



# Library Glossary: A Guide to Common Library Terms

**Abstract:** A summary of an article or book, accompanied by a bibliographical reference to the original work when appearing separately from it.

**Annotated Bibliography:** A list of works on a particular topic, with each entry being accompanied by a note intended to explain, describe, or evaluate the publication.

**Anthology:** Collection of extracts from the works of various authors.

**Atlas:** A volume of maps, plates, engravings, tables, etc.

**Autobiography:** An account of one's life, written by one's self.

**Bibliography:** List of works or documents by a given author, on a given subject, or published in a given place, and differing from a catalog in its contents, not restricted to the holdings of a single library collection. Also, a list of references used in research, appearing at the end of a journal article or book.

**Citation:** Written information about a book or journal article needed to identify it. Usually includes the author's name, title, date, journal or book title, and (if journal article) volume number.

**Citation Index:** Index consisting essentially of a list of works which have been cited in other later works, and a list of the works from which the citations have been collected. May be used to identify later published works related by subject to the original cited work.

**Circulation:** Location at which library materials may be checked out. Also, the process of checking out materials.

**Database:** Organized collection of computer records, standardized in format and content, which can be searched for specific information specific to that database. Examples include: Academic Search Premier, PsycINFO, and Literature Resource Center.

**Directory:** List of persons or organizations, arranged giving address, affiliation, etc.

**Encyclopedia:** Book or set of books providing informational articles on either a specific subject or a wide range of subjects, usually arranged in alphabetical order.

**Gazetteer:** Geographical dictionary; usually includes longitude and latitude of a given place, population, size, etc.

**Handbook:** Collection of informational entries on one or more topics, arranged for easy access.

**Index:** Systematic guide to the contents of a file or other informational resource, in an arrangement which represents the contents of a file or other informational resources, in an

arrangement which represents the contents, references, page numbers, etc., helpful for accessing the contents.

**Journal:** Periodical containing scholarly articles disseminating current information on research and development in a particular subject discipline.

**Magazine:** Periodical designed for general/popular reading, containing articles on various subjects by different authors, not necessarily expert on the topic.

**Microfiche:** Flat sheet, 4x6 inches or 3x5 inches, containing micro-images arranged in a grid pattern.

**Periodical:** Publication which appears periodically, generally more frequently than annually. Each issue is numbered and/or dated consecutively, and normally contains articles, stories, or other writings.

**PITTCat:** The University of Pittsburgh library system's online library catalog.

**Reference Book:** Book designed by its arrangement and treatment of its subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information/facts, rather than read consecutively; a book whose use is restricted to library use only.

**Serial:** Publication issued in successive parts bearing numerical or chronological designation and intended to be published indefinitely.

**Stacks:** Series of bookcases or sections of shelving, arranged in rows or ranges, freestanding or multi-tiered, for storage of the library's principle circulating collection.

**Thesaurus:** Compilation of terms given synonyms and/or antonyms for each. In database searching: providing a standardized and controlled vocabulary for information retrieval.

**Yearbook:** Annual compendium of facts and statistics on a particular topic for the preceding year.