



# Ready Reference Without Fear

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# What is Reference?

- ❑ Reference is the creation, management and assessment of information resources in order to develop services that meet people's information needs.
- ❑ Ready Reference is provision of quick answers to factual questions.
- ❑ Controlled Vocabulary is a specified list of terms developed to ensure precise and comprehensive searching also known as subject headings and descriptors.

# Things You Should Know

1. It is impossible to know EVERYTHING, despite what your patrons might think.
2. It's ok to take your time.
3. Note: The first part of Reference is "Refer"

# Customer Service and Ethics

- ❑ Be approachable, relaxed, and show an interest in your patrons.
- ❑ Be aware of physical and communication barriers.
- ❑ Don't point. It's rude.
- ❑ Remember the ALA Code of Ethics and the Library Bill of Rights:
  - We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
  - We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
  - We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
  - A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views.

# The Reference Interview

What is the real need behind the patron's first question?

"I need information on Ohio."

1. Listen. Do not interrupt.
2. Paraphrase. Do not add interpretation or rely on assumptions.
3. Clarify. Use open-ended questions.
4. Verify. Repeat the information the patron has given you.
5. Keep the patron informed. Let them know what you're doing.
6. Follow-up.

# Evaluating Sources

- ❑ Accuracy: Is the material current? Unbiased? Distinctions made between fact, theory, and opinion?
- ❑ Scope: the depth and breadth of the material
- ❑ Authority: Who published it? What are their qualifications?
- ❑ Age appropriateness: Vocabulary, density of text, physical attributes
- ❑ Additional Resources: Glossary, index, table of contents, bibliographies, etc.

# Searching

Mentally review the sources you have on hand

Think of yourself as a human thesaurus: Use broader terms and synonyms to open more areas of possible information and narrower terms for precision searching

Be familiar with advanced searching techniques (wildcards, phrase searches, Boolean searching, etc.)

Be aware of recommended websites

Never knock the library catalog, or MeLCat

Google is a search tool, and it should be used as such, but it's a jumping off point, not necessarily a resource in itself.

Referrals: Local experts, government agencies, educational institutions, other libraries.

# Types of Print Resources

Almanac: A publication, usually issued annually, containing facts and statistics.

Atlas: A collection of maps

Bibliography:

1. A list of works cited at the end of an article, book, or other information source.
2. A book-length collection of citations published on a specific subject.

Dictionary: A book that gives definitions of words.

Directory: A list of names or organizations, including contact information

Encyclopedia: A work containing informational articles on a single subject or multiple subjects, usually arranged alphabetically.

Gazeteer: a dictionary of geographical information and data about places.

Index:

1. A list of names or topics usually found at the end of a publication directing you to the pages where the names or topics are discussed.
2. A printed or electronic publication listing references to periodical articles or books by subject and/or author.

Thesaurus: A book or list that shows relationships among terms, such as broader, narrower, and related terms, synonyms or antonyms.

Yearbook: An annual compendium of facts and statistics from the previous year, often limited to a specific subject.

# Print Titles

- ❑ Ancestry's Red Book
- ❑ Bartlett's Quotations
- ❑ Black's Law Dictionary
- ❑ Bressers and Polk Directories
- ❑ Chase's Calendar of Events
- ❑ Columbia Gazeteer
- ❑ Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media
- ❑ The Handybook for Genealogists
- ❑ Hoover's Handbook of American Business
- ❑ Michigan Manufacturer's Directory
- ❑ New York Public Library Desk Reference
- ❑ Places Rated Almanac
- ❑ Small Business Sourcebook
- ❑ Something About the Author
- ❑ Statesman's Yearbook
- ❑ Statistical Abstract of the United States

# Virtual Libraries / Web Directories / Social Bookmarking



MEL Databases  
Index to Periodicals  
Gateways  
Michigana  
MORE

Ready Reference  
POTUS  
Literary Criticism  
Research and Writing  
Stately Knowledge  
Science Fair Information



Librarians' Index to the Internet [www.ii.org](http://www.ii.org)  
ALA Great Websites for Kids [www.ala.org/greatsites](http://www.ala.org/greatsites)  
Delicious [www.delicious.com](http://www.delicious.com)

# General Databases

- ❑ InfoTrac General OneFile, Academic OneFile – Full-text articles from magazines and journals including People Weekly, Newsweek, Time, etc.
- ❑ Wilson Select Plus – Full-text articles primarily in the humanities and social sciences
- ❑ SIRS Discoverer – K-8 Database
- ❑ NetLibrary – access to more than 20,000 ebooks

# Phone and Address Information

- ❑ Switchboard – [www.switchboard.com](http://www.switchboard.com) (includes reverse look-up)
- ❑ Canada 411 – [www.canada411.com](http://www.canada411.com)
- ❑ International - <http://www.wayp.com/>
- ❑ Toll-Free numbers - <http://www.anywho.com/tf.html>

