

GLOSSARY OF LIBRARY TERMS: A GUIDE

In a general sense, a glossary contains explanations of concepts relevant to a certain field of study or action. This glossary will assist in clarifying concepts that are used in the library but may not necessarily be familiar to you.

Abstract - Brief summary of the content of a book, article, speech, report, dissertation, etc.

Acquisitions - Department within the Library responsible for ordering and purchasing new materials. If the University of Venda (UNIVEN) online catalog indicates the item you need is "on order," the Acquisitions Department has placed an order, but the item has not yet arrived from the publisher or distributor.

Acronym - A word formed from the first (or first few) letters of several words; for example UNIVEN stands for University of Venda

Almanac - An annual publication containing astronomical data, weather forecasts, maps, dates, and tables of other useful information. These publications are kept on the quick reference shelf next to the Reference Desk.

Annotation - A critical or explanatory note, usually included in a bibliographical reference or citation.

Annual – see frequency

Anthology - Collection of stories, plays, and/or poems, selected by an editor.

Atlas - A book of maps.

Author - Writer of a book, essay, story, play, poem, etc. Some books have two or more *coauthors*. In an AUTHOR Search in the UNIVEN online catalog, the term "author" is used in its broadest sense to include coauthor, editor, playwright, director, composer, performer, etc.

Autobiography - Account of one's life written by one-self. See also: biography.

Bibliography - List of references at the end of a book or article. Books, scholarly articles, term papers, etc often include bibliographies listing the information sources on which they are based. Long bibliographies may be published separately in book form.

Biennial – see frequency

Biography - Account of a person's life, written by another. The person who writes a biography is the "biographer." The person written about is known as the "biographee." See also: autobiography.

BIP - An acronym which stands for Books in Print. It is an electronic database which indexes (by author, title, and subject) books currently available for purchase. BIP is available through UNIVEN e-resources.

Boolean searching - A method of combining concepts in a keyword search which allows the searcher to make use of logical commands (sometimes called "operators").

- The "or" command is used to expand or broaden search results to include synonyms and related terms. Example: motivation or emotion
- The "and" command is used to narrow search results. Each time another concept is added, the search becomes more specific since the two concepts must appear together. Example: motivation and emotion.
- The "not" command is used to exclude unwanted records from search results. Example: motivation not emotion
- When two different Boolean commands are used in the same search statement, parentheses must be included to indicate which command is to be performed first. Example: motivation and (emotion or achievement).

Bound – a term referring to pages, sheets or issues of periodicals which have been covered by a binding, usually hardback to create a single volume. This is used in libraries to preserve items for long term use.

Call number – letters, numbers, and symbols assigned to a book to show its location in the library shelving system. The numbers are derived from the Dewey Decimal Classification system in the case of UNIVEN.

Catalogue – a list of items such as books, periodicals, maps and audiovisual materials arranged in a defined order.

Cataloguing - The department in the library responsible for entering all the information necessary about library materials in the online catalog to make them accessible to patrons.

CD-ROM - Stands for "Compact Disc Read-Only Memory." A medium for publishing and storing information in digital format, similar to audio compact discs.

Circulating collection - Books and other materials which may be checked out by registered borrowers. Periodicals and all reference materials do not circulate in the UNIVEN library.

Circulation Desk -The Circulation Desk is where books and other materials are checked in and out of the library.

Citation – the written reference to a specific work. For a book one would need title, author, or editor, edition, place of publication, publisher and year of publication.

Collected work - A book of works by different authors (essays, stories, poems, plays), selected for publication by an editor. See also: anthology.

Compact disc - Sound recording medium. In UNIVEN Library, the compact disc collection is kept in the media centre on the first floor.

Database - A continuously updated file of related information, abstracts, or references on a particular subject, arranged for ease and speed of search/retrieval on a computer. Most library databases are periodical indexes.

Descriptor – words or phrases used as subject headings

Directory - Book which lists the names, addresses, and phone/FAX numbers of a specific group of persons, companies, organizations, or publications. In the Reese Library, most directories are shelved in the reference collection.

