

# **Library Terms Glossary**

## **Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives**

The profession of librarianship has a language all its own. Below is a list of selected library terms and acronyms used by Kentucky public libraries. This glossary's intent is not to collect all specialized language of libraries, but to focus on a manageable number of terms that a library staffer, trustee or patron could easily peruse. This glossary is a great beginner guide to the language of libraries and could be used as a primer for staff and trustees new to the library world, or as a refresher.

This glossary was compiled by Library Development Branch staff at the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives. The staff would like to thank the American Library Association as well as the state libraries of Utah, Rhode Island, Georgia, and Montana with their assistance in this glossary's creation.

### **THIS GLOSSARY FOR INFORMATIONAL USE ONLY**

#### **Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACRII)**

Second edition of AACR was published in 1998. It establishes the standard set of rules for cataloging procedures and decisions used by most libraries in English speaking countries.

#### **abstract**

Brief description of a document, prepared by an author or professional abstracter, which identifies its major points.

#### **access**

Availability of a library and its services to the population it is intended to serve. In a larger sense, access is the ability to obtain information through a library and its cooperative links to additional resources.

#### **acquisitions**

Process of acquiring the library materials which comprise the library's collection.

#### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Federal legislation giving civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities; it impacts libraries as service providers and as employers. Libraries should think about the provisions of the ADA when designing or reworking spaces and events.

#### **American Library Association (ALA)**

Founded in 1876, [ALA](#) is the national association serving the interests of libraries.

## **automation**

All aspects involved in using a computer system for such tasks as circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, interlibrary loans, etc.

## **bibliographic database**

Computerized listing of books, periodicals or other library materials from which information can be extracted by a number of identifiers related to the bibliographic description of the item.

## **bibliographic records**

Catalog information used to describe and access an item such as a book, magazine, video or sound recording, map, etc.

## **board of trustees**

Legally designated governing body of a library or library system. Board formation, terms, and requirements are laid out by that library's establishing statute. The board has regularly scheduled monthly meetings, where they set policies, approve and pay library bills, and conduct other necessary library business.

## **branch library**

Auxiliary unit of a public library which has separate quarters, a permanent collection, permanent staff, and scheduled public hours. Branches are administered by a central unit.

## **call numbers**

Classification number on an item of library material used to mark the item, shelve it properly, list it in the card catalog or computer, and find it for a user. Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress are two classification systems used for call number development.

## **catalog**

File of bibliographic records created according to specific uniform principles of construction, which describes the materials in a collection, a library or a group of libraries. It may be in the form of a card catalog, a book catalog or an online catalog.

## **cataloging**

The act of creating a record which provides a standardized bibliographic description of a book or other item in a library's collection, including assigning subject headings and a call number, so that the items can be located in the catalog or on the shelf.

## **continuing education (CE)**

Ongoing professional training to help library employees develop and maintain their skill set. KDLA offers a variety of [training opportunities](#) for librarians, library staff, and trustees.

## **challenge**

An attempt to remove or restrict materials, based upon the objections of a person or group. Every library should have a process in their collection development policy for managing challenges as well as a standardized form that lists the steps in the library's response to a challenge.

## **Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)**

[The Children's Internet Protection Act \(CIPA\)](#) and the [Neighborhood Internet Protection Act \(NCIPA\)](#) went into effect on April 20, 2001. These laws place restrictions on the use of funding that is available through the Library Services and Technology Act, Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and on the Universal Service discount program known as the E-rate (Public Law 106-554). These restrictions take the form of requirements for Internet safety policies and technology which blocks or filters certain material from being accessed through the Internet.

## **circulation**

Activity of a library in lending materials to borrowers and the recording of these transactions.

## **classification system**

System for arranging books and other materials according to subject or form. The two most common systems in use are Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress classification systems.

## **Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP)**

a consortium of states working together to provide a unified theme along with professional art and materials so that member libraries can provide high-quality summer reading programs at the lowest possible cost.

## **collection**

Total accumulation of all library materials provided by a library for its patrons, also referred to as the library's holdings. Collection is also used to describe a group of library materials having a common characteristic (e.g., Children's Collection, Reference Collection, Local History Collection, etc.)

## **collection development and management**

Planned process of selecting and acquiring library materials to meet the needs of the library's community. It includes assessing user needs, adopting a collection development policy, studying collection use, selecting materials, maintaining the collection, and weeding.

## **copyright**

Exclusive privileges of publishing and selling a work granted by a government to the creator of that work. Copyright is a right of intellectual property whereby authors obtain, for a limited time, certain exclusive rights to their works and is managed by the [U.S. Copyright Office](#). Libraries have a special interest in fair use of copyrighted material.

## **CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation & Weeding)**

A common practice for evaluating a library collection. CREW is a streamlined and ongoing routine that makes collection management a consistent process, not just in the cases of space management or particular need. This method makes it easier to routinely remove outdated and unused materials from the collection while also learning where the collection has gaps or needs new items.

