Glossary of Library Terms

AALT	Alberta Association of Library Technicians
Abridged edition	A shortened version of the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system that is a logical truncation of the notational and structural hierarchy of the corresponding full edition on which it is based. The abridged edition is intended for general collections of 20,000 titles or less.
Academic library	A library that is an integral part of a college, university, or other institution of postsecondary education, administered to meet the information and research needs of its students, faculty, and staff.
Acquisitions	The department of the Library where book and journal orders are processed and new materials are received.
ALA	American Library Association
Allotment	Funds received by PLS from a public library's board or a school library's school division twice annually (in January and July) and used to purchase materials for the library's collection and supplies to get them shelf-ready.
ALTA	Alberta Library Trustees Association. Represents the library boards and trustees that govern public libraries in Alberta and serves over 2400 volunteer library trustees across Alberta who provide governance to over 165 library boards across the province. ALTA is the collective voice for library trustees across Alberta and promotes effective library service and leadership through training, resources, communication and advocacy.
Alberta Supernet	A broadband network comprised of fibre-optic cables and towers built to connect public institutions including schools and libraries across the province and enables high-speed internet access, video conference and other services.
APLAC	Alberta Public Library Administrators' Council. An incorporated not-for-profit body that connects the people who manage Alberta's public libraries. APLAC's objectives are to address practical issues affecting the management and provision of public library services in Alberta, and to serve as a forum for the discussion and exchange of information on current public library developments, emerging issues, and projects of relevance to Alberta public libraries.
Archives	The noncurrent records of an organization, regardless of format, which are maintained and preserved because of their permanent legal, fiscal, regulatory, evidential, informational, or historical value to the institution. Materials that are archived are permanently retained.

Glossary of Library Terms

Authentication	A security process that typically employs usernames and passwords to validate the identity of users before allowing them access to certain information.
BAC-LAC	Bibliothèque et Archives Canada/Library and Archives Canada
Barcode	A barcode is made up of a series of lines and a string of numbers and is found on library items and library patron cards. The barcode is specific to the item or patron and can be read by an optical scanner to connect to information in a computer record about the item or patron. Barcodes are used in libraries to identify and circulate library items to library patrons.
Bibliographic Record	Contains the cataloguing information that describes the physical format and intellectual content of a single entity (a book, video, computer file, CD, etc.). Cataloguers create records by encoding this information using tags, indicators, and subfield codes in a standard format called MARC 21 (Machine-Readable Cataloguing). Each record is divided into fields (author, title, subjects, etc.). Fields are subdivided into subfields (place of publication, publisher, etc.).
Bibliography	A list of citations to works used by an author to write a paper, article, or book.
Call Number	An identification code assigned to a library collection item (book, video or audio recording, manuscript, periodical, musical score, etc.) that distinguishes one item from another and indicates its location in the library.
Catalogue	Online database with detailed descriptions and location information for materials in a library collection.
Cataloguing	The process of creating entries for a catalogue. In libraries, this usually includes bibliographic description, subject analysis, assignment of classification notation, and all the activities involved in physically preparing the item for the shelf, tasks usually performed under the supervision of a librarian trained as a cataloguer. (Reitz, 2004, p. 122)
CD	An abbreviation for compact disc; it is used for storing digital information.
CELA	Centre for Equitable Library Access. The Centre for Equitable Library Access. Canada's comprehensive accessible reading service, providing books and other materials to Canadians with print disabilities in the formats of their choice. A national not-for-profit organization, CELA is fully funded to serve 97% of the estimated 3 million Canadians with print disabilities in partnership with member public libraries and offers a digital-only service to those in non-funded areas. CELA provides access to 800,000 professionally produced titles to provide people with print disabilities with a quality library experience.

Glossary of Library Terms

Term	Definition
CFLA	Canadian Federation of Library Associations. The national voice of Canada's library associations to advance library excellence in Canada, champion library values and the value of libraries, and influence national and international public policy impacting libraries and their communities.
Check Out	To borrow materials from a library for a fixed period of time.
CIP	Cataloguing-In-Publication was pioneered in the U.S. Library of Congress in 1971. The British programme, which closely resembles the US system, became fully operational in 1977. The aim of the programme is to provide bibliographic data for new books in advance of publication, and it depends heavily on the voluntary co-operation of publishers. Records are compiled from information supplied by publishers on a standard data sheet. The record also appears in the book itself, usually on the verso of the title-page. (Prytherch, 2005, p. 115)
Circulate	To loan library materials to users.
Citation	A reference to a book, magazine or journal article, or other work containing all the information necessary to identify and locate that work. A citation to a book thus includes its author's name, title, publisher and place of publication, and date of publication.
Classification	A system for arranging library materials in a logical order according to subject or form.
CNIB	Canadian National Institute for the Blind
Coding	The set of step-by-step instructions, a computer or software or an app needs to perform a function, such as making a robot move. Coding is being increasingly incorporated into school curricula and library programming to help kids learn problem-solving and collaboration skills.
Collection	A group of library or archival materials, sometimes on a single subject or related subjects. Multiple independent works by a single author or multiple authors that are published together.
Collection Development	A term which covers the activities related to managing the library collection: setting selection policy, assessing user needs, studying collection use, selecting materials, maintaining the collection, weeding, etc.
Controlled Vocabulary	Set of established terms used in indexes, catalogues, and databases used to provide access to records. Library of Congress subject headings are one example of a controlled vocabulary.