Dictionary – a book which defines the terms of a language, profession, discipline, or specialized area of knowledge.

Display rack - Located in the Circulation Area and in the Reference Room. The handouts available on the display rack explain how to use library resources and services. They are free to ASU students, faculty, and staff.

Dissertation - A formal and lengthy written research report, especially one required by universities in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Ph.D.

Download - To transfer data or program files from a central computer to a peripheral computer or storage device, such as a USB. Results from UNIVEN database searches may be downloaded to your own CD or USB for use on another computer.

Due date - When library materials are issued out of the Library at the Circulation Desk, each item is stamped with the date by which it must be returned to the Library. Fines are charged for items returned after the due date, unless the item has been renewed. Lost items are billed to the borrower. See also: overdue.

Edition - Some books (particularly reference books) are revised and republished. The new version is often called the "revised" or "second" edition. Subsequent revisions are numbered sequentially. The latest edition is the most current, but older editions may contain useful information deleted from later editions.

E-Journal – a periodical that is available in an electronic or computerized form.

Encyclopedia - A book or set of books which contains information about topics arranged in alphabetical order. A subject encyclopedia is a similar work on a single field of activity or a single subject. Multi-volume encyclopedias often include an index in the last volume.

excerpt - Selection or fragment from a writing or other work.

Fines - Most libraries charge a small fee for each day (or hour) a circulating item is kept past its due date. UNIVEN Library charges R3.00 per day for circulating books and 50 cents per hour for reserve materials. Items (except reserve materials) may be renewed on the due date for an additional checkout period, unless a hold has been placed by another person.

Footnote - Reference at the bottom of a page documenting words or ideas taken from another source.

Frequency - The interval at which a newspaper, periodical, or other serial publication is issued (daily, semiweekly, weekly, semimonthly, monthly, bimonthly, triquarterly, quarterly, semiannually, annually, irregularly, etc.). Scholarly journals are usually published quarterly, magazines weekly or monthly, and newspapers daily or weekly. Frequency and changes of frequency are indicated in the note area of the bibliographic description of a serial.

Daily	Every single day
Weekly	Once a week
Semiweekly	Twice a week
Biweekly	Every two weeks
Monthly	Once a month
Semimonthly	Twice a month
Bimonthly	Every two months
Quarterly	Every three months
Triquarterly	Every four months
Annually	Once a year
Semiannually	Twice a year
Biennially	Once every two years
Irregularly	No fix time schedule

Government documents - Publications of government (local, regional and national), including government gazettes, reports and statistics.

Handbook - Compact reference book which provides useful information on a specific subject. Statistical information is often provided in handbooks.

Hardcopy - Material printed on paper, as opposed to information in microform or in digital (computerized) format.

Hold - If the book you need is checked out, you may request at the Circulation Desk that a "hold" be placed on the item. The person who checked it out will not be permitted to renew it, and you will be next in line to check it out after it has been returned.

Holdings - All the materials (print and nonprint) owned by a library.

http:// - An Internet address prefix which stands for "HyperText Transfer Protocol." HTTP is the language used by the Internet to access information available electronically on the World Wide Web.

Index – a list, in alphabetical or numerical order, of the topics, names, etc. that are treated or mentioned in a publication or group of publications, along with references to the pages where the topics are discussed.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) - If the book or periodical article you need is not available in UNIVEN Library, you may fill out a printed request form at the ILL office to borrow the item from another library. (this service is available to Academics and Post-graduate students only)

Internal, (in-text, or parenthetical) citation refers to the practice of giving credit to an author, singer, or speaker by citing their words/ideas within your paper. This internal citation is then referenced at the end of your paper in your 'Works Cited' list

Internet -- Fiber-optic computer network which connects computers all over the world, enabling computer users to communicate via e-mail, find information on the World Wide Web, and access remote computer systems such as library catalogs.

Internet Explorer -- A software program for browsing sites on the World Wide Web (WWW). Access to Internet Explorer is available in the Computer Labs and on the UNIVEN OPAC areas in the Library.

