

The Language of Information Literacy: Do Students Understand?

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To effectively access and use the resources of the academic library and to become information-literate, students must understand the language of information literacy. This study analyzes undergraduate students' understanding of fourteen commonly used information-literacy terms. It was found that some of the terms least understood by students are those most frequently found in faculty-created research assignments and syllabi and that are used by librarians during library instruction. It is recommended that librarians work with faculty to make them aware of students' lack of understanding of information literacy terms and that librarians also reinforce their meaning during library instruction and in one-on-one consultations.

There is a language of information literacy that explains how information is organized, stored, retrieved, evaluated, and ethically used. While there is ongoing debate about its status as an academic discipline, there are specific terms that students must understand in context to effectively access and use the resources of the academic library and to become information-literate. Students encounter these terms in library instruction and individual consultations and through research and writing assignments given by discipline faculty.

This study had its genesis in conversations between the authors when they were writing and editing lesson plans designed to teach students information-literacy threshold concepts. Often, these written lesson plans included terms used by librarians when teaching information literacy concepts such as *source*, *database*, and *peer review*. Many of these same terms are used frequently by discipline faculty in course syllabi. When students do not understand this language, it can interfere with their comprehension of how information is created, disseminated, and used in research, making it difficult for students to become information-literate. The authors wanted to measure student understanding of this language. By assessing what students do and do not know, librarians can be more purposeful in instruction and can more effectively integrate information literacy into the curriculum.

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Background

Grand Valley State University (GVSU) is a comprehensive state-supported university with campuses in Allendale and Grand Rapids, Michigan. At the time of this study, 21,235 undergraduates and 3,049 graduate students were enrolled in classes at the university. GVSU Libraries consists of three libraries, including the main building in Allendale and two satellite libraries in downtown Grand Rapids. GVSU libraries uses a liaison system in which librarians are assigned to work with specific discipline areas within the university community. Primary among each liaison's duties is providing classroom instruction in information literacy to the students in those disciplines.

Literature Review

Much of the literature on the subject of information literacy terminology focuses on website usability. A library website guides the student to library resources, often in lieu of interaction with library personnel. Therefore, ease of use, intelligibility of language, and simplicity of design are essentials for the "face" of the library. Library terminology, or jargon, used in a website, can create "barriers for users who are unfamiliar with it," though Thomas Dowling, author of the *Web Manager's Handbook*, acknowledges its necessity in framing "a specific meaning that is not directly captured by more general wording."¹

A number of researchers have identified issues with language use and misunderstanding when examining college students' information-seeking behavior. Vicki Tolar Burton and Scott Chadwick, in their investigation of the criteria students use to evaluate Internet and library information sources, found that students were unsure of the meaning of *primary source* and conflated *peer review* with the informal feedback process used in their first-year writing courses.² This lack of understanding may have affected the way they ranked various criteria for evaluating the information accessed in library databases and on the Internet, placing higher importance on ease of access and use than on authority and accuracy.³

Studies of website design and use have examined students' information-seeking behavior that is independent of librarians or library instruction, but their findings often demonstrate the point that language is an issue, and removing or simplifying the language does not automatically eliminate confusion. Bonnie Imler and Michelle Eichelberger analyzed students' research sessions to discern between "ease of use" and "usefulness" in library web page design, noting that the attractiveness of an easy-to-use search may "cause the researcher to lose sight of the ...added value of library material over a simple Google search."⁴ Students in the study printed abstracts rather than the full-text articles for two reasons. Either they were unable to locate the print function on the web page, or they were unclear on the meaning of the term *abstract*.⁵ As Dowling pointed out in his discussion of usability and user behavior, it is impossible to know exactly what students know or what they will comprehend. In some cases, a term like *abstract* or *citation*, though jargon to some, is the best and clearest word choice. Since it is impossible to know exactly what students do or do not know, it is best to err on the side of clarity and define the terms when necessary.⁶

There are only a handful of studies that identify information literacy terms least understood by students, with the goal of either improving communication between library staff and students or examining whether library terminology interferes with student understanding. In 1989, Rachel Naismith and Joan Stein's survey of terms taken from reference interviews and library publications showed that students understood only about half of the terms they encountered. They asserted that "[i]f the library patron cannot comprehend this language, the reference transaction is impeded."⁷ The list of "common" library terms has, of course, changed over the more than twenty-five

years since this study. Use of some terms has fallen off while the use of others has burgeoned, mainly those referring to or representing digital objects or concepts. Naismith and Stein's list included such terms as *clearinghouse*, *viewing carrel area*, *microform*, and *proceedings*, none of which are likely to make a list of common library terms today.

