are not familiar with the wide variety of available subdivisions, the index can be helpful.

Slide 16: Pattern Headings

To reduce the length of the LCSH volumes, for some categories of subject headings, one example heading in each category is chosen to be a pattern heading. Examples of these categories include subjects such as countries, states, cities, diseases, authors, languages, industries, animals, etc. This list of pattern headings is found in the introduction to LCSH. Pattern headings serve as examples for the options available for use with any heading that fits into the same category as the pattern heading.

Pattern headings contain scope notes and a specific list of subdivisions developed for each category of heading. If a cataloger wants to use a subject that fits one of the categories of pattern headings, the pattern heading can be consulted for the correct way to create the heading and possible subdivisions to use with any heading of that type.

Some subject headings are singular forms of a noun and some are plural. For consistency, and because sometimes they will indicate different meanings, paying attention to the scope notes is important in creating a subject heading when following a pattern heading example.

Pattern headings were created because it is impractical in the LCSH to list all the possible options for subjects in all areas of knowledge. If all of the possible terms were listed, the complete subject heading list would expand to many more volumes. Part of the reason for having pattern headings is to

provide an example of how a particular heading should be done, and then leave it to the cataloger to determine which of that type of heading is needed in his or her library. The following slide shows examples of some of these categories and pattern headings.

Slide 17: Pattern Heading example

For example, consider a cataloger with an item about whales. To discover what type of subdivisions could be used under the name of an animal, the cataloger would consult the subject heading FISHES or CATTLE. Both of these headings are designated as pattern headings for the category 'Animals'. Both provide an example of how to create the needed heading and the subdivision options available for the cataloger to choose from, depending on what is appropriate for the item being cataloged and the patrons of the library.

Another example would be using either HEART or FOOT for an item about lungs. These headings are both pattern headings for the category 'Organs and regions of the body.'

Slide 18: Important Abbreviations

LCSH uses a number of important abbreviations which help catalogers navigate through the lists. The most important abbreviations are discussed below and on the following slides.

USE: This is an indicator that the term listed is not to be used as a valid subject heading. Instead, the term listed after USE should be selected. In addition, the term listed before USE (the invalid heading) is printed in regular type, and the term after USE (the valid heading) is printed in bold type. In the example of Boston on this slide, the USE abbreviation indicates that rather than using "Description" the cataloger should use "Description and travel."

UF: This stands for 'used for', the opposite of USE. The term listed before

UF is the chosen heading term. The term listed after UF is not a valid term for a subject heading. In the example on this slide, the UF abbreviation under "Description and travel" shows that this subheading is used rather than "Description."

Slide 19: Important Abbreviations

BT: This stands for broader term. These are other valid subject terms that are broader in scope than the term they are listed under. These broader terms are listed to help the user find general subjects that include the specified topic. In the example, the subheading "Siege, 1775-1776" leads to a broader topic of "Sieges--Massachusetts."

NT: This stands for narrower term. The valid subject terms listed after NT are more specific aspects of the term under which they are listed, and may help the user find more in-depth information related to this topic. Narrower topics for "Boston (Mass.)--History--Revolution, 1775-1783" would be "Boston Port Bill, 1774" and "Boston Tea Party, 1773." Because neither of these headings is preceded by a dash, they are considered independent subject headings and do not have to be preceded by Boston (Mass.).

Slide 20: Important Abbreviations

RT: This stands for related term. The valid subject terms listed after RT are somehow related to the term they are listed under. Under older cataloging rules, these were included with "See Also" references. In the example, "Arboretums" is a related topic to "Botanical gardens." See Also references may still be found, as in the example where one is used to indicate subject headings that can be created for the names of particular botanical gardens.

All of these definitions are important to understand, as they form the bulk of information in the subject heading list. Knowing the meaning of the various terms and abbreviations helps the user to understand the information included with each subject heading.

Slide 21: Scope Notes Are Important

For many subject headings, the singular and plural form of a word may have different meanings, which impacts how the word should be used in a cataloging record. The scope notes under various headings help to explain how these interpretations are made. Notes also help to explain whether the subject term or geographic area name should come first when there is a need to indicate a geographic area in a heading. Scope notes may be included under subdivisions of a topic, to further explain the use of that subdivision.

Please take the following quiz and then proceed to the next section.

