

SECTION SEVEN

CLASSIFICATION AND CATALOGUING

It is essential that every item in a library can easily be found. If someone in your library asks you for a book, or for some information, you must be able to find it quickly. You do not want to go from shelf to shelf trying to find it. Proper organisation of materials will be of help not only to you: users can be shown the system so that they, too, can easily find what they are looking for.

Most books in a school library are books dealing with subjects (such as biology, geography, history, chemistry and so on). These books are best arranged by their subjects so that all the geography books are put together, all the chemistry books are put together, and so on.

For this reason, when you receive a new information book (or other information item) for your library, you must decide what its subject is. This is the first stage in the process of classifying the book.

Classifying Information Books

How can you decide on the subject of a book?

1. Look at the title. Does this tell you what the book is about?
2. Look at the list of the book's contents, or the headings of its chapters. Does this confirm the decision you have made on the basis of the title? (Perhaps the title is confusing; or perhaps the book deals with only one part of the subject you chose first).

3. Are there any pictures that help you to decide what book is about? Is there a short introduction at the beginning of the book in which the author tells you what he has tried to do?

Often all these questions will give you the same answer. Some books, however, will need careful study before you can be sure what the subject is. It is very important that you get it right. If you make a mistake about the subject, you will not put the book in the best place on the shelves. Some readers will find the book and be disappointed because it does not deal with the subject they are interested in. Others will be disappointed because they do not find the book at all, having looked somewhere else for it.

When you have decided on the subject of a book, you will wish to put it on the shelves with other books on the same subject. The easiest way to do this is to give each subject a number. If every book on the same subject is given the same basic classification number, and if the numbers are put in order when books are arranged on the shelves, all the books on that subject will be near to each other.

To guide you in choosing a number for each book, and to ensure that you decide in the same way whenever you classify books, you need to use a classification scheme. This is a list of subjects arranged in a useful order. The scheme used most widely all over the world is called the Dewey Decimal Classification, named after the man who invented it.

The Dewey Decimal Classification

As you will see on the next page, the Dewey Decimal Classification divides the whole of knowledge into nine very broad subjects. Each of these, which is called a "class", is given a three-digit number. There is also a number for books which are so broad in their subject that they will not fit into any of the other classes, for example, general encyclopedias. This "general class" is 000.

The ten classes are as follows:

000	General works	500	Pure science
100	Philosophy	600	Applied science
200	Religion	700	The arts
300	Social sciences	800	Literature
400	Languages	900	History, geography, biography

For a very few books, these broad subject classes might be enough. But even the smallest school library needs to be able to arrange its books more precisely than this. A reader looking for a book on chemistry would have to look at all the books numbered 500 (Pure science) to find it, thus wasting time looking also at books on physics, biology, astronomy and so on.

Each broad class, therefore, is divided into sub-classes, for example:

500	Pure science		
510	Mathematics	560	Prehistoric plants and animals
520	Astronomy	570	Nature study
530	Physics	580	Botany
540	Chemistry	590	Zoology
550	Earth sciences		

The same idea is applied again and again, so that even very small subject areas or topics can be given a specific number.

Here is an example. Follow it step by step using the classification scheme set out in Appendix B (page 94).

The number given for history, geography and biography is 900.

The history of different areas of the world is divided by continent with the numbers 940 to 999. The number for Asia is 950.

Within this sub-class 950, South-East Asia is given the number 959.

And within the sub-class 959, Malaysia and Singapore are given the number 959.5.

Large libraries, with very many books, or libraries which have a special interest in a particular topic (such as their own country and its history) can add further sub-divisions with numbers to identify quite small subject areas. For example, a school library in Malaysia would wish to have separate class numbers for that country and for Singapore. Should a problem like this arise in your library, the best thing to do is to find out what procedure your public library uses, and then copy it. Such instances are rare, however. Most of the numbers in the classification scheme in Appendix B are limited to three, and a few cases four, digits; only a few have as many as five digits. This will usually be quite sufficient for a book in your school library.