In 2001, Abdus Sattar Chaudhry and Meng Choo created a list of twenty commonly used technical terms from librarians' e-mail replies to student queries.⁸ Their results were more positive than Naismith and Stein's, although they, too, discovered students' lack of familiarity with terminology. Prescient of Dowling's 2003 comments, they cautioned that librarians "should not make any preliminary or hasty assumption about the client's understanding about the library." Rather than complete avoidance, however, they advocated for a careful use of technical language that strives to find similar linguistic ground with the client, patron, or student.⁹

A 2005 study done in the Philippines of librarians' perceived frequently used terms and their students' comprehension of them found that the terms were less of an obstacle to student understanding than was the method of information access the student employed (for instance, catalog vs. personal assistance). As in previous studies, several of the terms tested for comprehension would not be considered common for student use by current standards, including *OPAC*, *vertical file*, *serial*, and *gazetteer*.¹⁰

Norman Hutcherson's 2004 work is the most similar to the current study regarding purpose and terminology studied. He found that students better understood words with one commonly understood definition, such as *copyright* and *plagiarism*, and were more confused by those terms having a different meaning outside a library context, like *abstract*, *citation*, and *authority*.¹¹ Hutcherson's published study did not include the survey instrument, information about the methodology, or sample size, so it is impossible to assess the statistical significance of his findings. However, his work did add to the small but growing body of literature aimed at enriching student learning through improved communication between librarians and students.

Since Hutcherson's paper, there has been no published research examining the use of terms used in library instruction, and no recent research exists that attempts to measure the effectiveness of library instruction on student understanding of information literacy terms. The language of information literacy has changed in the past decade, and this study will examine student understanding of the current lexicon used by librarians and classroom faculty.

Survey Instrument and Methodology

Target Population and Data Collection

The population selected for this survey was that of undergraduate students at GVSU. The sample was taken from the 21,235 undergraduate students enrolled in 3,080 separate classes during winter semester 2015. To obtain a sufficient number of responses, the authors randomly selected 400 classes for survey distribution. The professors of those classes were asked via e-mail to invite their students to participate in the survey. Professors were given a link to the survey and asked to either post it in GVSU's learning management system (Blackboard) or provide students with the link via e-mail. Survey responses were collected over a four-week period.

The survey included three demographic questions: class level, age, and whether the student had previous library instruction; and fourteen multiple choice questions that asked them to select the correct definition of common library terms. Each of these questions included the correct answer, three distractors, and an unsure option. For the correct definitions, the authors consulted the *Instruction for Diverse Populations Multilingual Glossary Definitions*¹² and the *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science*.¹³ To avoid false positives, the survey instructions advised students to select

the unsure option rather than guess. Respondents were allowed to skip questions. As a result, not every student answered every question, and sample sizes for particular analyses may not always correspond to the total sample size. To identify a list of terms to test, the authors compiled a list of terms used in their instruction, consulted with colleagues, and reviewed syllabi in their liaison disciplines. From this process, a list of fourteen terms was identified. The survey instrument was pilot-tested with one class of 15 students, and adjustments were made to some of the distractors based on the results. The survey was created in SurveyMonkey and is provided in appendix A.

Response Rate and Respondent Demographics

A total of 773 responses was collected, although sample sizes vary for specific analyses. Survey responses were exported to the software program SPSS for statistical analysis.

Table 1 describes the respondents by class level. Five graduate students who were enrolled in undergraduate classes responded to the survey; their answers are included in certain analyses.

Table 2 shows the percentage of respondents who had previous library instruction and the percentage of those who had not.