Slide 22: Quiz: Library of Congress Subject Headings

Slide 23: Section 3. Types of Subject Headings

Subject headings allow the cataloger to describe the content of materials in the library. Many times this can be done with a single word, such as ARCHITECTURE. Sometimes, the concepts require subject headings that can provide further definition of the content. Therefore, subject headings can also be phrases such as CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERISTICS IN LITERATURE. Subject headings can have subdivisions to clarify the meaning or focus of the subject term, such as ARCHIVAL MATERIALS—CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION.

LCSH has identified four broad types of subject headings that cover all the different concepts a cataloger must describe. The following slides will review the four types of subject headings:
- Topical
- Form
- Geographic
- Period

Slide 24: A Note About Our Examples

This section will take a look at the words and phrases listed as subject headings in LCSH. As on the previous slide, the subject heading examples provided are shown in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS to make them stand out from the accompanying text. However, in the LCSH books and in the display for an OPAC, subject headings are usually not shown in ALL CAPS.

In computer catalogs, the style of type for subject headings depends on the specifications of the software. Some software shows them in capitals, some in a different color of type, and some just list them together under a heading indicating subjects.

Slide 25: Topical Subject Headings

Topical headings use a word or phrase to describe the content, or topic, of the library material. Examples would be headings such as:
- ARCHITECTURE
- AMERICAN STUDENTS
- ANTISEPTICS IN DENTISTRY
- BEACH PLANTS
- CABERNET (WINE)
- COINS, AFGHAN

All of these examples describe information contained in items in the library collection. Topical headings are often used as a subdivision of another heading, such as BUSINESS— MATHEMATICAL MODELS, or CHAMBER MUSIC—HISTORY AND CRITICISM.

Slide 26: Form Subject Headings

Form headings are used to describe the genre, or style, of the item being cataloged.

Examples of this type of heading would be CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, referring to collections of works published for children, regardless of their topical content, and POETRY, referring to collections of poems, again

without looking at the specific topics covered by those poems.

Using form headings indicates to the library user and staff where materials in a specific form can be found, such as essays, plays, poems, biographies, and various forms of literature.

Form headings can be used alone, or combined with a topical subject, such as CONCENTRATION CAMPS—DRAMA, to indicate both the content and form of the library item.

Slide 27: Geographic Subject Headings

Geographic headings relate to a specific region or place. Geographic headings can be used in two different ways. The first style is to have a heading that consists of a geographic name, such as BELARUS or CANADA.

This geographic name can be further subdivided using topical or form headings to indicate the focus of the library item, such as BELARUS—HISTORY, FRANCE—DRAMA , or CANADA—ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

Slide 28: Geographic Subject Headings

The second style of geographic heading is to use the geographic place name after the topical heading. This indicates treatment of that topic related to a specific geographic area. Examples of this type of use would be CATACOMBS—ITALY, or BARS (DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS)—NEW YORK.

In the listing of subject terms in LCSH look for the phrase "(May Subd Geog)" as part of the scope notes and information following any given subject term. This phrase indicates the geographic place name may be used after the topical heading, as in BOLL WEEVIL—GEORGIA.

The phrase "(Not Subd Geog)" or the absence of either of these phrases

means that the geographic place name should come first, as in UNITED STATES—HISTORY.

Slide 29: Period Subject Headings

The period heading specifically relates to a time period. It may be the name of an historical event, such as CHACO WAR, 1932-1935, or AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL, 1776-1976. This type of heading may be found as the name of a broader period in time, such as BYZANTINE EMPIRE, ENLIGHTENMENT (for the 18th century intellectual movement), TWENTIETH CENTURY, or PALEOLITHIC PERIOD.

Time period indicators may also be used as subdivisions, to indicate a time period specific to a particular topic. Examples of this type of heading would be PALEOCEANOGRAPHY— CENOZOIC, or CAPITALS (ARCHITECHTURE)—BYZANTINE INFLUENCES.

Slide 30: Period Subject Headings

Another type of time period indicator used as a subdivision is a range of dates. This type of subdivision helps to denote a specific range of years being covered by the library materials. These date ranges are often found under subdivisions, such as HISTORY, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS or POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT, or under geographic headings, such as CHINA, FRANCE or OREGON.

Please take the following quiz and then proceed to the next section.

Slide 31: Quiz: Types of Subject Headings

Slide 32: Section 4. The Form of Subject Headings

In addition to the types of headings discussed in the last section, Library of Congress Subject Headings can take several different forms. The form of a subject heading can have a large impact on how it might be used by a cataloger.