Choosing the Right Number

Having decided what a book is about, how do you find the right number for it? Ask yourself the these questions:

1. Which of the ten main subject classes does it fall into? A book on Arithmetic, for example, obviously belongs in the class Pure science (500).
2. Is the book about the whole broad subject, or about one part of it? Arithmetic is a part of Mathematics (510).
3. Is there an even more precise place for it within Mathematics? You will see in the classification scheme in Appendix B that there is a place for Arithmetic (511).

Choose the most precise subject heading you can find in the tables of the classification scheme. But make sure that the subject heading you choose includes all the topics in the book. If our example, the book on Arithmetic, also included Algebra and Geometry, you would have to choose the heading Mathematics (510).

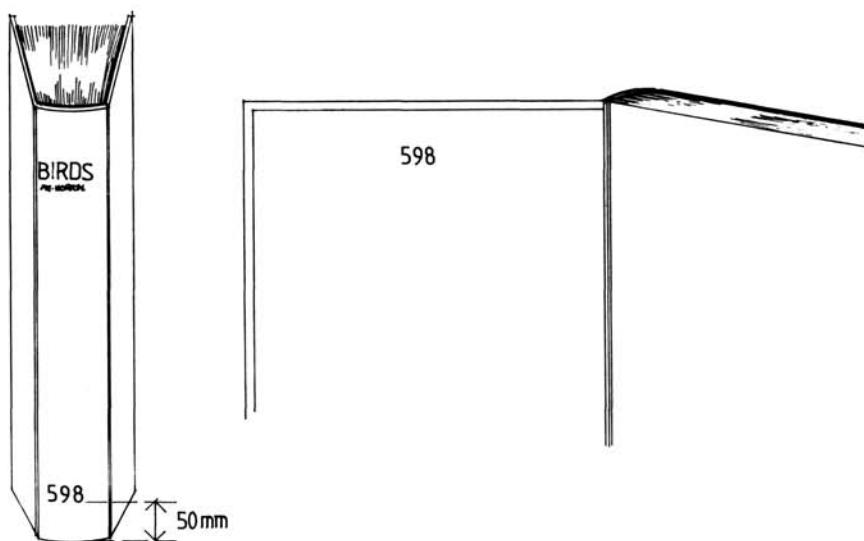
Marking the Item

When you think you have found the right number, check it carefully to make sure it is the right place in the

classification scheme. For example, you might think that a book on painting a house should have the number 750 (Painting). But when you check back, you will see that this is the number for the kind of painting done by artists; you will have to find a more suitable number for the book on painting a house.

Write the number in two places. The first place is on the back of the title page (so that there is a permanent record of the classification number given to this book).

The second is on the spine of the book about one inch from the bottom. An example, for a book on birds, is shown in diagram 20. Use a marking ink that does not easily rub off.



*Diagram 20: Marking the Class Number on the Spine
and on the back of the Title Page*

Non-Book Materials

The method of classification of non-book materials is exactly the same as for books.

Choose the best place on each type of item for marking the classification number. You will want to be able to see this number easily when the item is shelved or stored. When you have chosen the best place (e.g. the top left-hand corner of a record cover, or the top edge of a filmstrip box) always use the same place on each item of that kind.

Fiction

Books of fiction will be chosen for their stories, not for information. Do not classify them. Instead, put them on different shelves from the information books. Arrange them in alphabetical order of their authors. Because the author's name is shown on the spine of the book, and because they need no classification number, you will not need to mark these books yourself.

The Catalogue

You will need to have a complete record of the materials in the library so as to show whether the stock includes a book or other item on a particular subject, even if the item is out on loan. This record is called the catalogue.

A catalogue can be arranged in several ways. Choose the one which will be most useful to your readers.

There are two important questions which many people will ask you. Both can be answered from the catalogue.

The first of these questions is: "Has the library this particular book, whose author and title I know?". The second is: "Has the library any information on this subject?".

The first of these questions may be asked about any of the books, but is most likely to be asked about novels and other literature. The second question is likely to be asked about works of non-fiction.

The easiest way to be able to answer these questions is to have two catalogues.

One will be a record of all the books in the library, arranged alphabetically by the surnames of the authors of books. This is the author catalogue.

The other will provide details of all the information books and non-book materials arranged according to their subjects. This is the subject or classified catalogue.

A Catalogue on Cards

Your library will always be changing as new items are added to it and old ones are discarded. For this reason the type of catalogue you need is one that enables you to include details of new items and delete details of those items you discard.