Glossary of Library Terms

Copyright	Copyright is a set of rights that protects the works of authors, artists, composers, and others from being used by other people without permission.
Critical Functions	TRAC-defined essential Polaris functions that library staff and/or patrons must be able to perform, and technical interruptions of which should be remedied promptly - Login, Check in/out, TRACpac searching, Patron registration.
CULC	Canadian Urban Libraries Council
DAISY	Digital Audio Information System. The technical standard for digital talking books for print-disabled patrons.
Database	An organized collection of information. Commonly, the term "databases" refers to electronic or computer databases.
Date of Publication	A date of publication is a date associated with the publication, release, or issuing of a document. The date of publication is the year in which the edition, revision, etc., described in the edition area was published.
DC	Dublin Core. An initiative to create a digital "library card catalogue" for the Web.
DDC	Dewey Decimal Classification. The world's most widely used way to organize library collections.
Domain	All or part of an Internet name, address or element that identifies a computer and the organization that transmits or receives electronic data.
DRM	Digital Rights Management. DRM technology is used by hardware and software manufacturers, publishers and copyright holders with the intent to control the use of digital content and devices.
eBook	Also known as an electronic book, it is a book publication made available in digital form, consisting of text, images, or both, readable on the flat-panel display of computers or other electronic devices. Available through the library catalogue and through subscription services made available by the library.
FOIP	Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy. A piece of legislation from the Alberta government which regulates how public bodies manage personal information.
Government Courier	Through an agreement with Service Alberta, the PLSB facilitates delivery of library materials to all library systems and to several municipalities.
Help Desk	PLS's online portal where member libraries can request support for technical issues, ranging from computer training to issues with Polaris.

Glossary of Library Terms

Hold	To place a hold on an item means to reserve it. An item that is checked out may have a hold placed on it by another patron who wishes to use it. When the item is returned, the library will contact the patron who is waiting so they may check that item out.
Holdings	The materials owned by a library.
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language. The computer language used to create documents on the World Wide Web so that they are readable by Web browsers.
IUG	Innovative Users Group. IUG is an international organization of member libraries who use the Innovative Interfaces, Inc. integrated library software.
ILL	Interlibrary Loan. The cooperative arrangement among libraries that allows books and other materials from one library to be loaned out to a patron from another library. PLS patrons may request interlibrary loans via TRACpac for books held by TRAC libraries. If their request is unavailable within the TRAC consortium, they may request ILLs via Relais, which enables Alberta-wide borrowing.
ILS	Integrated Library System. Polaris is an ILS that allows our libraries and PLS staff to catalogue and circulate materials and track patrons.
Information Literacy	The competencies and skills needed to locate, retrieve, evaluate, analyze, and use information. These competencies are developed over time and are essential for lifelong learning.
In Process	The status of purchased or gift material that has been received by the Acquisitions Department and is awaiting cataloguing
Innovative Interfaces, Inc.	Commonly referred to as "Innovative". A software company specializing in integrated systems for library management. Their key products include Sierra, Polaris, Millennium, and Virtua.
ISBN	International Standard Book Number. An ISBN is essentially a product identifier used by publishers, booksellers, libraries, internet retailers and other supply chain participants for ordering and cataloguing purposes. ISBNs were 10 digits in length up to the end of December 2006, but since 1 January 2007 they now always consist of 13 digits.
ISSN	International Standard Serial Number, a unique, eight-digit number assigned to each magazine, journal, newspaper, and serial publication.
LAA	Library Association of Alberta: A non-profit, independent, voluntary association of over 800 members including librarians, library personnel, library trustees, institutions, and other interested individuals and companies. The association's