This section will look at the specific form of subject headings in regards to:
- Singular and plural subject headings
- Proper nouns
- Phrases
- Use of parentheses

Slide 33: Singular and Plural

Subject headings may be either singular or plural in form. Many of the headings found in LCSH are single nouns, such as AUTOIMMUNITY or BIOLOGY. They may also be plural nouns, such as BELTS or THEATERS. Sometimes the LCSH employs the singular and plural forms of a word as different headings, each with its own specific meaning related to the topic.

The scope note is helpful in explaining the way each term will be used. Here is an example using a singular, a plural, and a synonym – each defined in the scope notes:

THEATER is for drama as acted on the stage
THEATERS is for facilities used to stage drama
DRAMA is for drama as a literary form

Without scope notes, a cataloger would be unable to apply these headings correctly. The scope notes of pattern headings will include information about whether to use the singular or plural form when creating headings

based on the pattern example. Following these guidelines is important for the consistency of subject headings from library to library and from item to item in the catalog.

Slide 34: Proper Nouns

Subject headings can be proper nouns, such as the name of a famous person, family, place, or event. This style of heading is found in the coverage of biographical, historical or literary materials.

Examples of this style of headings include:
BEMBE (WEST AFRICAN PEOPLE)
SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM, 1564-1616
JESUITS
ARARAT, MOUNT (TURKEY), and
SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, 1899-1902

These headings may include date ranges or may consist only of the proper noun.

Slide 35: Phrases

While many subject headings are single nouns, they may also be made up of phrases. Subject headings may consist of a noun with an adjective to clarify, such as COMMERCIAL ASSOCIATIONS or COMPUTER GAMES.

Sometimes these phrases are inverted, such as CHEMISTRY, TECHNICAL or BRONZES, CHINESE. Inverted phrase headings often look and sound awkward to the library patron, but they have been created for a specific purpose. Phrases will be inverted when the key component is at the end of the phrase if it is in normal order, such as the word CHEMISTRY or BRONZES in the examples above.

When subject headings are searched in a library catalog, they generally are displayed in alphabetical order. If phrases such as the examples above

were listed in normal order, the various types of chemistry or bronzes would be spread throughout the alphabet in a search results display.

Inverting the phrase allows the key component of the phrase to be the word used when alphabetizing, making a search results display that groups all the types of chemistry or bronzes together alphabetically. This provides a more complete list of the subject options in the library catalog for the person doing the subject work.

Slide 36: Phrases

Some subject heading phrases are nouns connected with and, such as COMPUTER AND PIANO MUSIC or WIT AND HUMOR. As in these examples, topics connected using and have often been created to clarify meaning in subject areas that are multidimensional or that indicate connections between varied topics.

Subject heading phrases may also be used to indicate the specific focus of a subject heading with many aspects to it, such as:
BALLET IN LITERATURE
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF THE DEAF
CABLE TELEVISION ADVERTISING
CATALOGING OF RARE BOOKS

Slide 37: Use of Parentheses

Several examples for the various types of subject headings have words in parentheses that are included in the subject heading. This style of entry will often be found in LCSH. The purpose of the parentheses is to clarify the meaning of the term being listed. For example:

CABERNET (WINE)
The term 'wine' is used to indicate this subject heading is for a beverage, not a proper noun being used in any other way.

BARS (DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS)—NEW YORK
'Drinking establishments' clarifies what is meant by BARS.

CAPITALS (ARCHITECTURE)—BYZANTINE INFLUENCES
This entry has the word 'architecture' to help indicate that the subject heading deals with the building of capitals, rather than political or governmental issues.

BEMBE (WEST AFRICAN PEOPLE)
This explanatory phrase 'West African people' is used to geographically limit the area that this group of people came from and live in.

ARARAT, MOUNT (TURKEY)
Again, a geographic indicator, 'Turkey', is used to make sure that there is no confusion as to where this mountain is located.

Slide 38: Use of Parentheses

There are examples throughout LCSH of clarifying terms in parentheses after a word or phrase. Even though the subject heading is longer, these terms are helpful. If a subject heading is chosen that includes such a word or phrase, be sure to copy it exactly as listed in LCSH. If a heading is created by the cataloger, such as happens with the categories listed in the pattern headings, it is also acceptable to use a clarifying word or phrase if needed.