Class Level	Responses	Percent of Total Respondents
Freshman	207	26.88%
Sophomore	176	22.86%
Junior	173	22.47%
Senior	209	27.14%
Graduate	5	0.65%

Class Level	Total Responses	Had Previous Library Instruction		Had No Previous Library Instruction	
		Responses	Percent	Responses	Percent
Freshman	205	145	70.73%	60	29.27%
Sophomore	176	104	59.09%	72	40.90%
Junior	172	108	62.79%	64	37.21%
Senior	208	148	71.15%	60	28.85%
Graduate	5	3	60.00%	2	40.00%

Findings

Tested Terms

The researchers tested fourteen information literacy terms, as identified in table 3. Comprehension (correct answers) ranged from a high of 87.1 percent of students who correctly identified the meaning of the term "citation" to a low of 22.3 percent who understood the term "stacks." The data revealed no statistically significant associations between a student's understanding of the tested terms (as evidenced by a correct answer) and whether or not they had received library instruction in a university class.

TABLE 3
Tested Terms from Most to Least Understood

	Total Responses	Correct Responses	Percent Correct
Citation	768	669	87.11%
Bibliography	771	668	86.64%
Keyword	767	650	84.75%
Full Text	763	629	82.44%
Abstract	770	610	79.22%
Database	764	554	72.51%
Peer Review	769	477	62.03%
Journal	765	416	54.38%
Catalog	767	402	52.41%
Open Access	764	393	51.44%
Subject Heading	767	390	50.85%
Scholarly	766	315	41.12%
Source	763	286	37.48%
Stacks	764	170	22.25%

With respect to class level, significant relationships ($P < 0.05$ via chi-square test) were discovered on ten of the fourteen (71.4%) dependent variables. Individual item results are discussed below.

Discussion

Analysis of Responses

Student understanding of the fourteen tested terms as indicated by correct answers is shown in table 3. These answers fall into five distinct categories: 1) terms related to writing research papers; 2) terms related to database searching; 3) terms related to scholarly writing; 4) archaic terms; and 5) *open-access*, which is considered separately.

Category 1: *citation* and *bibliography* (terms related to writing research papers)

According to the results of this study, GVSU students appear to have a relatively good understanding of two terms that are frequently used by librarians and discipline faculty with reference to writing research papers: citation and bibliography. Students' K-12 experience may have played a role in this understanding, as annotated bibliographies are a common assignment in high school and in college. While they may not always understand how to correctly format citations, students do appear to understand what a citation is.

Library instruction did not have a statistically significant effect on student understanding of either of these terms. However, statistical analysis did reveal that more advanced students appeared to more frequently identify the correct meaning of the word *citation* as compared to less advanced ones (88.5% correct responses for seniors vs. 79.5% for freshmen, $P < 0.001$). Similar results were revealed for the term *bibliography* (92.3% correct responses for seniors vs. 77.3% for freshmen, $P < 0.001$).

Category 2: *keyword*, *abstract*, *full text*, *database*, and *subject heading* (terms related to database searching)

Three-quarters or more of responding students also appear to understand the four terms that relate to database searching: keyword, abstract, full text, and database. Using databases, citing sources, accessing abstracts or full-text articles via keyword searches

are common topics of library instruction. These are task-oriented terms; their definitions are often demonstrated at the point of need and are learned through application in a way that more conceptual terms are not. It is concerning, however, that a full quarter of students do not know the definition of a database.

A little more than 50 percent of students defined *subject heading* correctly. Subject headings are also known as descriptors, subjects, major subjects, and subject terms (among others), and such variety in nomenclature likely contributed to students' confusion. As databases and discovery tools become more sophisticated, users need to rely less on strictly controlled vocabularies. Often, this means that instruction librarians, particularly in single sessions, spend little time teaching the use of such strategies and, in fact, may not explicitly define this term to students. However user-friendly databases become, it is still imperative that students familiar only with Google-type natural-language searching understand database structure and the need to use targeted language to retrieve optimal results. Whatever the name, the concept of subject headings as linked to organized, indexed information is crucial to developing strong information-seeking skills.

As above, library instruction did not have a statistically significant effect on student understanding of these terms. However, chi-square did reveal that more advanced students were more frequently able to identify the correct meaning of *keyword* than their less experienced counterparts (85.6% correct responses for seniors vs. 78.6% for freshmen, $P < 0.02$); similar results were revealed for the terms *abstract* (88.0% correct responses for seniors vs. 62.1% for freshmen, $P < 0.001$), *full text* (86.5% correct responses for seniors vs. 74.9% for freshmen, $P < 0.02$) and *database* (82.0% correct responses for seniors vs. 66.0% for freshmen, $P = 0.001$). However, there was no statistically significant relationship between class level and understanding of the term *subject heading*.

