

Assigning Subject Headings

Subject headings provide two services to your patrons:

1. The ability to search the OPAC for materials on specific topics.
2. The ability to find additional materials by using the hyperlink in the subject field.

Assigning subject headings may be necessary when evaluating and editing existing records in your collection; when evaluating and editing records imported from SmartPort or received from vendors; and when cataloging with INFOhio templates.

Two key guidelines:

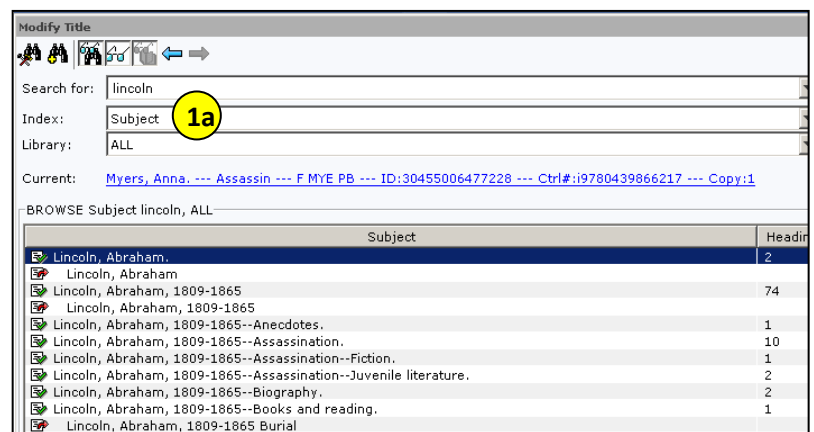
1. Be consistent.
 - **Subject heading hyperlinks work only if the subjects are in the exact same format.** If you use “Baseball – Biography” for some titles and “Baseball players – Biography” for others, the OPAC hyperlink will not take the patron to all library materials dealing with the biographies of baseball players.
 - Make building or district decisions regarding cataloging practices and follow those guidelines when assigning subject headings.
 - **Specifications sent to vendors for your library need to request Library of Congress Subject headings.**
 - When receiving new materials, check subject headings assigned to items in your vendor records to be certain they are consistent with your guidelines.
2. Keep your patron in mind.
 - Choose subject headings that are most appropriate to the school curriculum and the needs and interests of your students.
 - If students are looking for sports biographies, are your subjects going to be “Athletes”, “Sports -- Biography”, or “Baseball -- Biography” or all three? Train students accordingly.
 - If a student locates a biography of a baseball player in the OPAC, a subject hyperlink should lead to additional materials on that subject no matter what call number has been assigned or where they are shelved in your library, i.e. 796.357, 920, B, REF, DVD, etc.

Selecting subject headings:

1. **Search your library database** for the subject you need. Note the subject headings used on similar items. Add the same subjects to your record so they will hyperlink.

- a. **Search** using the Modify Title wizard.

A Subject Browse for a broad topic will show you all the related headings currently in your database and the number of records that include them.



b. When you locate the desired subject heading, highlight the title at the bottom of the screen and **click** Modify.

c. Locate the desired subject heading in the record. **Note** the tag number and indicators.

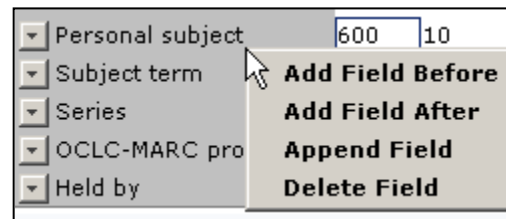
Label	Tag	Ind.	Contents
Summary	520		Describes the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and Booth in graphic novel format.
Interest grade level	521	2	3-9.
Reading grade level	521	0	4.
Reading program	521	0	Accelerate 1d der AR bMG c3.7 d0.5 z85022
Personal subject	600	11	Lincoln, Abraham, d1809-1865 xAssassination.
Personal subject	600	11	Booth, John Wilkes, d1838-1865.
Subject term	650	0	Political crimes and offenses.

d. **Copy** (Ctrl + c) all the information in the Contents field.
NOTE: In Sirsi |a is assumed and does not display.

e. **Open** the record you are modifying in the Modify Title wizard.

f. **Add** a tag with same number and Indicator.
Be careful to use:

- 600 = Personal subject
- 650 = General subject
- 651 = Geographic subject



Right click where the 6XX tag would go. **Select** Add Field After.