An example might be the term LIME, which could be used to describe a fruit or a mineral. Using the term LIME (FRUIT) or LIME (MINERAL) helps to indicate the content of the item being cataloged. Catalogers should feel free to add words or phrases in parentheses to any subject heading terms they feel might not be understood by their patrons.

This practice will add some variation to subject terms that, as discussed earlier, have the standard purpose of maintaining consistency. However, as long as the clarification is added in parentheses after the subject heading

term, it will not usually impact the overall consistency of subject terms or create a problem when copy cataloging or sharing library catalog access. As in our example, LIME (FRUIT) and LIME (MINERAL) would still appear in the correct order within an alphabetized subject list.

Please take the following quiz and then proceed to the next section.

Slide 39: Quiz: The Form of Subject Headings

Slide 40: Section 5. Using Subdivisions

Subdivisions can be used to add specificity or depth to a particular subject heading term. The various types of subject headings addressed earlier in the course (topical, form, geographic and period) are also found among subdivisions. Sometimes, examples of subdivisions are provided under the term for a subject heading in the LCSH list. Subject headings listed as pattern heading examples contain the list of accepted subdivisions that are applicable for similar kinds of subjects. Other headings may list subdivisions that are frequently used with that term.

Those subdivisions that can be widely used under various types of subject headings are also listed in Free-floating Subdivisions: An Alphabetical Index, a publication from the Library of Congress.

Slide 41: Free-Floating Subdivisions

Free-floating subdivisions are form or topical terms that may be used as subdivisions under any designated subject heading terms allowed by LCSH, without needing to be listed specifically in the printed volumes. These terms are to be used at the discretion of the cataloger, whenever their use is deemed appropriate for the needs of an individual library.

While the cataloger is expected to use these terms freely, without worrying about whether other libraries have used the same subdivisions, there are guidelines for how to use free-floating terms. Specific guidelines for

applying free-floating subdivisions can be found in Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings, published by the Library of Congress.

There are five categories of free-floating subdivisions. The most commonly used of these is the "Form and topical subdivisions of general application." These general subdivisions are listed alphabetically with brief guidelines that describe how and when to use each subdivision. These can be used under most of the topics listed in LCSH.

Slide 42: Section from LCSH

Here are some examples taken from Free-Floating Subdivisions: An Alphabetical Index, 13th edition (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress Cataloging Distribution Service, 2001).

The first column lists the valid subdivision term.

The second column indicates the type of subdivision, using USMARC subfield codes. An "x" is a topical subdivision; a "v" is a form subdivision. Although there are no examples in this list, a "y" would indicate a chronological subdivision, and a "z" a geographical subdivision.

The third column indicates the section of subdivisions in the Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings in which this subdivision appears. A fuller explanation of how this subdivision is to be used appears in this section of the manual.

The fourth column gives a description, in abbreviated form, of possible categories of subject headings for which this subdivision can be used. For example, if the library owns some slides of an individual, and you want to make a subject heading indicating this, you will need to look in H1110 in the Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings for basic notes on how to do this.

The fifth column shows where more detailed usage guidelines and

examples of USMARC formatting using this subdivision can be found in the Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings. These will be further addressed in the ABLE course on MARC cataloging.

Slide 43: More on Subdivisions

As indicated by the "v" in the second column on the previous slide, the following are examples of "form" subdivisions:
SLIDES
SOFTWARE
SONGS AND MUSIC

These subdivisions would be used with topical headings to indicate the actual form of the library item that is being described. For example:
WHALES—SLIDES
COOKERY, AMERICAN—SOFTWARE
WEST (U.S.)—SONGS AND MUSIC

Slide 44: More on Subdivisions

The other four categories of free-floating subdivisions are topical subdivisions used under specific categories of subject headings.

They include:
- Subdivisions used under classes of persons and ethnic groups
- Subdivisions used under names of individual corporate bodies, persons, and families
- Subdivisions used under place names, and
- Subdivisions controlled by pattern headings.

The various lists of subdivisions for places, groups of people and personal names can be very helpful for a library with sizable collections in biography, literature, genealogy, and history. Many times names of persons or places are used as subject headings and need the further clarification of subdivisions to aid the user in understanding the focus of the library

material. The list of subdivisions controlled by pattern headings further explains and defines the entries listed under the pattern headings that were discussed earlier.

Please take the following quiz and then proceed to the next section.

