Terms

ODLIS — Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science by Joan M. Reitz
from: http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_y.cfm

Abstract
A brief, objective representation of the essential content of a book, article, speech, report, dissertation, patent, standard, or other work, presenting the main points in the same order as the original but having no independent literary value. A well-prepared abstract enables the reader to 1) quickly identify the basic content of the document, 2) determine its relevance to their interests, and 3) decide whether it is worth their time to read the entire document.

Article
A contribution written for publication in a journal, magazine, or newspaper. A self-contained nonfiction prose composition on a fairly narrow topic or subject, written by one or more authors and published under a separate title in a collection or periodical containing other works of the same form. The length of a periodical article is often an indication of the type of publication—magazine articles are usually less than five pages long; articles published in scholarly journals, longer than five pages. Periodical articles are indexed, usually by author and subject, in periodical indexes and abstracting services, known as bibliographic databases when available electronically.

Bibliography
Strictly speaking, a systematic list or enumeration of written works by a specific author or on a given subject, or that share one or more common characteristics (language, form, period, place of publication, etc.). When a bibliography is about a person, the subject is the bibliographee. A bibliography may be comprehensive or selective. Long bibliographies may be published serially or in book form.

In the context of scholarly publication, a list of references to sources cited in the text of an article or book, or suggested by the author for further reading, usually appearing at the end of the work.

Catalog
A comprehensive list of the books, periodicals, maps, and other materials in a given collection, arranged in systematic order to facilitate retrieval (usually alphabetically by author, title, and/or subject). In most modern libraries, the card catalog has been converted to machine-readable bibliographic records and is available online.

Citation
In the literary sense, any written or spoken reference to an authority or precedent or to the verbatim words of another speaker or writer. In library usage, a written reference to a specific work or portion of a work produced by a particular author, editor, composer, etc., clearly identifying the document in which the work is to be found. Citation format varies from one field of study to another but includes at a minimum author, title, and publication date. An incomplete citation can make a source difficult, if not impossible, to locate.

Conference proceedings
The published record of a conference, congress, symposium, or other meeting sponsored by a society or association, usually but not necessarily including abstracts or reports of papers presented by the participants. When the entire text of the papers presented is included, the result is called transactions. Conference proceedings are indexed worldwide in ProceedingsFirst, an online database available in OCLC FirstSearch.
Database
A large, regularly updated file of digitized information (bibliographic records, abstracts, full-text documents, directory entries, images, statistics, etc.) related to a specific subject or field, consisting of records of uniform format organized for ease and speed of search and retrieval and managed with the aid of database management system (DBMS) software. Content is created by the database producer (for example, the American Psychological Association), which usually publishes a print version (Psychological Abstracts) and leases the content to one or more database vendors (EBSCO, OCLC, etc.) that provide electronic access to the data after it has been converted to machine-readable form (PsycINFO), usually on CD-ROM or online via the Internet, using proprietary search software.

Dictionary
A single-volume or multivolume reference work containing brief explanatory entries for terms and topics related to a specific subject or field of inquiry, usually arranged alphabetically (example: Dictionary of Neuropsychology). The entries in a dictionary are usually shorter than those contained in an encyclopedia on the same subject, but the word "dictionary" is often used in the titles of works that should more appropriately be called encyclopedias (example: Dictionary of the Middle Ages in 13 volumes).

Directory
A list of people, companies, institutions, organizations, etc., in alphabetical or classified order, providing contact information (names, addresses, phone/fax numbers, etc.) and other pertinent details (affiliations, conferences, publications, membership, etc.) in brief format, often published serially. In most libraries, current directories are shelved in ready reference or in the reference stacks.

Dissertation
A lengthy, formal written treatise or thesis, especially an account of scholarly investigation or original research on a specialized topic, submitted to a university in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree.

Encyclopedia
A book or numbered set of books containing authoritative summary information about a variety of topics in the form of short essays, usually arranged alphabetically by headword or classified in some manner. An entry may be signed or unsigned, with or without illustration or a list of references for further reading. Headwords and text are usually revised periodically for publication in a new edition. In a multivolume encyclopedia, any indexes are usually located at the end of the last volume. Encyclopedias may be general (example: Encyclopedia Americana) or specialized, usually by subject (Encyclopedia of Bad Taste) or discipline (Encyclopedia of Social Work). In electronic publishing, encyclopedias were one of the first formats to include multimedia and interactive elements (example: Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia Online). The modern encyclopedia began with the 21-volume Encyclopédie edited by Denis Diderot and Jean d’Alembert, an expression of the rationalism of the 18th-century Enlightenment (Cornell University Library).