ISBN - International Standard Book Number. Unique ten (now lately thirteen)-digit publisher's I.D. number for a specific edition of a book. Usually printed on the reverse side of the title page.

ISSN - International Standard Serial Number. Unique eight-digit number which identifies a specific serial title.

Issue - All the copies of a specific periodical published on the same date. A subscription entitles the subscriber to receive one copy of each issue. In libraries, all the issues of a periodical published during the same calendar year are usually bound together in a single annual volume.

Journal - Scholarly periodical devoted to a specific field or subfield of knowledge. Most journal articles are more than five pages long and include a bibliography or list of works cited. Journal

articles often published by a professional body. They include a paragraph at the beginning, called an abstract, which summarizes the main points of the article.

Keyword(s) - The UNIVEN online catalog (as do most online databases) includes a keyword search option which allows users to type keywords describing their topic, in any order. Searching by keywords often utilizes Boolean searching.

Media – A generic term for non-print library materials (films, filmstrips, slides, video-recordings, audio-recordings, CD-ROMs, machine-readable data files, computer software, etc.).

Monograph - A scholarly book complete on one subject or a class of subjects. It can also refer to a lengthy work on a particular subject or person, and often contains bibliographies.

Non-circulating - Some library materials may not be issued out. Non-circulating materials in UNIVEN Library include reference books, items in Special Collections and periodicals.

Non-print - Materials published in a format other than print on paper, including microfilm and microfiche, audiocassettes, compact disks, films, videocassettes, and digitized information such as computer files.

Online – Accessible via a computer or computer network. Generally synonymous with the words "automated," "computerized," and "electronic."

OPAC - An acronym which stands for "Online Public Access Catalog." A computerized catalogue of books and other materials owned by a library.

Online Tutorial - An instructional tool in electronic format, usually available via the Internet, designed to teach library users, in a step-by-step and sometimes interactive process, how to use a specific resource (usually an online catalog or bibliographic database), or all the services and resources needed to research topics in a specific discipline or subject area.

Open access - Information content made freely and universally available via the Internet in easy to read format, usually because the publisher maintains online archives to which access is free or has deposited the information in a widely known open access repository.

Overdue - An item from the circulating collection which has been kept by the borrower past its due date. UNIVEN Library charges fines for overdue materials. Overdue charges can be avoided by renewing an item on its due date.

Patrons - People who use the library. (also referred to as library users, clients or customers)

Periodical - Publication issued in soft-cover more than once, usually at regular intervals and intended to continue indefinitely, includes newspapers, newsletters, magazines, and journals. It is sold at newsstands and/or by subscription. Libraries usually bind all the issues published during a specific calendar year in a single volume.

Preprint – a portion of a work printed and issued before the publication of the complete work.

Printer – this term has two meanings. (1) a machine that prints the output from a computer to paper , or (2) a person or company that produces the printed copy of a book or other item, e.g. Government Printer.

Proceedings – the published record of a meeting of a society, association, institution, or other organization, often accompanied by abstracts or reports of papers presented. It is sometimes synonymous with transactions.

Publication date - year in which a book was published. The publication date can usually be found on the back (verso) of the title page. For periodicals, the publication date is the month and year (or month/day/year) in which a specific issue was published. The publication date can usually be found on the front cover and on the title page of a periodical.

Publisher - Company (or person) which prepares and issues print or non-print material for public distribution and/or sale.

Ready Reference - Shelves located next to the Reference Desk which house reference books in high demand, such as Business Blue Book & Book of Facts.

Reference book - Books such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and directories, which are used to find specific information. Reference books may not be checked out because they are needed on a daily basis to answer questions at the Reference Desk. Use the photocopiers for making copies of information in reference books.

Renew - Borrowers may take an item out for a second period by coming to the Circulation Desk. A student card is required for renewals. If another person has placed a hold on the item, it may not be renewed. Fines are charged for items kept past their due date, unless they have been renewed.