Slide 45: Quiz: Using Subdivisions

Slide 46: Section 6. Assigning Subject Headings

Once a cataloger understands the types and forms of headings and subdivisions that are available in the LCSH, the next challenge is to decide which headings should be used for the library materials being cataloged.

There are two steps in determining the correct headings to describe a specific item:
- Subject analysis
- Finding appropriate terms

Slide 47: Subject Analysis

Subject analysis is reviewing the item in question to determine the exact content. Often this is evident by looking at the title of the item, such as in Desserts from Your Bread Machine. This title will require subject headings indicating cooking, desserts, and bread machine use.

Sometimes the title indicates little of the content. The title Full Circle by itself does not explain what this book might be about. Further analysis is needed. This can be done in several ways. Looking through the table of contents can be a good indicator of the subject of an item. Paging through an index and any illustrations or photographs will also help. For non-book materials, accompanying booklets or instruction guides should give information that will help determine the topic. When these simple measures do not work, read a few paragraphs of several chapters in a book, or look at or listen to computer programs, videos, cassettes and compact discs.

Slide 48: Subject Analysis

It is important to complete the cataloging process as quickly as possible, but it is also important to be sure that assigned headings properly reflect the content. A misassigned subject heading can lead to frustration on the part of library users and staff, when the material found doesn't deal with the specified topic.

In the previous example, Full Circle, a brief look through the table of contents shows that the book covers various countries around the Pacific Rim. Looking through the index, the chapters, and at the photos and illustrations further clarifies that the book is in a chronological format and deals with traveling to various places around the Pacific, covering eastern Asia, Australia, and both South and North America.

This information makes it possible to assign subject headings related to the countries involved with an emphasis on travel and personal anecdotes, rather than scientific study.

Slide 49: Finding Appropriate Terms

The next step in assigning subject headings is to find the appropriate terms in LCSH. To ensure all aspects of the topic have been addressed, catalogers can use several headings for each item. It is important not to assign an exhaustive list of subject headings to every item in the library. If the listing of materials under a heading is too extensive, then it becomes cumbersome for the patron to review, defeating the purpose of having subject headings.

Traditionally, catalogers tried to assign three or four subject headings to any library item. The challenge to the cataloger was one of determining the three or four best terms, out of all the possible terms, to describe a given library item. Sometimes trying to determine what terms library users might look for when searching for library materials was a frustrating or time-consuming task.

Slide 50: Finding Appropriate Terms

Computers make assigning multiple subject headings an easier job. When cataloging information is entered into a computer program, the subject headings are entered one time, usually at the end of the cataloging record. Once these terms are entered in the record, each subject term becomes an access point for patrons. Catalogers will often use the notes and the subject heading areas to give rather extensive information about the item being listed, so that patrons have more access options.

While many library items will still have three to four subject headings assigned to them, items will also be found with many more. For example, if a library has a small collection of items on snakes, and an encyclopedia of reptiles is being cataloged, it would be appropriate to go through the table of contents and assign subject headings for each type of snake listed in the work. In this way, a general keyword search or a subject search for a type of snake would show the patron this encyclopedia as a source of information. Smaller libraries in particular can benefit from the generous use of subject headings if they have computerized catalogs.

Slide 51: Locating the Best Subject Headings

The actual process of finding a subject heading term involves looking up the word the cataloger determines to be the topic of the item in the appropriate LCSH volume. Each of the five volumes covers one part of the alphabet. This step is where the various abbreviations given earlier will help.

Look up the term that best describes the content of the item being cataloged. For example:

Telephone service
USE Telephone

When this phrase is looked up in LCSH, we find it listed in light-colored

type. This indicates that this phrase is not used by LCSH as a valid subject heading. Instead, below the phrase it tells the cataloger to USE Telephone, indicating in bold-faced type that TELEPHONE is the valid subject heading term.

By going to the appropriate place for TELEPHONE in the alphabetical listings, the cataloger discovers this heading can have geographical subdivisions. Also given is a range of suggested Library of Congress call numbers, depending on whether the item deals with the economics or the technology of telephones.

Slide 52: Subject Heading example

Let's examine part of the entry for this subject heading, to understand the information being given:

Looking through the entry for TELEPHONE, the cataloguer will find there are two listings of synonyms that are not used as headings, Telephone service and Telephones. These are indicated by used for (UF).