Government publication
Under Title 44, Section 1901 of the United States Code, a government publication is defined as "information matter" published as a separate document at government expense or as required by law. Section 1902 states that government publications, except those "required for official use only or for strictly administrative or operational purposes which have no public interest or educational value and publications classified for reasons of national security," are to be made publicly available to depository libraries by the Superintendent of Documents. The term is also used in a broader sense to include documents published by local, state, territorial, and foreign governments.
Handbook
A single-volume reference book of compact size that provides concise factual information on a specific subject, organized systematically for quick and easy access. Statistical information is often published in handbook form (example: *Statistical Handbook on the American Family*). Some handbooks are published serially (CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics).

Index
An alphabetically arranged list of headings consisting of the personal names, places, and subjects treated in a written work, with page numbers to refer the reader to the point in the text at which information pertaining to the heading is found. In single-volume works of reference and nonfiction, any indexes appear at the end of the back matter. In a multivolume work, they are found at the end of the last volume. In very large multivolume reference works, the last volume may be devoted entirely to indexes. Works of fiction are rarely indexed. The publisher of a periodical may provide an index to each volume at the end of the last issue of the publication year. For best results, indexing should be done by a professional indexer.

Journal
A periodical devoted to disseminating original research and commentary on current developments in a specific discipline, subdiscipline, or field of study (example: *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*), usually published in quarterly, bimonthly, or monthly issues sold by subscription. Journal articles are usually written by the person (or persons) who conducted the research. Longer than most magazine articles, they almost always include a bibliography or list of works cited at the end. In journals in the sciences and social sciences, an abstract usually precedes the text of the article, summarizing its content. Most scholarly journals are peer-reviewed. Scholars often use a current contents service to keep abreast of the journal literature in their fields of interest and specialization.

A library usually binds the all the issues for a given publication year in one or more annual volumes or converts its print issues to microform. Articles from some journals are available in digital format in full-text bibliographic databases, usually by licensing agreement. Some journal publishers also provide an electronic version accessible via the World Wide Web.

Magazine
A popular interest periodical usually containing articles on a variety of topics, written by various authors in a nonscholarly style. Most magazines are heavily illustrated, contain advertising, and are printed on glossy paper. Articles are usually short (less than five pages long), frequently unsigned, and do not include a bibliography or list of references for further reading. Most magazines are issued monthly or weekly for sale at newsstands, in bookstores, and by subscription.

Manual

Also refers to a book or pamphlet containing practical instructions, rules, or steps for performing a task or operation, assembling a manufactured object, or using a system or piece of equipment. Used synonymously with handbook.

Also, any operation or procedure done by hand rather than by machine, such as the physical processing of a book or other bibliographic item done in a library to prepare the item for circulation or other use.
Microcard
A trade name for a 3 x 5 inch sheet of opaque material bearing one or more microimages.

Microfiche
A format; photographically reduced images reproduced on a small 4 x 6 sheets of film. Often used to provide backup for periodicals with missing pages.

Microfilm
A format; photographically reduced images of printed pages on 35mm film. This format also provides backup for periodicals with missing pages. Older issues of newspapers are often microfilmed because newsprint deteriorates so rapidly.

Microform
Formats for storing photographically reduced images onto plastic film. Microfiche and microfilm are two types of microforms. A microform reader/printer is required to read or copy microforms.

Monograph
A relatively short book or treatise on a single subject, complete in one physical piece, usually written by a specialist in the field. Monographic treatment is detailed and scholarly but not extensive in scope. The importance of monographs in scholarly communication depends on the discipline. In the humanities, monographs remain the format of choice for serious scholars, but in the sciences and social sciences where currency is essential, journals are usually the preferred means of publication.

For the purpose of library cataloging, any nonserial publication, complete in one volume or intended to be completed in a finite number of parts issued at regular or irregular intervals, containing a single work or collection of works. Monographs are sometimes published in monographic series and subseries.

Patent
A legal document issued by the government of a country, in response to a formal application process in which the inventor or originator of a new product or process is granted the exclusive right to manufacture, use, and sell it for a designated period of time. The document is assigned a patent number by the patent office for future reference. Most large engineering libraries provide patent search databases and services.

Peer-reviewed
Said of a scholarly journal that requires an article to be subjected to a process of critical evaluation by one or more experts on the subject, known as referees, responsible for determining if the subject of the article falls within the scope of the publication and for evaluating originality, quality of research, clarity of presentation, etc. Changes may be suggested to the author(s) before an article is finally accepted for publication. In evaluation for tenure and promotion, academic librarians may be given publishing credit only for articles accepted by peer-reviewed journals. Some bibliographic databases allow search results to be limited to peer-reviewed journals. Synonymous with juried and refereed.