The easiest way to do this is to make the catalogue on cards, using a separate card for each book or other item. The advantages of using cards are that they can be arranged in any order you wish. Cards for new items can easily be inserted at the right place. Cards for items no longer available can easily be removed. As the library grows and more cards are added, the space to file the cards can grow with it.

The standard size of card, used in libraries all over the world, is 5 inches x 3 inches ($12\frac{1}{2}$ cm x $7\frac{1}{2}$ cm). Special cabinets are made for housing drawers of the right size to hold files of these cards (diagram 12). At first, for the very small library, you can make do with cardboard trays or home-made wooden trays. Be sure that these are large and strong enough to hold the cards, and not so large that the cards can slip out of order.

The Author Catalogue

You need an author catalogue card for every item already in your library and for every item you add to it. Diagram 21 shows the information you must include.

Making the Cards

1. On the top line, at the left-hand side, write the name of the author. Give the author's surname first, and follow this with a comma, and then the first name(s) or initials.
2. On the next line, at the left-hand side, write the title of the item. Copy this exactly from the title page of the book, or from the packing of items other than books (e.g. the sleeve of a gramophone record).
3. Follow this with the name of the publisher (usually given at the bottom of the title page of a book) and the year that the book was published.

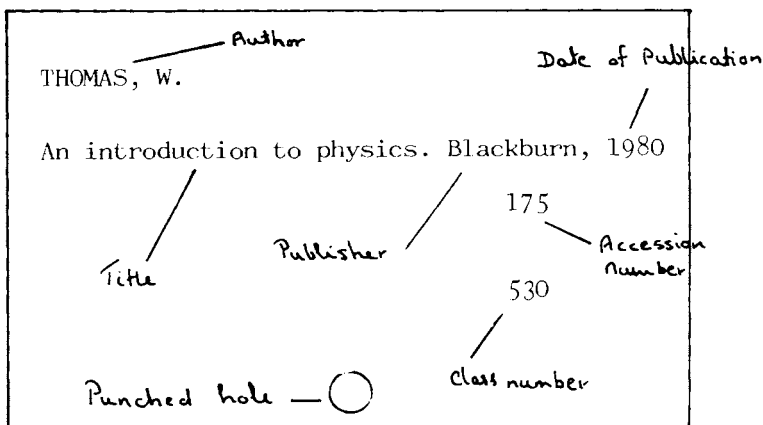


Diagram 21: Example of an Author Card

4. Add to the card, lower down on the right-hand side, the accession number (see pages 49-50).
5. In the case of non-fiction, give the classification number (see above). This will enable readers to know where the book is on the shelves.
6. If the item is not a book, show below the classification number what type of material it is (e.g. filmstrip, sound cassette etc.).

Arranging the Cards

When the author catalogue cards have been made, put them in alphabetical order of the authors' surnames. Thus you will have together cards for all the books by Dickens. The titles on the cards will tell you which of his books are in the stock of the library.

Joint Authors

Some books are written by two, or even three, people. Their names may appear on the title page as Smith, Brown and Jones. Some readers may well remember only the name Brown, and look for Brown in the catalogue. Others may mistake the order in which the names appear, and look in the catalogue for Jones, Brown and Smith.

You must take these possibilities into account when you are making the catalogue. In a case like this, the first thing to do is to make one card, as described, under the first author named; but, after the title, include the other two names. Then make two additional cards, one for each of the other two authors, directing the reader to the main entry.

For the layout of these three cards, see diagram 22 on page 68.

Each of these additional cards must then be filed in its proper alphabetical place in the catalogue.

Corporate Authors

Some items are produced not by named authors but by an organisation, such as the United Nations, or the Commonwealth Secretariat, or the Library Association. Where no individual author is given on an item, try to decide the organisation which is responsible for its production. Treat this organisation as the author, in the same way as you would a person (except, of course, that there is no surname to be put first). An example is shown in diagram 23 on page 69.