Category 3: *peer review, journal, scholarly, and source* (terms related to scholarly writing)

Students begin to falter when asked to define information literacy terms that are more conceptual in nature, particularly the terms *peer review, journal, source, and scholarly*. These terms are used frequently by discipline faculty with reference to research assignments, and liaison librarians often refer to these terms when teaching students how to find information to complete these assignments. And, according to the survey results, even when these terms are defined in class, students do not understand or retain the meaning of these concepts.

For instance, roughly 60 percent of students were unable to correctly define the terms *scholarly* or *source*. As in previous cases, library instruction did not significantly improve student comprehension of any of these terms.

Peer Review and Journal

The authors reviewed more than one hundred syllabi for undergraduate classes in several disciplines¹⁴ at GVSU and found that discipline faculty often use both of these terms when describing the requirements of a research assignment or paper. And they often do so in ways that may be confusing to students. For example, the following uses of these terms were found in GVSU syllabi:

professional journal sources

selected journal article

empirical article from a journal listed below

peer-reviewed journal article

peer-reviewed/refereed

peer-reviewed academic journals

peer review (meaning student-peer critiquing of each other's work)

articles include those from journals, publications, the Internet, the newspaper, and the like no more than 2 non-peer-reviewed resources

Students' confusion over the term *peer review* may be due, in part, to the fact that all undergraduate students at GVSU are required to take at least two courses with a supplemental writing skills (SWS) designation. Almost 30 percent of respondents chose choice "d," a system of grading in which students grade the work of other students. A review of SWS syllabi reveals frequent peer evaluations of writing assignments, a term easily confused with *peer review* as used in this study. GVSU's first-year writing class features peer-review workshops in which students learn to give and receive constructive feedback on their writing, both in small groups guided by peer writing consultants (students hired by the University's Writing Center) and in one-on-one sessions. Just less than 50 percent of first-year GVSU students take this class each year. Additionally, this term is occasionally found in other discipline syllabi referring to in-class student-to-student evaluation or critiquing of coursework.

Journal is a term frequently appearing in course syllabi and class discussions, the library catalog, and library instruction. Nearly half of the respondents failed to correctly define it. Like *peer review*, *journal* is a term that has more than one meaning. To students, journaling may have been a common practice in their K–12 experience, so their understanding of the term may be as a diary or activity log. As addressed in Hutcherson's study, terms "which in a library setting may have a markedly different meaning from that which is typically understood, also can be an impediment to student understanding."¹⁵

Even the notion of a "periodical devoted to disseminating original research" is new to most college students. The word *periodical* is confusing and perhaps, in hindsight, should have been included in the survey. Further, in digital form, a journal article looks no different from a magazine or newspaper article. So the lack of physical form makes it difficult, if not impossible, for students to readily understand the purpose for which the information was created and how it differs from other, more "popular" information. Knowing what an academic journal is and what it does helps to synthesize the idea that quality information takes time to produce.

Still, notwithstanding these difficulties, there did appear to be substantial statistical evidence to suggest that understanding of this terminology improves as students advance through their college careers. For instance, 65.7 percent of seniors correctly identified the meaning of the term *journal*, as compared to 43.7 percent of freshmen ($P < 0.001$); similarly, 77.9 percent of seniors, but only 42.0 percent of incoming students, knew the definition of *peer review* ($P < 0.001$).

Scholarly

Scholarly is a term that, again, may have more than one meaning to students and professors. Beginning college students are exposed to new ideas, theories, and concepts within the context of their course disciplines, taught by experts—or scholars—in a field. The concept of *scholarly*, as it refers to a type of writing, is not one that students automatically understand. They need to recognize the characteristics of the style, and this takes time and exposure to scholarly work. While many professors do define the term, some may use it in lectures or course materials without a clear explanation, assuming this type of writing is familiar to students. This study's findings demonstrate otherwise. A little more than 40 percent of students were able to identify the meaning of the term (and its relevance) in a library research context. Moreover, unlike *journal* and *peer review*, comprehension of *scholarly* did not significantly improve with class standing.