Periodical
A serial publication with its own distinctive title, containing a mix of articles, editorials, reviews, columns, short stories, poems, or other short works written by more than one contributor, issued in softcover more than once, generally at regular stated intervals of less than a year, without prior decision as to when the final issue will appear. Although each issue is complete in itself, its relationship to preceding issues is indicated by enumeration, usually issue number and volume number printed on the front cover. Content is controlled by an editor or editorial board.
The category includes magazines, sold on subscription and at newsstands; journals, sold on subscription and/or distributed to members of scholarly societies and professional associations; and newsletters, but not proceedings or the other regular publications of corporate bodies as they relate primarily to meetings. Nor are newspapers formally classified as periodicals--although many libraries store newspapers with magazines and journals, separate values are assigned for periodicals and newspapers in the 008 field of the MARC record to indicate type of serial.

Periodicals are published by scholarly societies, university presses, trade and professional associations, government agencies, commercial publishers, and nonprofit organizations. The most comprehensive directory of periodicals is Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory published annually by R.R. Bowker, available in the reference section of libraries in the United States. Content is indexed in finding tools called periodical indexes and abstracting services, usually by subject and author.

Most academic libraries bind all the issues for a given publication year in one or more physical volumes. The bibliographic volumes are numbered consecutively, starting with number one for the first year the title was issued. Periodicals are usually shelved alphabetically by title in a separate section of the library stacks. In some libraries, current issues are shelved separately from back files, which may be converted to microfiche or microfilm to conserve space. Microform reader-printer machines are provided for viewing and making copies.

**Portal**

Originally, a general purpose Web site offering a wide variety of resources and services, such as news, weather, directory information, Web searching, free e-mail accounts, chat groups, mailing lists, online shopping, and links to other Web sites. However, the term is increasingly applied to Web sites that offer such services only within a particular industry, occupation, or field.

**Preprint**

A portion of a work printed and distributed for a special purpose in advance of the publication date announced for the whole, for example, an article to be published in a periodical or a work selected for inclusion in an anthology or collection. Also, a paper preapred for presentation at a conference, printed in multiple copies in advance of the conference date, usually for distribution to participants and other interested persons. In some academic disciplines, preprints are an important medium of scholarly communication. Also refers to a few copies of an author’s manuscript produced by a method such as xerography for circulation within the office of the publisher, usually to facilitate reading, evaluation, and editing.

Also refers to an advertising insert printed by a manufacturer to be included in a periodical, sometimes designed to accommodate local copy, such as the names and addresses of sales outlets located in the area of circulation.

**Primary source**

In scholarship, a document or record containing firsthand information or original data on a topic, used in preparing a derivative work. Primary sources include original manuscripts, periodical articles reporting original research or thought, diaries, memoirs, letters, journals, photographs, drawings, posters, film footage, sheet music, songs, interviews, government documents, public records, eyewitness accounts, newspaper clippings, etc. Terry Abraham of the University of Idaho provides an online list of Repositories of Primary Sources. The History Section of the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) within the American Library Association (ALA) provides a guide to Using Primary Sources on the Web.
Reference
A conventional word or phrase used in a work to refer the reader to another part of the or a similar word or phrase used in an index, catalog, or reference work to direct the user from one heading or entry to another. Also refers to any Latin phrase used in footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographies to refer the reader to works previously quoted or cited. Sometimes used synonymously with citation.

Review journal
A scholarly journal devoted to the publication of articles providing analysis of trends in an academic field or summaries of the current state of research on topics of particular interest within the field. Articles may be submitted at the editor's invitation.

Secondary source
Any published or unpublished work that is one step removed from the original source, usually describing, summarizing, analyzing, evaluating, derived from, or based on primary source materials, for example, a review, critical analysis, second-person account, or biographical or historical study. Also refers to material other than primary sources used in the preparation of a written work.

Serial
Materials published at regular intervals (at least 3 times a year) and intended to be continued indefinitely. Examples of periodicals include magazines, journals, and newsletters.

A publication in any medium issued under the same title in a succession of discrete parts, usually numbered (or dated) and appearing at regular or irregular intervals with no predetermined conclusion.

Serial publications include print periodicals and newspapers, electronic magazines and journals, annuals (reports, yearbooks, etc.), continuing directories, proceedings and transactions, and numbered monographic series cataloged separately. When serials split, merge, or are absorbed, a title change may occur. Most libraries purchase serials on subscription or continuation order.

A specific serial title is identified by a unique International Standard Serials Number (ISSN) and key title, assigned and maintained by the International Serials Data System (ISDS), a network of national serials data centers. Serials and annuals are listed in Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory published annually by R.R. Bowker and in The Serials Directory published by EBSCO. A library's holdings of a serial title are indicated in an open or closed entry in the serial record representing the item in the catalog.