Following is a list of broader terms (BT) related to telephones. These terms consist of valid subject headings which encompass telephones as well as other related information. These terms help the cataloger decide whether a broader approach to the topic might be better for a subject heading. For example, if the material deals with telephone service as a part of telecommunications, the broader heading of TELECOMMUNCATION might be a better choice.

Next is a list of narrower terms (NT) which help the cataloger determine whether or not a more specific term might be suited to this work. Choices such as LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE SERVICE or TELEPHONE, WIRELESS might be more suitable for the content.

After the listing of broader and narrower terms comes a listing of suggested subdivisions. These are subdivisions often used with this subject heading,

such as TELEPHONE—AMATEUR'S MANUALS. These are not the only subdivisions that can be used with this topic since Free-floating Subdivisions may also be applicable. These subdivisions are indicated by the use of a long dash at the beginning of each subdivision. These subdivisions may also have UF, BT, and NT listed under them, to help guide the cataloger to the best choice.

Remember valid subdivisions are listed in bold type and synonyms not used are in lighter type with a USE note leading to the correct subdivision term. In this example, TELEPHONE—EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES would be used instead of Telephone—Apparatus and supplies.

Slide 53: Finding the Balance

The best balance for assigning subject headings is a blend of both the traditional approach and the freedom that computers offer. This can be accomplished in several ways.

When dealing with materials covering a wide spectrum of a topic at a specific level, such as the encyclopedia of reptile species mentioned earlier, using many subject headings to indicate the contents of the work might be appropriate for some libraries.

If the work just covered general information about the different types of reptiles, the subject headings should be broader, to reflect the level of information included. Headings indicating categories of reptiles, such as lizards and snakes, would be better choices than specific names of each type of reptile.

If the work deals with general information about the animal kingdom, including reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals, then the subject headings should describe these broader categories of animals.

Slide 54: Finding the Balance

Many times headings are assigned from several different viewpoints of a topic.

For example, a work about looking at the night sky can have several aspects.

- The heading ASTRONOMY covers looking at the stars.
- The heading TELESCOPES covers the use of the equipment needed.
- The heading STARS—CHARTS, DIAGRAMS, ETC. covers the information needed to locate particular constellations in the sky.
- The heading CONSTELLATIONS covers information about these groups of stars.

All of these headings might be appropriate to use for this one work, because patrons may approach the search for this information from any of these angles.

Slide 55: Finding the Balance

The use of subdivisions will help indicate a higher level of specificity under a broader subject heading. If a library has a large collection on a particular topic, subdivisions will help the patron determine the focus of the items within that collection. Sometimes the same subject heading will be repeated with different subdivisions to indicate the various treatments of that topic in a single work.

For example, a work about the treatment of cancer may require the following:
CANCER—CHEMOTHERAPY
CANCER—HOMEOPATHIC TREATMENT
CANCER—LASER SURGERY
CANCER—PHYSICAL THERAPY
CANCER—SURGERY

Since the work deals with just one basic topic, cancer treatment, it is

possible to use subdivisions of the one subject heading to cover the various aspects of treatment that are covered. It is also possible to cover these topics by the use of the broader headings such as PHYSICAL THERAPY or SURGERY in addition to the more specific cancer approaches if the cataloger feels library patrons might also try to take a broader approach to the topic.

Slide 56: Finding the Balance

The size of a library's collection should affect how the cataloger approaches the use of subdivisions. Libraries with smaller collections may not use subdivisions as often within subject headings in their cataloging.

In the previous example of CANCER, if the library owns only eight or ten items dealing with the topic of cancer, having the various subdivisions listed above might be less helpful for the patrons. In such a small collection, the patrons would probably prefer to see a listing of all the items on cancer in one place, rather than having one or two items listed under each subdivision within the heading for cancer. The cataloger's familiarity with the collection and patrons' needs plays an important part in the decisions made when assigning subject headings.

The general rule for assigning subject headings is to be as specific as possible, without too much detail. As a general rule, this works well, but each library must adapt this rule to the content of their collection, as well as to the abilities and needs of their patrons. Too few headings might mean that information will not be found. Too many headings will mean that patrons will be frustrated trying to sift through lists of information.

Please complete the following quiz and then proceed to the next section.

Slide 57: Quiz: Assigning Subject Headings

Slide 58: Section 7. Cataloging with Subject Headings

Once subject headings have been chosen, the terms must be entered into the cataloging record. If the cataloguer is entering cataloging information into a computer, the subject headings must be entered in the appropriate area of the cataloging record.