## **database**

Systematic organization of information stored in a computer file for ease of searching, update and retrieval. Databases commonly found in libraries are the library's catalog and aggregators of full-text journals such as EBSCO.

## **Dewey Decimal Classification**

Subject classification system for books developed by Melvil Dewey (1851-1931) that divides all knowledge into ten classes arranged in numeric sequence and further divided by a decimal system. Most public libraries organize their non-fiction collection by this system.

## **digital equity/digital divide**

Digital equity occurs when everyone, regardless of their background or community, has access to the necessary technological resources to fully engage in our society, democracy, and economy. Currently there is a divide where there are differences in peoples' ability and knowledge to access and effectively use online services. Libraries bridge this divide by offering free access to the internet and knowledgeable staff to offer assistance and programming to improve skills.

## **digital rights management (DRM)**

Any system used by creators, publishers, and distributors to put restrictions on how intellectual property is digitally accessed and intended to protect their copyright. These systems can be simple to complex and effect users' ability to access digital products.

## **E-Rate (Education Rate)**

Federal program providing discounts to eligible schools and libraries for internet access services and acquisition and installation of network equipment. The Universal Service Administrative Company's Schools and Libraries Division administers the E-rate program for libraries.

## **fair use**

Special conditions (such as criticism, news, teaching, or research) under which all or portions of copyrighted work may be reproduced without infringing upon the copyright laws.

## **foundation**

Library foundations are separate, nonprofit groups that operate independently from the library to help with fundraising for the benefit and improvement of the library. Most commonly, foundations are in larger library systems to assist in capital development.

## **Friends of the Library**

Group of volunteers organized to support a particular library through lobbying, public relations, fundraising and program assistance. [The Friends of Kentucky Libraries](#) is a non-profit group that provides support to local Friends chapters.

## **Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)**

Independent federal agency that provides programs of support for both libraries and museums and encourages library museum partnerships. It provides funds to libraries by direct grant opportunities on its [website](#) as well as the LSTA grants managed by KDLA.

## **Integrated library system (ILS)**

Software that allows the library to manage its entire collection in one system. These systems have separate modules for cataloging, circulation and more.

## **intellectual freedom**

Right of individuals to the free and open exchange of information and ideas. This right is supported by the American Library Association, the [Kentucky Public Library Association](#) and individual libraries through commitment to the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read Statement](#). Public libraries safeguard intellectual freedom by providing a collection representing all viewpoints and equal service to all members of the community.

## **Interlibrary Loan (ILL)**

System of interlibrary cooperation, which allows libraries to obtain information and materials for their users from other cooperating libraries.

## **International Standard Book Number (ISBN)**

Unique identification number printed in books by international agreement.

## **International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)**

Unique identification number for each serial publication.

## **Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA)**

Part of the Education & Labor Cabinet, [KDLA](#) consists of two divisions, the Library Services Division and the Archives and Records Management Division. The Library Development Branch within the Library Services Division work directly with KY public libraries. The branch consists of four Regional Consultants providing general consultation, four statewide consultants providing subject specific consultation and a Continuing Education Section providing assistance with certification, continuing education and our Online Learning Portal.

## **Kentucky Public Library Association (KPLA)**

[Kentucky Public Library Association \(KPLA\)](#) is a subsection of the Kentucky Library Association (KLA) dealing specifically with the public libraries in the state. KPLA has three objectives:

1. To encourage professional growth among its members by offering opportunities for study and for participation in professional activities.
2. To promote the improvement of public library service in Kentucky and the nation.
3. To cooperate with other library agencies in improving all types of library service in Kentucky and the nation.

## **Kentucky Library Certification Program**

The Kentucky State Board for the Certification of Librarians, created by the Kentucky General Assembly in 1938, is required by KRS 171.250 to issue certificates to qualified library staff. Under the terms of KRS 171.260, public libraries in Kentucky are required to be administered and staffed by appropriately certified personnel.

## **Kentucky Public Library Standards**

The [Kentucky Public Library Standards](#) is a self-assessment tool developed by the Kentucky Public Library Association in cooperation with library directors and KDLA for public libraries. Libraries use the Standards as a benchmark for improving their local library service.

The Standards cover seven key areas: governance and administration, human resources, collections, services, facilities, technology, and marketing/public relations.

## **Kentucky Talking Book Library (KTBL)**

The Kentucky Talking Book Library (KTBL) provides free library service to people who cannot read traditional print because they have a visual, physical, or reading disability. Audio and Braille materials are sent to and from users by postage-free mail, or can be downloaded from the internet. A special Talking Book player is provided on loan. KTBL has been in operation since 1969 and is part of a national network of libraries administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, a branch of the Library of Congress

## **Kentucky Libraries Unbound (KLU)**

[Kentucky Libraries Unbound \(KLU\)](#) is a consortium of Kentucky public libraries that share electronic resources. KLU offers downloadable material through a company called Overdrive. Collections include eBooks, audiobooks and magazines for all age groups.