Enter the same tag number and indicators.

g. **Paste** (Ctrl + v) the subject heading into the contents field. **Note:** Subject headings end in a period.

600: 11 : Lincoln, Abraham,|d1809-1865|xAssassination.

NOTE: OPAC format – (what your patrons see):

Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865 - - Assassination.

h. **Update or add** an 040 tag.

- Add subfield d (|d) with your LC/NUC code to the 040 tag. There can be more than one |d.
- If you do not know your code, locate it at: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/marc/organizations/>
- If there is no 040 tag, create one and enter your code in subfield a of the 040.

Data source	003		IJPBB
Date/time stamp	005		20061012163458.0
LCCN	010		97029718
ISBN	020		0689832133 : c\$17.07
Local system #	035		(Sirsi) i9780689832130
Local system #	035	1h	pbb00000055796
Cataloging source	040		DLC cDLC dDLC dIJPBB
LC Call Number	050	00	PZ7.C88135 bCl 2000

2. Check the OPACs of other schools. If you can't find appropriate subject headings in your own database, use the online catalog to search other schools.

- a. **Locate** an item in the OPAC that has the subject heading you need.
- b. **Select** the Full Description tab.
- c. **Select** Change Display.
- d. Under Change Catalog Display **change** unformatted display to "yes". Full Description will now display MARC format.
- e. **Highlight and copy** the subject heading with all delimiters and punctuation. Remember, in Sirsi **la** is assumed and does not display.
- f. Open the record you're modifying in Modify Title.
- g. **Paste** (Ctrl = v) subject heading into record.
Be careful to use the same tag number and indicator values. Subject headings should end in a period.
 - 600 = Personal subject
 - 650 = General subject
 - 651 = Geographic subject
- h. **Add or update** the 040 (Step 1-h above)

3. Check public libraries.

- a. Use the online catalog to subject headings that public libraries have added to their records for your title.
- b. Display the record in MARC format and proceed as you would if copying from a school library OPAC.

Editing subject headings:

- Check your new and existing records for any unnecessary or unwanted subject headings and delete those that are not appropriate. Start with the most popular subjects.
- Don't add multiple headings for subjects with only a few titles unless they are really needed.
- When editing subject headings, choices should be consistent and reflect the library collection on this topic.

For example, too many headings for a subject like *Vampires/vFiction*, will limit search results rather than help.

Current subjects in a record	Less can be best!
Vampires--Comic books, strips, etc.	Vampires--Comic books, strips, etc
Vampires--Comic books, strips, etc.--Fiction	Vampires--Fiction.
Vampires--Comic books, strips, etc.--Juvenile fiction	
Vampires--Encyclopedias.	
Vampires--Fiction	
Vampires--Japan--Comic books, strips, etc	
Vampires--Juvenile fiction.	
Vampires--Juvenile literature.	
Vampires--Russia--Moscow--Fiction.	

4. For further assistance please contact your INFOhio Provider.

Use any of the following online sites for subject heading suggestions:

- WorldCat access to **1.5 billion items** from more than 10,000 libraries worldwide
<http://www.worldcat.org/>
- Library of Congress Online Cat
<http://catalog.loc.gov/>
- Library of Congress Authorities and Vocabularies search
<https://id.loc.gov/>
- Basic library knowledge / skills for staff members who have no formal education in library science
<http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/alternative-basic-library-education-able>