Glossary of Library Terms

	activities focus on library advocacy, the Alberta Library Conference, and continuing education and job placement through the Partnership, Canada's national network of provincial and territorial library associations.
LC	Library of Congress. The national library of the United States.
LCC	Library of Congress Classification. Classification system used by the Library of Congress to arrange materials by subject using a combination of letters and numbers (call number).
Leap	Leap is a web-based circulation tool for Polaris that will allow circulation staff to perform basic library services outside of the library. Although Leap has been designed to work best on a laptop, it will work on tablets as well. Circulation staff can use Leap away from their circulation computer to register new patrons, renew existing patrons, check out materials, check in materials, place holds, and run the picklist (the Leap equivalent to the Polaris Request Manager).
Librarian	Librarians are specialists in the field of information organization and retrieval. Librarians have a Masters degree in library science, and may have other graduate degrees as well.
Library Clerk	Library support staff who may be responsible for the shelving, receiving, processing and circulation (checking in and checking out) of library materials. Library clerks report to a Librarian.
Library Technician	Library technicians are paraprofessional library staff who hold a Library Technician diploma. They are responsible for the cataloguing of library materials, assisting in the organization of library materials, and recommending material for the library's collection.
LibraryAware	Marketing software that helps libraries to design promotional materials in order to connect with readers and keep them engaged. It provides templates and tools to create newsletters, bookmarks, shelf talkers, flyers, and more for promoting books and resources throughout the library and beyond.
LISTSERV	An e-mail discussion forum which allows participants to subscribe and automatically receive messages posted to the list by other subscribers. Participants may also post their own messages and replies which are automatically disseminated to the other subscribers to the list. "LISTSERV" is actually a brand of software that runs e-mail discussion groups.
LIT	Library and Information Technician

Glossary of Library Terms

Little Free Libraries	Free neighbourhood book exchanges placed in an accessible outside location where children and adults may take a book or leave a book to promote the love of reading in locations where access to books is scarce or at a distance.
Loan Period	Amount of time library materials may be borrowed (checked out); varies depending on type of material borrowed and the borrower's status.
MARC	Machine Readable Cataloguing
ME Libraries	A free Alberta Public Library Network service that facilitates Alberta-wide borrowing. Patrons sign up at www.MELibraries.ca with their home library card online and can then visit 300 Alberta-based libraries in-person and borrow over 14 million physical items. Borrowing through ME Libraries is limited to physical collections due to licensing restrictions on eResources.
Media	Non-print materials such as films, filmstrips, video discs, audio compact discs, and vinyl LPs.
MLIS	Master of Library and Information Science
Monograph	A non-serial publication that is complete in one volume (book) or a finite number of volumes. Books or reports are usually monographs, periodicals are not.
Monthly Statement	A monthly record of all the library materials paid out of your allotment. Includes opening balance, all purchases (including vouchers, supplies and credits), items on order, and free balance at month end.
NCIP	NISO Circulation Interchange Protocol. This protocol is limited to the exchange of messages between and among computer-based applications enabling them to: perform functions necessary to lend and borrow items, provide controlled access to electronic resources, and facilitate co-operative management of these functions.
Net Neutrality	The principle that internet service providers must treat all data on the internet the same, and not discriminate or charge differently by user, content, platform, website, application, type of attached equipment or method of communication.
NNELS	National Network for Equitable Library Service. The National Network for Equitable Library Service. A repository of content owned and sustained by Canadian public libraries. NNELS works with international partners, libraries, readers, and publishers (particularly Canadian ones) to make copies of books in accessible formats available to readers in Canada who have print disabilities. NNELS is fully funded and supported by the provincial governments of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon.

Glossary of Library Terms

Non-Circulating Materials	Non-circulating materials are for use in the library only. Included in this category are: reference books, periodicals, special collections, microfilm, microfiche, and some government documents. Some materials in the library reserves may be deemed "non-circulating".
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center, Inc. is a non-profit membership organization offering computer-based services to libraries, other-educational organizations, and their users. The OCLC Online Union Catalog is the world's largest and most comprehensive database of bibliographic information, with over 28 million items. This shared database supports cataloguing and interlibrary loan.
OLA	Ontario Library Association
OPAC	Online Public Access Catalogue. A computer catalogue of the books and other materials owned by a library. It is increasingly common for OPACs to serve as the gateway to the online catalogues of other libraries, online periodical indexes and other databases, and the World Wide Web.
Patron	Term often used for a library user.
Pecans	Peace Electronic Computer Automation Network. A discussion group for PLS member libraries and headquarters staff to communicate with each other over email.
Periodical	Publication distributed on a regular schedule (e.g., weekly or monthly). Popular periodicals are called magazines and scholarly periodicals are called journals. Newspapers are also periodicals.
Physical Description	Describes the physical characteristics of an item. For books, includes such data as dimensions, number of pages and illustrations, and accompanying materials, if any.
PLSB	Public Library Services Branch. A branch of the provincial government's Ministry of Municipal Affairs which is dedicated to public library service in the province, providing grants to municipal and library system boards to supplement municipal funding and encourage library service. It also establishes standards for operation and planning of the service and facilitates province-wide sharing of public library resources.
Polaris	Software that automates the management of library patron records and library collections including print, non-print and e-content; enables powerful usage analytics; and facilitates resource sharing among libraries by providing a public interface for placing requests.