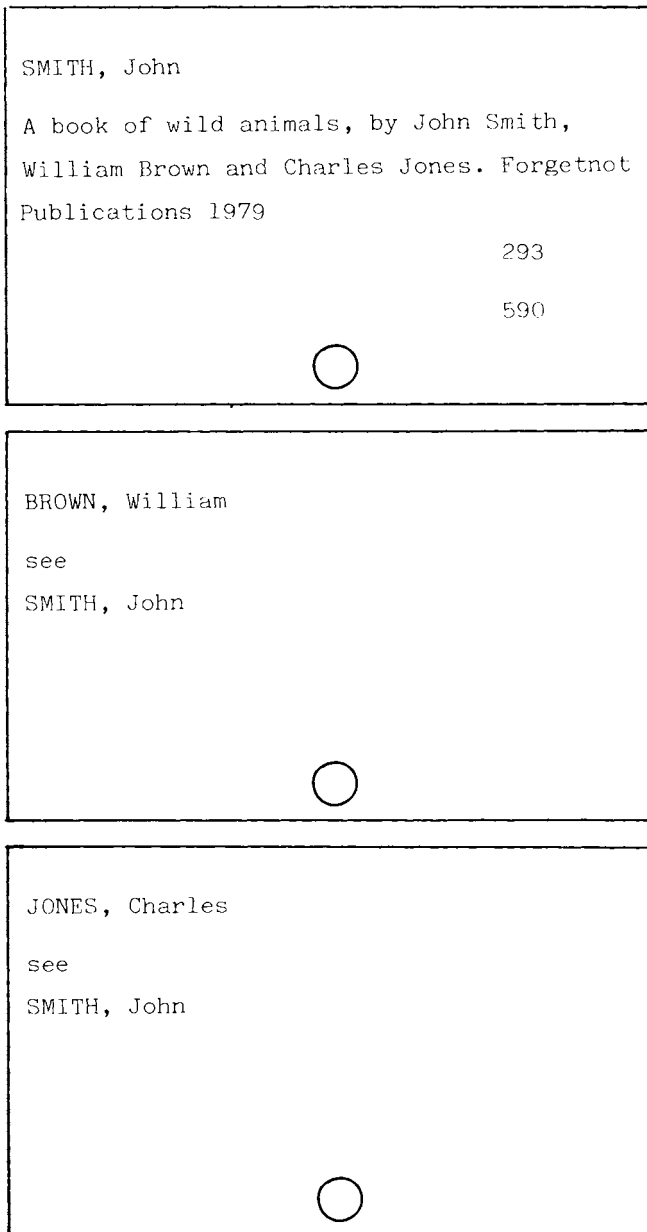


Diagram 22: Joint Author Cards

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL
The windows of the cathedral. Coventry Cathedral, 1976
343
720
○

Diagram 23: Corporate Author Card

Title Entries

Some items, even some books, do not have an author - either a person or an organisation. When you find an item of this kind, make the entry by the title, writing this on the top line where the author's name would usually be. An example is shown in diagram 24.

ENCYCLOPEDIA of sport. Outdoors Press, 1977
1421
796
○

Diagram 24: Title Entry Card

Filing

These cards must be filed, like the others, in alphabetical order. Thus a possible sequence of headings on cards might run like this:

COLLINS, James
COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT
CONNOLLY, John
COTGREAVE, William
COUNTY COUNCILS ASSOCIATION
COVENTRY CATHEDRAL
COWARD, Noel

The most important rules for filing are given in Appendix C on page 106.

The Classified Catalogue

This is the second of the two catalogues recommended on page 65. Its purpose is to enable readers to know what materials the library has on any subject.

As we have seen, the best way of identifying and arranging materials on a subject is by classifying them and allocating a class number from the Dewey Decimal Classification.

When the number has been allocated to an item, it can be used on a card for the item. A catalogue of these cards, arranged in order of these numbers, is called a classified catalogue.

Making the Cards

The cards for the classified catalogue should be the same size as those for the author catalogue (i.e. 5 inches by 3 inches).

The arrangement of the information on the card is the same as with the author catalogue, with one important difference.

On the top line, on the left-hand side, put the classification number (which you have already written on the spine of the book and on the back of the title page), and then the word or brief phrase describing the subject. Then follow the pattern as with the author catalogue. Diagram 25a shows an example of a classified card for a book; diagram 25b shows one for a filmstrip.