# Consumer Information

- ❑ Consumer Reports available through MEL
- ❑ Better Business Bureau – [www.bbb.gov](http://www.bbb.gov)
- ❑ Federal Citizen Information Center - <http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/>
- ❑ Federal Trade Commission <http://www.ftc.gov/>

# Health Information

- ❑ Health and Wellness Resource Center
- ❑ MedlinePlus Health Information  
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>
- ❑ Web MD <http://www.webmd.com/>
- ❑ HealthFinder <http://www.healthfinder.gov/>
- ❑ MerckSource <http://www.mercksource.com>

# Government Information

- ❑ Thomas – Legislative Search <http://thomas.loc.gov>
- ❑ GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/>
- ❑ Statistical Abstract of the United States
- ❑ <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>
- ❑ Michigan Legislature <http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

Also, try [www.google.com/unclesam](http://www.google.com/unclesam) for quick searches

# Legal Information

Findlaw [www.findlaw.com](http://www.findlaw.com)

Internet Law Library <http://www.lawguru.com/ilawlib/index.php>

Michigan Court Forms

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/courtforms/index.htm>

AllLaw Legal Help Directory

<http://www.alllaw.com/>

# Business Information

- ❑ Business and Company Resource Center - financial profiles, market research, investment reports, contact information, rankings, articles, etc.
- ❑ BigCharts [www.bigcharts.com](http://www.bigcharts.com) Stock quotes, including historical
- ❑ Thomas Regional <http://www.thomasnet.com/> *Directory of suppliers*
- ❑ Hoovers [www.hoovers.com](http://www.hoovers.com)
- ❑ Small Business Administration [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)
- ❑ Business Owner's Toolkit <http://www.toolkit.com/>

# Education / Employment Information

- ❑ Learning Express Library, Job and Career Accelerator
- ❑ MEL Business and Jobs Links (Includes resume, job posting, small business, statistics, personal finance sites)
- ❑ Petersons College Search [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)
- ❑ College Board [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
- ❑ Fastweb <http://www.fastweb.com/> Scholarship search
- ❑ Occupational Outlook Handbook <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

# Historical and Genealogical Information

- ❑ HeritageQuest
- ❑ MEL Michigana
- ❑ Cyndi's List <http://www.cyndislist.com/>
- ❑ Family Search <http://www.familysearch.org>
- ❑ Infoplease History <http://www.infoplease.com/history.html>  
Timelines, Documents, etc.

# Reader's Advisory

## □ General

### •Novelist

### •What Do I Read Next?

### •KDL What's Next Database –

[www.kdl.org/libcat/WhatsNextNEW.asp](http://www.kdl.org/libcat/WhatsNextNEW.asp) Search for complete listings of series by author, title, series name or genre.

### •Library Thing – [www.librarything.com](http://www.librarything.com)

## □ Library Links

▪Library Booklists and Bibliographies (from the former Waterboro Library website) - <http://librarybooklists.org/>

▪Compilation of booklists from libraries all over the web.

▪Mid-Continent Public Library Reader's Advisory -

[www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/readers/](http://www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/readers/) Includes book to movie lists, juvenile series and sequels lists, awards, recommended reading and links to other resources.

▪Multnomah Library Booklists - [www.multcolib.org/kids/booklists/](http://www.multcolib.org/kids/booklists/)

# Youth Reader's Advisory

## ■ Youth Resources

- Reading rants - [www.readingrants.org](http://www.readingrants.org) Out of this world booklists for teens
- Teen Reads – [www.teenreads.com](http://www.teenreads.com) Resource for teen booklists and reviews
- No Flying, No Tights – [www.noflyingnotights.com](http://www.noflyingnotights.com) Great site for people exploring the realm of graphic novels.
- **YALSA Booklists and Book Awards** such as Popular Paperbacks, Teens Top 10, Printz, and BBYA  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.cfm>
- **ALSC Booklists and Book Awards** such as Children's Notable, Newbery and Pura Belpre  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/awardsscholarships/literaryawds/literaryrelated.cfm>

# Entertainment Information

- ❑ Internet Movie Database – [www.IMDB.com](http://www.IMDB.com)
- ❑ All Music Guide – [www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com)
- ❑ Rotten Tomatoes – [www.rottentomatoes.com](http://www.rottentomatoes.com)
- ❑ Metacritic - <http://www.metacritic.com>
- ❑ Common Sense Media – [www.common Sense Media.org](http://www.common Sense Media.org)

# Reference Services

## □ Assessing and Evaluating

- Track Statistics
- Surveys

## □ Hands-Off Reference

- Pathfinders and Booklists
- Signage

## □ Marketing and Remote Services

- Outreach
- Telephone and Email

## □ Bibliographic Instruction

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