Reserves - Materials made available by lecturers for a limited borrowing period (two-hour, overnight, 2-day weekend) as long as the library is open reserved material must be used in the Library. The fine for overdue reserve materials is 50 cents per hour.

Serial – any publication issued in successive parts, appearing at intervals, usually regular ones, and as a rule, intended to be continued indefinitely. The term includes periodicals, newspapers, annuals, numbered monographic series and the proceedings, transactions and memoirs of societies.

Stacks - Public areas where books and periodicals are shelved. In UNIVEN Library books are shelved in Dewey Decimal Classification number order.

Stop word - In a keyword search, short words which occur very frequently may be excluded. Each electronic database has its own list of stop words. Examples: a, an, for, of, on, the, to, with.

Subject heading – the word or phrase used to describe the subject content of a work.

Subscription - The right to receive a periodical for a fixed period of time in exchange for payment of a fixed sum. Most subscriptions are delivered by mail and renewed annually.

Subtitle - Portion of a work's title following the semicolon or colon. For example, in the title *Psychology: an introduction*, the words *an introduction* constitute the subtitle.

Table of contents - List of chapters or topics covered (with page numbers) in the front of a book, following the title page. In an anthology, the Table of Contents lists the titles of the works (stories, poems, plays, essays) selected for inclusion by the editor.

Thesaurus - a list of terms and concepts representing the specialized vocabulary of a particular field. The thesaurus will also show relationships between terms such as synonymous or related terms, hierarchical arrangements and provide references from terms not currently in use to acceptable terms, including older words or phrases that are no longer used.

Title - Name of a book, essay, story, play, poem, picture, statue, piece of music, film, etc. A work published under many different titles is often cataloged under a well-known or "uniform" title (example: Bible). Some titles include a subtitle following a colon or semicolon. Translations sometimes have an alternate title in the original language.

Title page - Page in the front of a book which gives the complete title, the name of the author(s) or editor(s), name of translator, publisher, and place of publication. Publication date and ISBN are usually printed on the back (verso) of the title page.

Truncation - In a keyword search, a word root followed by the truncation symbol will retrieve variant endings. Truncation is useful for retrieving both the singular and the plural forms of a word at the same time. See also: Boolean searching.

Tutorial - A printed or online instructional tool designed to teach novices how to use a computer system or electronic resource, usually in a self-paced step-by-step manner, often with questions at the end for testing proficiency. Online tutorials have been developed by instruction librarians to accommodate distance learners and students who prefer online library instruction.

URL - An acronym which stands for "Uniform Resource Locator." Each resource on the World Wide Web has its own address or URL. For example, the URL of the UNIVEN Home Page is: <http://www.univen.ac.za>. The first part of the URL (<http://>) indicates that the resource is a hypertext document. The second part of the URL shows the location of the document.

Volume – This word is used to describe two different materials: (1) a series of printed sheets, bound, typically in book form, or (2) an arbitrary number of consecutive issues of a periodical.

Web browser - A sophisticated software program which allows the user to search for information available electronically on the World Wide Web. At the present time, the most popular Web browser is Netscape. Netscape is on Computer Lab Computers and on the Library Research Workstations.

World Wide Web (WWW) - Global network of information available on computers connected to the Internet. Most Web pages are written in HTML script.

Yearbook - An annual documentary, historical, or memorial publication containing information about the previous year. Yearbooks are usually shelved in the reference collection.

SOURCES

This glossary is adapted from the following websites and sources:

ODLIS: Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science by Joan M. Reitz.

www.lu.com/odlis/

<http://library.boisestate.edu/reference/BBRIN/jargon.htm>

<http://library.buffalo.edu/help/glossary.html>

<http://www.aug.edu/libra>

www.merriam-webster.dictionarary

www.wikipedia.org

Need more help? Ask any librarian.

TAKE A QUIZ

Indicate true (T) or false (F)

A glossary is a magazine with shiny pages

T		F	
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An ISBN is number assigned to numerous related books

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To search for information available electronically you use a web browser

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A tutorial can be accessed from outside the library even after hours

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