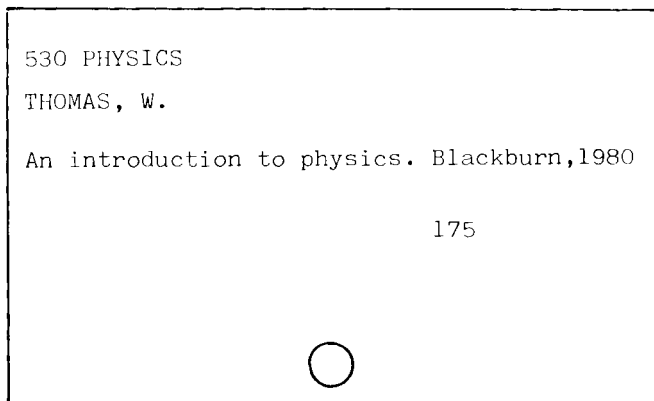


Diagram 25a: Classified Card for a Book

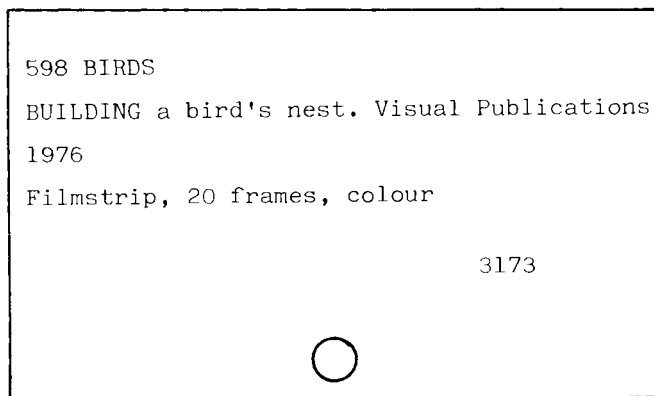


Diagram 25b: Classified Card for a Filmstrip

Arranging the Cards

File the subject catalogue cards in order of the classification numbers. This will bring together information on all the items you have on a subject, whether an item is actually in the library or out on loan, and whether the information is the main subject of a book or not.

Added Entries

A book can only be in one place in the library. But some books, while they are mainly about one subject, may include useful information on something quite different. The subject catalogue allows you to draw attention to the book, not only under its main subject, but also under any other subject heading where readers will find it helpful.

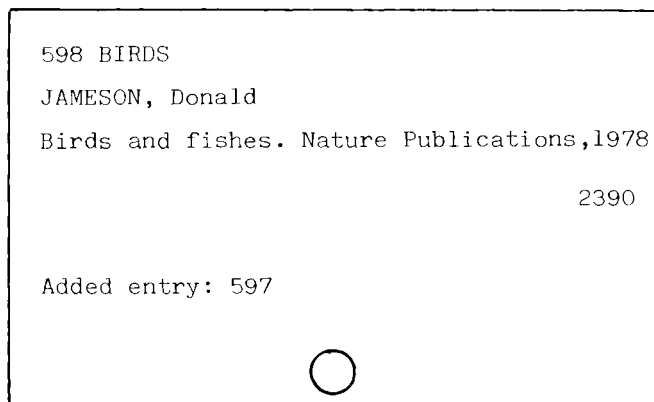


Diagram 26: Main Subject Entry

The book named in diagram 26 is about Birds and Fishes. It is classified by the number for Birds. Readers looking for information about birds will find out from the subject index (see page 74) that the classification number is 598. They can then look through the subject catalogue cards until they come to 598 and see that the library has this book on birds. But what about those

readers who want a book about fishes? They would never think of looking at the number 598 because that is the number for birds, not fishes.

In cases like this you should give the book an additional number for the second subject and make a separate, additional card (known as an "added entry") for the book at that number for the classified catalogue.

For the example just given, the added entry will have a number for Fishes (597) at the top. The rest of the entry will be the same as for the main card (under 598 Birds). But you must add at the end of the information the words "shelved at 598" (which is the number for Birds) so that the reader will know where the book itself is to be found. (See diagram 27).