The term *scholarly* is also frequently found in syllabi; examples of its use at GVSU include:

scholarly literature
scholarly perspective
scholarly debate
15 sources, 10 of which must be scholarly
3 scholarly citations
scholarly journals
scholarly research articles
scholarly book

Source

Students' lack of understanding of the term *source* may seem initially surprising, but the word means different things in different contexts. The word was, in fact, part of the discussion that inspired this study. In reviewing submissions for inclusion in a collection of lesson plans, the authors noticed varying uses of the term, leading to discussions with each other and with colleagues about the need to define terms, not only for students, but for one another. One could consider a database a source of information. An interviewee is a source of information to a reporter. Other potential sources could be the students' professors or even the entire library. In this context, however, faculty typically define *source* as a single piece of information such as a journal or newspaper article, book, online article, or video. The high number of responses for choice "d" (information used in research for which the author can be identified) may indicate that students think that the source is the creator of that information rather than the information itself. As was the case with *scholarly*, seniors were no better than freshman at correctly defining *source*.

The term *source* is commonly found in syllabi and research assignments and is used in a variety of ways that can be confusing to students. Some examples found in GVSU syllabi include:

using academic sources to support your claim
one paper that uses sources
Internet sources
news source
journal sources
qualifying sources
find two places where solid source integration
outside sources of supporting references
add research to any sourced-based paper that needs to be explained
multiple sources
relevant sources of data
acknowledge the source of your ideas
cite the source
other sources

Category 4: *catalog* and *stacks* (archaic terms)

These terms are ones that may or may not be used in reference interviews, and use in classroom instruction may be limited. These terms were included because, with the exception of open access, their obsolescence cannot be assumed. The fact that these terms represent physical entities with names that may have changed over time means they require explanation when encountered. The words *catalog* and *stacks* were, in fact, only recently removed from the GVSU website and replaced with, respectively, "Books & Media" and a floor location designation. The card catalog is a rare component of

today's library and is more often used in reference to a university's course catalog. The use of stacks to refer to library bookshelves is the one jargon term included in the survey, and it appeared on GVSU's website until February of 2015.

Library instruction did not influence student understanding of either term, and class standing was not significantly related to comprehension of the term *stacks*. However, while only 44.2 percent of freshmen could correctly identify the correct meaning of *catalog*, 62.5 percent of seniors were able to do so, a statistically significant difference ($P < 0.001$).

Category 5: open access

The term *open access* did not easily fit into any of the former categories. Perhaps this is because it has only recently come into the library lexicon and students have not yet been exposed to it. This is evidenced by the fact that only half of respondents defined it correctly. The open-access movement has gained significant momentum in recent years, and libraries are leading the charge to provide alternative modes of information storage and dissemination. This has been due, in large part, to rising publication costs and has, until now, involved mainly faculty. As these models change and institutions of higher education acknowledge students as creators as well as consumers of information, open access may become a common topic on campuses; recognizability of the term would likely follow. As in all other cases, library instruction did not improve student comprehension of this term; however, there was statistical evidence suggesting that seniors were able to correctly define *open access* more often (61.7%) than freshmen (41.5%) ($P < 0.001$).

Conclusion

The fourteen terms the authors used in the survey are part of the language of information literacy, a language that describes both concrete and abstract ideas in our field. To truly be effective users and creators of information, students need to understand the words that define not only the tools and resources, but also the concepts underlying their existence. What makes an academic journal a more credible source than a popular magazine? How do these two periodicals differ? Fruitful discussions on topics such as scholarly writing and authority of information can take place only when all participants understand the terms being used. As it stands, many librarians may work under the assumption that students come to college with an understanding of the terms associated with the library. The results of this survey show otherwise.

Students learn the language of their major or area of study through repeated exposure and direct instruction. The cross-disciplinary nature of information literacy, however, makes its particular lexicon not so easily conveyed. It is clear from the results of this survey that library instruction does not significantly enhance student understanding. While a library instruction session may be the only setting in which these terms are explained, it is not the sole venue where they are used. Not all students take classes in information literacy or research skills. In fact, many universities (the authors' included) do not offer them. Students' unfamiliarity with information literacy terminology is an issue that is bigger than the library. A way to develop information literacy across campus, in addition to defining terms and using clear language in the information literacy classroom, is through building awareness among nonlibrary faculty and integrating information literacy content and critical thinking skills into the university curriculum.