Slide 59: Headings in the Cataloging Record

In this example, the subject headings are listed at the end of this computer catalog record display.

This work has three subject headings, each with a form subdivision indicating the work deals with fictional treatment of each subject. One of the headings also has a geographic subdivision, indicating a specific geographical or geographically-based aspect to the topic. Most computer catalog displays list the assigned subject headings near the end of the record. This is because at this point most patrons are more interested in the author, title, and call number of a work, rather than its subject headings.

Slide 60: MARC Records and Subject Headings

When creating a cataloging record in MARC format, the subject headings are each assigned a numerical code indicating the type of heading being used. There are different codes for topical headings, geographic headings, or headings made up of proper names and place names. There are also subfields used to indicate whether or not subdivisions are being used, along with what types the subdivisions are. This coding is very detailed, and some information about this will be covered in the course on MARC cataloging.

Slide 61: Purchased or Copy Cataloging

If cataloging is purchased or copied from other sources, subject headings should already be listed in the cataloging record. Often, these cataloging records are copied from MARC records provided by the Library of Congress. This usually ensures subject headings are accurately done and

usable as listed.

Cataloging staff, however, should not assume that all headings can be copied without checking them. There are several reasons for double-checking headings even when you are buying or copying cataloging.

First, the subject headings may be from a different list than is being used in your library. If your library uses the Sears List of Subject Headings, you need to carefully check all purchased cataloging. The Library of Congress does include Sears headings on some of their MARC records, but most are LCSH. Many times the same terminology is used by both systems, but they differ often enough that using both subject heading lists concurrently would prove confusing to the patrons. It is highly recommended that a library try to use subject headings from only one list.

Second, some headings may be too specific and need to be modified given the size of your library collection. For example, with the CANCER subject heading given earlier, many of the subdivisions used would be unnecessary in a collection that only has a few books about cancer. A small library may want to eliminate all or most of the subdivisions and just have one or two subject access points for that item.

A third reason for double-checking subject headings would be to add headings or subdivisions that are of particular interest to the specific geographic area or the needs of the patrons of a given library. Libraries often have local collections of a historical nature or covering a particular regional interest. Materials that fit these collections may need some additional or modified subject headings to meet the collection needs.

Slide 62: Checking Purchased Cataloging

The process of double-checking subject headings is not difficult. Often when purchased or copied cataloging is added to the collection, the record must have a local call number added to it, and occasionally extra notes or other information are also added. While these modifications are being

done, the subject heading list, whether LCSH or Sears, should be double-checked for each of the headings already provided.

If any of these headings need to be changed or any new headings added, it can easily be done at this time. Only after all of the information on the existing record has been double-checked should the record actually be added to the computer catalog. It is much easier to adjust a record before you have entered it into the catalog and possibly lose track of the necessary modifications.

Subject access is crucial to the successful use of library catalogs. Whether a library is large or small, it is important to provide appropriate, high-quality subject access to the library patrons. Many library users are interested in browsing a particular topic of interest, and many have specific informational needs that require a subject search of the collection.

Library staff also need good subject access to the collection. Answering patron requests for information and assistance often means beginning with the library catalog. Subject searching is key to accessing information through an OPAC.

Providing thoughtful, carefully done subject analysis of materials found in the library collection is an important step in providing good library service. Taking the time to learn the proper way to use LCSH makes analysis of library materials easier and improves the overall quality of the library catalog.

Please take the following quiz and then proceed to the next section.

Slide 63: Quiz: Cataloging with Subject Headings

Slide 64: Section 8. Additional Access Points

So far in the Technical Services Sequence, we have reviewed various types of information included in a cataloging record. One purpose of

including this information in a record is to uniquely identify each title in the library collection. Another is to provide both library patrons and staff access to the materials in the library collection.

Access to materials can be provided through general keyword searches that cover all of the words listed in the computer record. This type of search will pick up terms in the various pieces of cataloging information included in the descriptive paragraph, the physical description, series area and the notes areas.

For example, if a patron was doing a general keyword search for "Sleeping Beauty," and a work on fairy tales had a note including the table of contents with the titles of stories including "Sleeping Beauty," the patron would locate that record.

When patrons don't use the general keyword type of search (though this is generally the default search in an OPAC), libraries have other ways of providing access to the information in a cataloging record. One way is the subject headings previously studied in this course. Another is the additional access points found in every type of cataloging record.

