

Language of the Library

The campaign “[Learn the Terms](#)” is a visual glossary of frequently used library terms that are often misunderstood by students. This ongoing collaboration between Liaison Librarian Gayle Schaub and Assistant Professor of Graphic Design Vinicius Lima, produces bold, creative designs that work to clarify library terms while also providing high-impact learning experiences for classes of art students. This year, the campaign even included an online “What Library Term Are You?” quiz. The project began as a response to Schaub’s research with fellow librarians Cara Cadena and Pat Bravender on students’ lack of understanding of commonly used terms in libraries.

Schaub stated,

“This is a win-win project. It helps students at Grand Valley, and has received incredible responses from librarians all over at conferences.”

Schaub and colleagues explained in their 2017 paper, “[The Language of Information Literacy: Do Students Understand?](#)” that information literacy instruction uses a language that is more than mere jargon. The vocabulary is integral to understanding how we locate, access, and create information, and students need to understand it to be successful researchers and scholars. Students unfamiliar with the terms used

in information literacy instruction or, more broadly, higher education, are less equipped to participate in academic life.

The visual glossary, created over several semesters, comprises two sets of terms and illustrations. Librarians often define terms when working with students, but it isn’t reasonable or practical to expect that they can do so during each interaction. Images on cards, bookmarks, and table decals provide a permanent record of the information, offering reinforcement of the terms in a manageable and easily accessible format. Simply relying on a singular conversation to relay new or unfamiliar content to students may be insufficient, or result in a kind of cognitive overload for the students trying to absorb new information. The “Learn the Terms” campaign is just one way the Grand Valley State University Libraries is breaking down barriers to understand issues facing new college students and help all learners succeed.

Schaub and Lima presented on their collaboration at the 2017 Association of College & Research Libraries Conference for which Schaub was awarded an ACRL early-librarianship scholarship. The two also presented on their work as part of a panel with colleagues at the 2018 American Library Association Conference. The collaboration continues with ART 410 students creating infographics to illustrate the conversational nature of scholarship.



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Learn the Terms Quiz
<https://www.gvsu.edu/library/learn-the-terms-46.htm>

The Language of Information Literacy:
Do the Students Understand?
<https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/16588/0>

2018 campaign can be viewed in the center graphic.

Learn the Terms

arch|ives

1. A space which houses historical or public records. 2. The historical or public records themselves, which are generally non-circulating materials such as collections of personal papers, rare books, etc.

ASRS|

The space-saving Automated Storage Retrieval System stores books in metal bins, retrievable by a robotic system operated via computer. ASRS is a common location code in the Libraries' Books and Media.

call| number

A group of letters and/or numbers that identifies a specific item in a library and provides a way for organizing library holdings. GVSU uses Library of Congress call numbers. Many public libraries use Dewey Decimal numbers.

document| delivery

A service that retrieves full-text or photocopies of information sources for library users.

limit|er

Also known as a filter, limiters restrict your search results to only information resources meeting certain criteria beyond subject. Common options for limiting your search can include: time period, language, geography, or scholarly/peer-reviewed articles.

primary| source

An original document or record of an event, such as a diary, a newspaper article, a public record, or scientific documentation. This term is conditional, or context specific.

periodic|al

An information source published in multiple parts at regular intervals (daily, weekly, monthly, biannually). Journals, magazines, and newspapers are all periodicals. Also referred to as a serial.

stac|ks

Shelves in the library where materials—typically books—are stored. Books in the stacks are normally arranged by call number. May be referred to as “book stacks.”