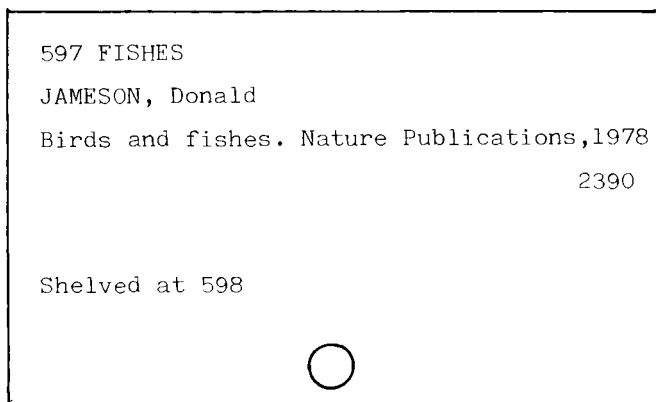


Diagram 27: Added Subject Entry

Now go back to the main entry (the card shown in diagram 26 which was made under 598 Birds). Add to it a note of the class numbers of any added entries. You then know what added entry cards there are in the catalogue. When the time comes to get rid of the book, you can easily find all the cards relating to it, and throw them all away. You do not want to keep cards for books that no longer exist in the library.

Subject Index

The classified catalogue will show readers everything you have on a subject, grouped by the classification numbers. But how will they know the right number to look for?

To help them with this, you must have a subject index. This consists of another set of cards intended not as a guide to books, but to classification numbers. Very little information is needed on each card.

On the top line put the name of the subject (on the left-hand side) and the classification number (on the right-hand side). Three examples are shown in diagram 28.

You can make the cards for the subject index at the same time that you are making those for the classified catalogue.

At first many of the classification numbers where you are filing cards will need subject index entries, because you will be using that class number and subject for the first time. But as the classified catalogue grows, many cards will be using a number you have included before. For these there will already be a card in the subject index. Another card will not be needed. One card in the subject index will guide readers to everything on that subject in the classified catalogue.

For some numbers there may be several words which will be useful guides: for example RAILWAYS, TRAINS. A card can be made for each of these. Each will give the same classification number, and lead the reader to the same place in the catalogue. When you are making entries for the subject index, try to think of all the words your readers are likely to look for, and include them.

Sometimes the same word, used to describe a subject, may have more than one meaning. For example, CHINA. Or there may be two very different aspects to a subject. For example, FISHING. In these cases the cards in the subject index will look like this:

