

Glossary of Library Terms

Abstract

A summary of a larger work, such as an article, book, or dissertation, included with citation information in many databases. Abstracts are usually not considered an acceptable source for a research paper. However if you have an abstract you would like to use you should check with you teacher. You may also use ILL to get the full text of the article.

Article Databases (e-Resources)

Online tools that index, abstract, or provide electronic access to articles, books, dissertations and other types of content. Many of these databases offer many full text articles. Examples of these are **ProQuest, Academic Onefile and Nursing & Allied Health Journal Articles (CINAHL)**.

Bibliography

A list often with descriptive or critical notes of writings relating to a particular subject, period, or author. The works or a list of the works referred to in a text or consulted by the author in its production, usually given at the end of a work.

Call Number

A unique code assigned to each item in the library. Think of it as the address of the book. The John A. Brown Library uses the Dewey Decimal system.

Circulation

The library department responsible for checking out and reshelving books, maintaining information on books that have been checked out, and tracing lost materials.

Citation

A standardized note documenting the exact title and author of a specific information source, as well as where and when the source was published.

Credibility

The trustworthiness (credentials, education, experience, etc.) of an author.

Database

A collection of related electronic records in a standardized format, searchable in a variety of ways, such as title, author, subject, and keyword. Common examples of databases are the **library catalog, History Resource Center and Health Reference Center**.

Full-text

An electronic resource that provides the entire text of a single work or article, in addition to the citation and (in most cases) an abstract of each work. Also spelled fulltext. Examples of this are **Opposing Viewpoints and Credo**.

Index

A list of citations to journal articles and/or books arranged by subject, author, or title. Indexes may be in print format, electronic format, or both.

Inter-Library Loan – ILL

The process of obtaining books or articles from another library because we do not own or have access to them. This is a service provided to WVC students free of charge. Books take 5 – 7 days. Articles take 1-2 days if they are in electronic format.

Keyword

A significant word or phrase in the title, subject headings, contents notes, abstract, or text of a record in an online catalog or database which can be used as a search term in a free-text search to retrieve all the records containing it.

Keyword Searching

A significant word or phrase in the title, subject headings, contents notes, abstract, or text of a record in an online catalog or database which can be used as a search term in a free-text search to retrieve all the records containing it.

Library Catalog or Online Catalog or OPAC

A database that organizes materials our library collects and identifies where these material are located. The John A. Brown Library Catalog is called **CATAPULT**

Microforms

Documents that are reduced in size and available in either microfiche or microfilm. This is rapidly becoming an obsolete technology.

Peer Review

The process by which articles are chosen to be included in a refereed journal. An editorial board consisting of experts in the same field as the author review the article and decide if it is authoritative enough for publication.

Periodical

A magazine, journal, newsletter, or newspaper produced on a regular basis. This term is sometimes used interchangeably with "serial". These items are published periodically; it can be daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly.

Plagiarism

The act of appropriating the literary composition of another author, or excerpts, ideas, or passages therefrom, and passing the material off as one's own creation.

Popular Articles

Serials that target general audiences with popular or current news stories. Authors are not usually scholars in a specific discipline and do not conduct original research. These articles are not peer reviewed.

Reference

The library department which aids patrons in using the library, helps with research problems, and assists in locating information. Materials such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and biography guides are found in reference.

Relevance

The degree to which a source addresses a research topic (some relevant sources may be more broad or more narrow than the specific research topic.)

Scholarly/Professional Journal

Journals that present in-depth, original research in a specific field. These articles have been reviewed by other scholars in the field for scholastic standards and validity. Professional journals may also contain profession or industry related news.

Serials

A publication that is issued in parts, indefinitely over time. Serials include journals, periodicals, magazines, almanacs, annual reports, numbered monographs, and other materials. This term is sometimes used interchangeably with "periodical."

Stacks

The area of the library where books and bound periodicals are shelved. These are items that can be checked out of the library.

Subject Headings

Terms, names, or phrases that are assigned to a publication (book, journal article, video, etc.) and used to describe the contents of that publication. They form a standardized set of terms that are consistently used to group materials together

Validity

The quality of research being used to support the argument being made.

Wayfinder

Provides access to the millions of holdings in the state of Washington Libraries. It includes, but is not limited to, books, periodicals, compact disks, microfilm and microfiche, musical scores, videocassettes and DVDs, and more.