



The Organization of Information Part One: Abstracting and Indexing

Understanding how articles are stored in research databases can help a researcher use the database's search functions more effectively.

Abstracting:

Abstracts are short summaries that provide a description of the content of an article. They help the reader decide whether an article might be useful for a research topic. Searching for keywords used in abstracts can result in more relevant search returns. Some abstractors are employed by publishing companies, but sometimes authors create their own abstracts.

Sample search and abstract featuring keywords “graphic novels” and literacy

Searching: Academic Search Complete | Choose Databases

graphic novels AB Abstract or Auth... ▾

AND ▾ literacy AB Abstract or Auth... ▾

AND ▾ Select a Field (optional) ▾

Cites the benefits that **literacy** educators can get from the use of **graphic novels** in the classroom. Advantages of **graphic novels** over traditional texts and other mass media; Subject areas which can benefit from the **graphic novel**; Suggested titles of **graphic novels** for use in the classroom.

Indexing:

At the same time the abstracts are written, indexers choose and apply subject headings to an item's record from a publisher-defined list. Using subject headings for a subject search allows a user to quickly and easily locate articles on a particular topic within one or more databases. These standard headings ensure that all material on the same topic is entered under the same heading for easy reference.

Search box

Searching: Academic Search Complete | Choose Databases

graphic novels SU Subject Terms ▾

AND ▾ literacy SU Subject Terms ▾

Subject headings

Subject Terms: *GRAPHIC novels
*LITERACY
*TEACHING

Headings may also be added for names and titles, and place names may be added if the article focuses on a particular geographic place. Abstracting and indexing help you focus your search so that you find the articles most relevant to your research topic.