## **KYVL (Kentucky Virtual Library)**

[KYVL](#) is a consortium of nearly 300 Kentucky libraries and institutions, including colleges and universities, public libraries, K12 schools, hospitals, Department of Defense libraries, KDLA, and more. It provides access to a number of specialty databases that cross disciplinary lines, user interests, and research needs. It also supports Inter-Library Loan services by providing courier service to participating libraries.

## **KACo (Kentucky Association of Counties)**

The [Kentucky Association of Counties \(KACo\)](#) is an association that offers a variety of services to county government and represents the needs of county government in legislative matters. Although the majority of Kentucky's public libraries are not part of county government, they are often eligible for KACo services as a [public agency member](#).

The KACo programs most often used by libraries are financing services and insurance. Their finance program offers short-term and long-term financing. KACo also offers a number of programs related to insurance: bonds, claims services, health insurance, property and casualty insurance and workers compensation.

## **keyword**

Word used in an information retrieval search to find a particular word in an author, title, abstract or subject field. This is especially useful when the word is not used as a recognized subject term within the index being searched. Most basic searches on catalogs or search engines are keyword searches.

## **local area network (LAN)**

Network that connects nearby computers, usually in the same building, using cables or wireless technology.

## **Library of Congress (LoC)**

National library of the United States that serves the U.S. Congress and provides services to all types of libraries. Their [website](#) has extensive digital collections as well a number of services and programs that may be of interest to library staff and patrons.

## **Library Bill of Rights**

[Policy statement](#) adopted in 1948 (and reaffirmed in 1961, 1980 and 1996) by the American Library Association concerning service to all people, free expression of ideas and censorship. Many Kentucky libraries have also adopted this policy statement.

## **Library of Congress Classification**

Subject classification system for books devised by the Library of Congress that divides knowledge into 21 subject areas and has a notation of letters and figures that allows for expansion. It is used mostly in academic and special libraries.

## **Long-range plan**

See [strategic plan](#)

## **MARC (machine readable cataloging)**

A nationally standardized method of describing library materials in a format that can be read by computerized database programs, thereby creating useable database records.

## **MLS/MLIS (Masters in Library Science/Library and Information Science)**

A graduate degree focusing on library service, traditions, theories and the study of information. Many librarian positions in KY require this degree. The degree is a requirement to be certified as a Professional I.

## **OCLC (Online Computer Library Center)**

Nonprofit library service and research organization located in Dublin, Ohio, used by libraries to catalog library materials, arrange interlibrary loans and maintain location information on library materials. In Kentucky, many libraries of all types use the OCLC bibliographic database for cataloging, interlibrary loan and reference. See also WorldCat.

## **Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)**

Automated catalog providing patron access through computers. In the last thirty years, OPACs have replaced the traditional paper card catalogs.

## **outreach programs**

Any program that occurs outside of a library and is intended to reach underserved populations. These may include service to nursing homes and institutions, bookmobile services, books by mail to the geographically remote and service to the homebound.

## **PLA (Public Library Association)**

[The Public Library Association](#) enhances the development and effectiveness of public library staff and public library services. The goal of the organization is to strengthen public libraries and their contribution to the communities they serve.

## **periodical**

Type of serial publication that is issued regularly, each issue of which is numbered and dated consecutively and contains separate stories, articles and other writings. The most common type in libraries are magazines.

## **policy**

Written statement passed by formal motion of the board of trustees which gives general guidelines for making decisions in the administration of the library. KDLA provides a number of [sample policies](#) in the areas of Personnel, Operations & Board policies.

## **processing**

Process for preparing books and other materials for use by the public; may include cataloging, preparation of barcodes and labels, and protective covers, etc.



## **request for proposal (RFP)**

Document issued to advertise for vendor proposals, equipment and software. Usually the RFP contains detailed specifications of the goods or services wanted.

## **serial**

See [periodical](#).

## **shelf reading**

a process at regular intervals where library staff “read” a shelf or a range of shelves to make sure materials are in proper order and shelves are attractive to library patrons (neat, not overstuffed.)

## **Special Purpose Governmental Entity (SPGE)**

Defined under [KRS 65A.010](#), SPGEs are statutorily created or authorized entities who have a limited region of jurisdiction and have independent authority to generate public funds. Currently, all KY libraries are SPGEs except for Jefferson, Knott, & Livingston counties. SPGEs are statutorily required to file a number of documents with the Department of Local Government including budgets & audits/attestations.

## **strategic plan**

Also called a long-range plan, a document adopted by a library’s governing Board outlining the mission, goals, objectives and action plans for the library’s operation and development over a designated time period, usually three to five years. This process consists of collection of qualitative and quantitative data in the forms of community meetings, surveys and more.

## **technical services**

All activities related to obtaining, organizing, and processing library items, and maintaining them with repairs and renovation. This work is generally done in a staff-only area away from the public.

## **weeding**

Part of collection management that selects library materials to be discarded or transferred to storage, based on standards of use, currency, condition and community needs.