Standard
Criteria established by professional associations, accrediting bodies, or agencies of government for measuring and evaluating library services, collections, and programs. The ALA Policy Manual defines standards as policies that "describe shared values and principles of performance for a library." They tend to be comprehensive, covering a broad range of programs and services, defining both qualitative and quantitative criteria and presenting goals toward which the profession aspires. Examples include Standards for Libraries in Higher Education (2004) and Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (1999), published by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). The four main types of library standards/guidelines and the authority for developing them are explained in the ALA Standards Manual (November 2003).

Also refers to any code of rules or procedures established by national and international library organizations to govern bibliographic control, such as the MARC record format, CIP, and the ISBN/ISSN adopted by the publishing industry.
In a more general sense, any criteria established by law, agreement, or custom, according to which values, quantities, procedures, performance, etc., are measured or evaluated, and to which manufacturers, practitioners, researchers, etc., seek to conform in order to ensure quality and/or uniformity of results.

**Technical report**
A scientific paper or article describing research or other significant developments in a field of the applied sciences. When submitted to a military agency, such a report may be classified or subject to other restrictions on access.

**Textbook**
An edition of a book specifically intended for the use of students who are enrolled in a course of study or preparing for an examination on a subject or in an academic discipline, as distinct from the trade edition of the same title, sometimes published in conjunction with a workbook, lab manual, and/or teacher's manual. Also refers to the standard work used for a specific course of study, whether published in special edition or not. Textbooks were among the first works to be published following the invention of printing from movable type.

Textbooks are usually ordered by college bookstores in quantity, based on projected course enrollment. The standard publisher's discount on textbook orders is 20 percent. Used copies in good condition may be sold back to the bookstore for resale at a lower price than new copies. Academic libraries generally do not purchase textbooks because for most subjects they quickly become outdated, but a textbook received as a gift, usually from a faculty member, may be added to the collection if the need exists.

**Tertiary source**
A written work, such as a chapter in a textbook or entry in a reference book, based entirely on secondary sources, rather than on original research involving primary documents. Whether a source is secondary or tertiary can be determined by examining the bibliography (if one is provided). Another clue is that secondary sources are almost always written by experts, but tertiary sources may be written by staff writers who have an interest in the topic but are not scholars on the subject.

**Thesaurus**
A book of synonyms and near-synonyms in a written language, usually arranged conceptually, although dictionary arrangement is not uncommon. The first thesaurus of the English language, published in 1852, was compiled by Peter Mark Roget.

Also refers to an alphabetically arranged lexicon of terms comprising the specialized vocabulary of an academic discipline or field of study, showing the logical and semantic relations among terms, particularly a list of subject headings or descriptors used as preferred terms in indexing the literature of the field. In information retrieval, a thesaurus can be used to locate broader terms and related terms if the user wishes to expand retrieval, or narrower terms to make a search statement more specific. A well-designed thesaurus also enables the indexer to maintain consistency in the assignment of indexing terms to documents. Plural: thesauri.

**Thesis**
1. The main idea or argument of a paper
2. A proposition advanced and defended in a formal disputation, especially by a candidate in partial fulfillment of university requirements for a master's degree. Master's theses are indexed annually by discipline, subject, and author in *Master's Theses Directories* and in *Dissertation Abstracts*
International. They can also be located in the WorldCat database in OCLC FirstSearch. For digital theses, see the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD).

**Trade journal**

A periodical devoted to disseminating news and information of interest to a specific category of business or industry, often published by a trade association. Some trade journals are available in an online version, as well as in print.

**Transactions**

The published papers or abstracts of papers presented at a conference or meeting of a society or association, usually including a record of what transpired. The term may also appear in the title of a scholarly journal that publishes articles that have not been presented orally.

**Working paper**

A preliminary paper, usually based on research, not intended for publication but rather for circulation by the author (or authors) to professional peers for comment. Working papers are usually not covered in periodical indexes and abstracting services, but online archives of working papers are available in some academic disciplines (example: EconWPA maintained by the Economics Department of Washington University). Synonymous with discussion paper.

**Yearbook**

An annual documentary, historical, or memorial compendium of facts, photographs, statistics, etc., about the events of the preceding year, often limited to a specific country, institution, discipline, or subject (example: Supreme Court Yearbook published by Congressional Quarterly). Optional yearbooks are offered by some publishers of general encyclopedias. Most libraries place yearbooks on continuation order and shelve them in the reference collection. Yearbooks of historical significance may be stored in archives or special collections.