The authors' findings provide useful insights to the challenge of teaching information literacy concepts. With limited time in the classroom, librarians must find other ways to help students navigate a complex information landscape. One way is through communication with the wider college community. In discussing the use of language in academic libraries, Daniel Coffey and Karen Lawson stated that the [librarian's] "value lies in his or her ability to distribute internal information to other parts of the organization that most need to use the information."¹⁶

Librarians can distribute information, such as the findings of this study, to others in the university in the following ways:

- Formally present findings in a workshop for faculty via the university's teaching and learning center.
- Design a professional development program for library faculty and user experience staff using survey results to reassess language usage in reference consultations and instruction.
- Provide syllabus language and a glossary in print and digital form for inclusion in course packets.

Librarians interact with students for only a small portion of their college careers. Without some type of increased educational effort, students will continue to misunderstand or, worse yet, fail to understand a good deal of what they need to be effective researchers.

To ensure students' understanding of information literacy terms, librarians need to clearly define them in their instruction sessions and work with faculty to reinforce understanding of terms in the classes and course materials. For any kind of instructional effort to be successful, it needs to be collaborative and far-reaching.

Limitations of the Present Study and Suggestions for Future Research

From a methodological perspective, a strength of the present study is that it used a numerically large ($n = 773$), broadly representative sample to explore relationships between library instruction, class standing, and comprehension of key information literacy terms. The authors selected the classes contacted for this research using probability methods (simple random sampling). Thereafter, however, students were allowed to self-select into the sample. While it is not known precisely how many total students were contacted within the 400 selected classes, the data indicate that a mean of 1.92 students per class responded, suggesting that the response rate may not have been exceptional. This, of course, raises the issue of representativeness. Were the students who replied to the survey typical of Grand Valley State University students in general? Might students who failed to respond be qualitatively different from those who did? It would not be unreasonable to speculate that exceptional students may have been overrepresented among responders; in fact, this study somewhat overestimates overall information literacy. Although the sample is acceptably representative within this university, there is no guarantee that the findings reported here would generalize to other institutions of higher learning. Perhaps other universities devote either far less, or far more, instructional resources to information literacy instruction.

There were also some technical issues pertaining to question wording. The authors developed their own survey instrument. Therefore, the validity and reliability of the measures used here are not assured.

Still, this study is, to the best of the authors' knowledge, the most advanced and recent attempt to quantitatively explore the key relationships investigated here. It would not be unfair to say that, while librarians (and the discipline of library science in general) possess a great deal of anecdotal wisdom surrounding student comprehension of terminology, very few empirical investigations on this topic have been conducted. Consequently, while the conclusions of this research should not be read as definitive, they do represent an important foundation for this line of inquiry. The authors would like to encourage colleagues at other postsecondary institutions to empirically assess information literacy within their student bodies and use their experiences to develop evidence-based practice pertaining to facilitating understanding of key terms. Ultimately, this could enable librarians to play a more important role within the college learning environment.

Appendix 1. Survey Instrument (Correct answers are in bold)

Library and Information Literacy Terms

This survey will help GVSU instruction librarians determine whether or not students understand the language they use in the classroom, so that they may provide more effective, meaningful instruction.

Informed Consent: You are asked to voluntarily provide the requested information on this survey. You may quit at any time. The purpose of the survey is to gather data regarding student understanding of library terminology. This survey will be completely anonymous. You are asked to voluntarily provide specific information to this web site. You may skip any question, or stop participating at any time. The information collected will be used for the stated purposes of this research project only and will not be provided to any other party for any other reason at any time except and only if required by law. You should be aware that although the information you provide is anonymous, it is transmitted in a non-secure manner. There is a remote chance that skilled, knowledgeable persons unaffiliated with this research project could track the information you provide to the IP address of the computer from which you send it. However, your personal identity cannot be determined.