Glossary of Library Terms

Term	Definition
Postage Reimbursement Form	To be submitted on a monthly or quarterly basis to request compensation from PLS for interlibrary loan costs.
RDA	Resource Description & Access. A current international standard used by libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural heritage institutions for describing materials of all types of content and media. A successor to AACR2, RDA is maintained in a collaborative process by the RDA Steering Committee (RSC).
References	A list of books, articles, and other sources on a particular subject, about a particular person, or published in a specific region or time period.
Renew	Extend the checkout period of library material; multiple renewals are generally permitted.
RELAIS	Software provided by the Public Library Services Branch and OCLC that allows Alberta patrons to place requests on items not available through their local system.
Request Manager	Interlibrary loan requests for your materials are managed through a Polaris report called the Request Manager. This should be opened daily, the items gathered from your collection, "Checked In", and sent to the requesting library.
Reserves	Reserves are course-related materials made available, either electronically or physically. More often found in academic libraries.
RFID	Radio-frequency Identification. RFID tags which are embedded with microchips can replace or supplement barcodes to identify and track items in some library collections. RFID systems can be used to make library circulation more efficient and assist with theft detection.
RLC	Rural Libraries Conference. Peace Library System's annual continuing education conference for school and public library staff and library trustees. Over 150 delegates from school and public libraries in northern Alberta, northern British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories attend each September to take in great keynote speakers, a variety of sessions on topics ranging from programming to board relations to collection development; and to have a chance to network and visit the exhibitor tradeshow.
Serial	Term describing a wide range of publications issued in successive parts with no predictable end in sight. Magazines, journals, newspapers, annual reports, some conference proceedings, and annual reviews are examples.
Series	Related works that are published together in succession that may have been given a series title. A group of materials in an archive.

Glossary of Library Terms

Shipping Tool	Canada Post's electronic shipping tool is used to make mailing labels for interlibrary loan items and is accessible at libraryshippingtool.ca.
Simply Reports	A report-creating software that pulls data from Polaris. It enables libraries and library systems to produce thousands of analytical and statistical reports concerning library collection usage and patron management. Library staff define the report criteria (parameters) they desire by selecting data columns for the report output and applying filters to limit the data. Reports can then be downloaded in specified file formats, or the report parameters can be saved and scheduled to run at defined intervals.
Spine Label	The label affixed to the spine of a library book that displays the book's call number.
Stacks	Stacks is a colloquial term used to refer to the areas of the library where materials are shelved.
Standing Order	An order placed by a library with an agent or publisher to supply each succeeding issue, volume, or part of a serial or series as it is published, until further notice.
STEAM	STEM + the Arts.
STEM	An educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. Public library programming incorporates engaging activities that encourage these pursuits.
Streaming	A service that allows people to watch movies or listen to music online without downloading.
Subject Headings	A standardized word or phrase describing a topic or concept. Also called descriptors or controlled vocabulary.
The Alberta Library	The Alberta Library (TAL) is a province-wide consortium that serves 48 member libraries in over 300 locations across the province, including: public libraries, regional library systems, university libraries, college, and technical institute libraries, and special libraries. Member libraries work together to take advantage of changing technologies, find creative solutions and seize new opportunities.
TRAC	The Regional Automation Consortium of Marigold, Northern Lights, Peace and Yellowhead library systems. Patrons borrow online or in person at over 175 public libraries through the shared Polaris ILS.

Glossary of Library Terms

TRACPac	The online public access catalogue, which allows staff and patrons to search over three million shared items from TRAC libraries, and is accessible online or through a downloadable app.
TRACSharing	A discussion group for TRAC member libraries and systems staff to communicate with each other over email.
Tutorials	Short, web based guides that explain and demonstrate research tasks.
URL	Uniform Resource Locator. The unique address for a Web page which is used in citing it. A URL consists of the access protocol (http), the domain name (www.nmsu.edu), and often the path to a file or resource residing on that server.
Volume	Single book or bound periodical, often part of a set of books or series of periodicals.
Voucher	A form issued by the Accounting Department at PLS that you complete and sign to authorize reimbursement or payment from your allotment account for library materials. Attach an original invoice or receipt to the voucher.
WebJunction	An online community dedicated to the emerging technology and training needs of librarians.
Weeding	Removing books and other library materials no longer up-to-date or useful to the users of the library. Weeding keeps a collection current and attractive, makes way for new material and provides ongoing evaluation of the library's material and its use.
Worldcat.org	OCLC service that allows users to access WorldCat through a search box that can be included in a variety of web sites. Users can then find the items in a library near them or buy them directly.
YCW	Young Canada Works is a federal program which offers a variety of summer job and internship programs to job seekers and employers. Eligible employers like libraries can benefit from wage subsidies and access to a pool of talented youth with innovative ideas and competitive skills.