CHINA:	ceramics	738	FISHING:	sport	799
CHINA:	country	915	FISHING:	industry	639

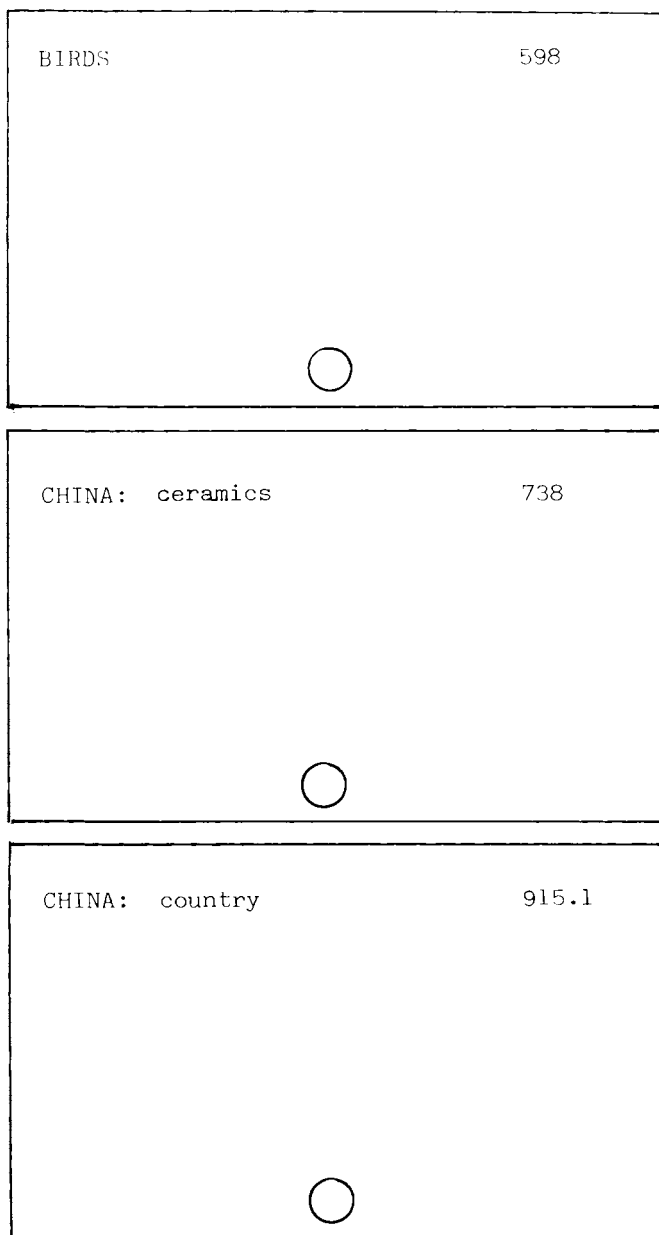


Diagram 28: Subject Index Cards

You now know how to make:

1. An author catalogue of all the items in the library.
2. A classified catalogue of the non-fiction items.
3. A subject index to the numbers used in the classified catalogue.

These must be kept in three separate sequences:

1. The author catalogue arranged in the alphabetical order of the authors' names (or other headings used).
2. The classified catalogue in order of the class numbers.
3. The subject index in alphabetical order of the names of the subjects. Because the name of each subject will appear only once, no matter many items you have in the library on that subject, this sequence will be much shorter than the other two.

When any of the sequences becomes sufficient to fill a catalogue drawer, it will be helpful to users if you insert guide cards at intervals. Guide cards are the same width as catalogue cards, but are tall enough to project above them as shown in the diagram below.

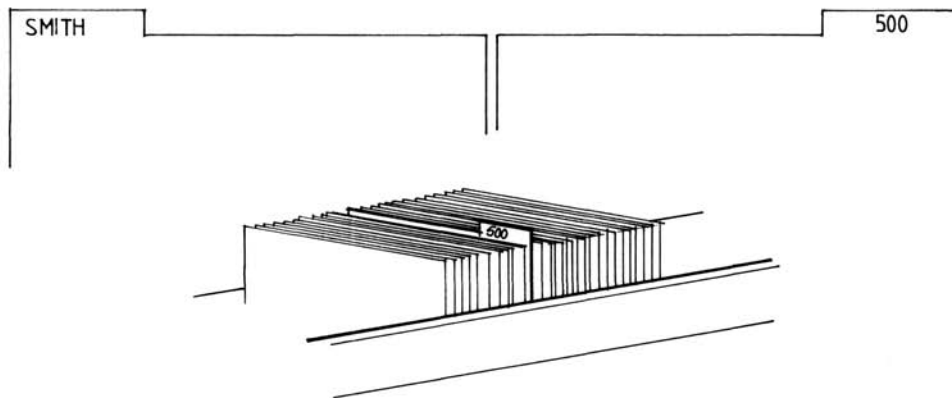


Diagram 29: Guide Cards (Author Sequence; Classified Sequence; and Inserted in a Cabinet Drawer)

The guide cards for the alphabetical sequences (the author catalogue and the subject index) will bear an initial letter or group of letters. The guide cards for the numerical sequence (the classified catalogue) will bear a number.

Label each drawer carefully on its front to show which sequence it contains. When any sequence spreads to more than one drawer, add a note of the contents. Two examples are:

1.

AUTHORS
A - F
2.

CLASSIFIED CATALOGUE
500 - 659

With these three elements you can answer the following questions:

1. Does the library have a copy of this book (or any other book) by this author? (Look in the author catalogue).
2. What information do you have on this subject? (Look in the subject index for the classification number of the subject. Then look in the classified catalogue to see what books (and other materials) are listed under that number).
3. Where do I look for books on this subject? (Find the classification number of the subject, and then find the books bearing that number on the shelves).

Without the three elements you will find yourself answering the same questions over and over again.

Although pupils should be encouraged to ask you for help when they really need it, they can, with a little training, use the catalogues on their own. This saves you from having to answer simple questions. It also helps the pupils to become more self-reliant and gain familiarity with libraries so that they will be able to use them with confidence for the rest of their lives.