1. Your class rank

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate

2. Age

3. Have you ever had library instruction in a university class?

- No
- Yes

Some of the following terms may have different meanings in different contexts. Please choose the ONE definition that you believe most applies to libraries and library research. PLEASE DO NOT GUESS. If you are unsure, please circle UNSURE.

4. Abstract

- A summary or brief description of the content of a longer work**
- Not easy to understand; extremely complex
- The section of an article in which terms are defined
- An article from a journal, magazine, or newspaper that is less than 50 words in length
- Unsure

5. Bibliography

- Excessive adherence to the literal interpretation of a written text
- The study of the written word
- A list containing references used in writing a research paper or other document
- A list of books or journals in chronological order of publication**
- Unsure

6. Catalog

- A list of items for sale, with descriptive comments and/or illustrations
- A list of books or journals in chronological order of publication
- A database used to document the date of receipt of items within a library
- A database listing and describing the books and other materials held by a library**
- Unsure

7. Citation

- A printer's or publisher's name, address, and other details in a book or other printed item
- A notice of overdue library materials
- A reference to a book, magazine or journal article containing the information necessary to identify and locate that work**
- A word that describes the subject of an article or book; used in many computer databases
- Unsure

8. Database

- The central location or headquarters for mass information storage
- A type of computer software that allows manipulation of numerical data
- An electronic collection of information organized for searching and retrieval**
- An information language based on numeric code
- Unsure

9. Full Text

- The complete text of a document is available for online viewing, printing, or downloading**
- The main body of a book or other piece of writing, as distinct from other material such as notes, appendices, and illustrations
- A search engine examines all of the words in every stored document as it tries to match search criteria
- An article with text containing all search words used in a specific database query
- Unsure

10. Journal

- A detailed description or replication of the methodology and results of a study
- A periodical devoted to disseminating original research or commentary in a specific discipline**
- A daily account of events; a log
- A daily or weekly newspaper of large circulation
- Unsure

11. Keyword

- The clue word that breaks a cipher or code
- A word or phrase used as a search term to retrieve all the information resources that contain it**
- The word used most often in the text of a book or article
- A word used to identify a specific command function in a database
- Unsure

12. Open Access

- Book shelving or storage reachable tall, including the disabled
- Literature that is freely available on the public internet to any readers or users**
- Library resources and materials that circulate without the requirement of an ID card
- To retrieve scholarly information from a physical or online collection
- Unsure

13. Peer Review

- A system of grading in which students grade the work of other students
- The process by which editors have experts in a field review books or articles submitted for publication**
- The process by which search terms are determined for articles indexed within databases
- The process of fact checking for print/online newspapers and magazines
- Unsure

14. Scholarly

- Written by an author with one or more advanced degrees
- Written for the purposes of completing the requirements of a degree
- Containing a lexile level of 1000 or above
- Concerned with formal study or research**
- Unsure

15. Source

- The donor or provider of a book, periodical, or other information to a library
- Any document that provides information sought by a writer, researcher, or library user**
- Copyrighted information used in research
- Information used in research for which the author can be identified
- Unsure

16. Stacks

- Computer memory that cannot be accessed randomly
- Lists of subject terms following the text of an online article
- A structure of bookshelves**
- Large quantities of vertical text, as in print articles
- Unsure

17. Subject Heading

- The description of an information source's content assigned to make finding information easier**
- The first word in a subject search
- The word used most often in the text of a book or article
- A summary or brief description of the content of another longer work
- Unsure

Notes

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4. Bonnie Imler and Michelle Eichelberger, "Commercial Database Design vs. Library Terminology Comprehension: Why Do Students Print Abstracts Instead of Full-Text Articles?" *College and Research Libraries* 75, no. 6 (2014): 286.
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11. Norman B. Hutcherson, "Library Jargon: Student Recognition of Terms and Concepts Commonly Used by Librarians in the Classroom," *College & Research Libraries* 65, no. 4 (2004): 353.
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14. The authors reviewed syllabi from a variety of GVSU discipline areas that described a research component or paper, including psychology, sociology, criminal justice, legal studies, business, management, marketing, health administration, and first-year writing.
15. Hutcherson, "Library Jargon," 353.
16. Daniel Coffee and Karen Lawson, "Managing Meaning: Language and Technology in Academic Libraries," *College and Research Libraries* 63, no. 2 (2002): 153.