Slide 65: Additional Access Points

These additional access points include items such as additional authors or illustrators, editors, titles, subtitles, series titles, content titles and related options. You may also hear these access points referred to as Added Entries, which originally meant added card entries that would be put alphabetically in the card catalog for each access point. This phrase has also carried over into use with computer records.

In the traditional card catalog format, the subject headings and other access points were found at the bottom of the cataloging record. Subject headings were listed first, with Arabic numerals. Other access points were listed after the subject headings, and were numbered with Roman numerals.

Slide 66: Card Catalog Format example

This example is in the traditional card catalog format. In this example, there are two subject headings that indicate the subject is dealing with cataloging rules.

The additional points of access are the title as listed in the title statement of the cataloging record and a variation of the title using the unabbreviated version of the acronym. These spelled out versions of the abbreviation 'AACR' are included because computers are literal and won't realize the abbreviation and the phrase are the same thing. Some patrons might type in the abbreviation and some might type in words from the phrase as it is spelled out.

Slide 67: Computer Format example

Here is the same cataloging record in computer format, taken from the Library of Congress website.

The same subject and additional access points are listed in the LCSH record, though the location in the record varies slightly from the older card-catalog style. The variation of the title is listed right below the main title, while the subjects are listed toward the bottom, just above the two classification choices given.

Slide 68: Title Main Entry example

As long as the information appears somewhere in the cataloging record, almost anything can become an access point listed at the bottom of the cataloging record. Here is an example of a title main entry. In this case, the title is already the main access point and the MARC tagging indicates this, so an added entry for the title is not necessary. There is no personal author listed in the title information, but three producers, responsible for the content of the video, are listed in the notes area.

Note that in the example, there are two subject headings, three name added entries or access points, and one access point for the corporate body (Thirteen/WNET) that sponsored this video. Because these names are listed in the cataloging record, they can be added to the author access points, shown as "Authors, etc." beneath the title. If a patron or staff member is interested in finding all of the videos by a particular producer, having that person's name as an access point can easily provide the required information.

Slide 69: Notes example

Here is another example of a cataloging record. This record contains a lengthy contents note listing all of the songs contained on the CD. For a patron using a computer catalog, these song titles would be accessible through a general keyword search.

There are three specified access points for this particular cataloging record:
- author (as the main entry)
- title (Billy the Squid) and
- subject heading CHILDREN'S SONGS

These access points are indicated through the use of MARC tagging, with coding that tells the computer program to allow these specified areas to be searched when a library user indicates an author, subject or title search. When a keyword search is used, the computer catalog would also provide access to the songs listed in the contents note as well as to the producer and the additional guest performers listed in the notes area.

Slide 70: Another example

Here is one more example of a catalog record. For computer records, access points are often entered into the cataloging record when all of the information is input, but the patron does not see that information displayed in a way that indicates the access points. The access points are all listed

here, but as part of the display, not as a separate listing at the bottom of the catalog record as in a traditional card catalog.

This catalog record has access points for the author, title, a series, and three subjects. Again, this is indicated through the coding used in the MARC cataloging record. With the additional search capabilities of the computer, keyword access would also be provided for the subtitle and information in the summary.

Slide 71: Guidelines for Added Entries

Guidelines for providing additional access points are included in The Concise AACR2, 1998 revision by Michael Gorman. It is important to think of the needs of the library patrons when deciding how many access points are needed for any given cataloging record in the library.

Generally, keyword searching using information in the notes area of a cataloging record will be adequate for most content lists and for the names of minor contributors such as editors, producers, and the like. Specific added access points will be preferable for records with more than one contributing author, well-known illustrators, major actors and producers, or for records with information of local interest.

For computer catalogs, many access points are automatically created as the information is entered into the computer. Access points are specifically created with MARC records through the use of the tagging that forms the MARC record. This process will be looked at in more detail in the later course on MARC cataloging.

Please take the following quiz and then proceed to the Final Exam for the course.

Slide 72: Quiz: Additional Access Points

Slide 73: Conclusion

For additional resources related to Subject Headings, download the files provided under the Attachments tab in the upper right corner of the course window.

The next slide will be the Final Exam for this course.

Slide 74: ABLE 6: Final Exam

Slide 75: Certificate of Completion

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.

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 Alternative Basic Library Education Introduction to Subject Headings course.