
Library of Congress Subject Headings

Module 3.3:
Reading and Interpreting Instruction Sheets

Policy and Standards Division
Library of Congress
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Recap and Plan

- Modules 3.1-3.2
 - Overview of the contents and use of the *Subject Headings Manual* (SHM)
 - Detailed explanation of the parts of instruction sheets devoted to a specific topic, material, or subdivision
- This module
 - Using instruction sheets to catalog resources

In the previous two modules in this unit, we provided a brief overview of the Subject Headings Manual, including a discussion of how it is organized, what it contains, and what it is used for, and we explained the parts of Special topics instruction sheets.

In this module, we will dig deeper by using instruction sheets as guides to the cataloging of two resources: one about a census, and the other, a biography.

First let's quickly review the main points from module 3.2.

Review

- Instruction sheets may include guidelines for proposing headings, assigning them, or both
- General rule is the most basic statement of policy on assignment of headings or subdivisions for the topic
- Examples are hand-selected for relevance and accuracy

- One. Some instruction sheets include guidelines for assigning headings, others include instructions for proposing them, and still others do both.
- Second. The general rule is the most basic statement of policy on the assignment of headings, and you should always read it even if you think you remember it.
- And, three, while we do not in general recommend that you catalog by example, the examples in the SHM are hand-selected for relevance and accuracy and can be trusted.

Review

- Always read the background statement, if present
- Skim the entire instruction sheet
- Closely read the pertinent sections
- Take the instructions literally

The first thing to do when opening an instruction sheet is to read the background statement, if there is one. It provides you with a wealth of information that you will not find elsewhere, along with a succinct statement of scope for the instruction sheet. Background statements also often provide cross-references to other instruction sheets.

Next, you should skim the entire instruction sheet to determine its organization and to figure out which sections are pertinent – or if all of them are, which is often the case. Then closely read the pertinent sections, taking the instructions literally.

Now that we have reviewed, let's look at a couple of examples.

Interpreting Instruction Sheets

- Example

Title: *Housing in the State of Wyoming:
Statistics from the 2010 United States Census*

Instruction sheet: H 1366, Census

The first is titled “Housing in the State of Wyoming: statistics from the 2010 United States census.”

Instruction sheet H 1366, Census, is pertinent.

Census H 1366

BACKGROUND: Subject headings of the type [place]-Census or [ethnic group]-Census are assigned to works that consist of, or discuss, data obtained as a result of censuses. Specific censuses are identified by adding the date, or the number and date, to the subdivision. Prior to the implementation of AACR2, descriptive catalogers assigned a related-work added entry to works consisting of data obtained as a result of specific censuses, for example, United States Census Office. 10th census, 1880. Under RDA, all census publications are entered under title, and related-work added entries are not made. Subject catalogers are always responsible for identifying and designating specific censuses when cataloging census publications.

1. General rule. Use the subdivision -Census under names of places or ethnic groups for works consisting of official counts of the population of a place or group, generally including vital statistics and other classified information relating to social and economic conditions; or for works that discuss censuses. Code -Census as a \$v subfield if the work consists almost entirely of statistical data from a census, such as an official edition of the census. Code it as an \$x subfield if the work consists primarily of analysis and discussion of the census data, even though it may include some actual statistics as well. Examples:

*Title: Counting America : the story of the United States census.
651 #0 \$a United States \$x Census.*

*Title: Population changes among the northern Plains Indians.
[an analysis of data from various censuses]
650 #0 \$a Indians of North America \$z Great Plains
\$x Census.*

This was a live demo. The slides on the handouts do not precisely match the slides in the audio-visual lecture.

H 1366 begins with a background statement that provides a definition and the scope of the sheet. It says:

Subject headings of the type **[place]—Census** or **[ethnic group]—Census** are assigned to works that consist of, or discuss, data obtained as a result of censuses. Specific censuses are identified by adding the date, or the number and date, to the subdivision.

It then provides some information about descriptive cataloging under AACR2 and RDA, which is unusual but not unheard of.

The general rule states

Use the subdivision **-Census** under names of places or ethnic groups for works consisting of official counts of the population of a place or group, generally including vital statistics and other classified information relating to social and economic conditions; or for works that discuss censuses. Code **-Census** as a form subdivision if the work consists almost entirely of statistical data from a census, such as an official edition of the census. Code it as a topical subdivision if the work consists primarily of analysis and discussion of the census data, even though it may include some actual statistics as well.

Now let's look at the examples. Do they look analogous to the resource we are cataloging, which is statistics from the 2010 census? Yes, so we would look up the authorized heading for the United States, and add the subdivision **-Census**.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

For works limited to a specific census add the date of the census to the subdivision. *Examples:*

Title: Census of India, 1991 : historical and world perspective.
651 #0 \$a India \$x Census, 1991.

Title: Census of population (1990) : Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States.
[work consists of data extracted from the 1990 census and published by the Bureau of the Census]
650 #0 \$a Asian Americans \$v Census, 1990.
650 #0 \$a Pacific Islander Americans \$v Census, 1990.
650 #0 \$a United States \$v Census, 1990.

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H 1366 Census

Let's continue with the next paragraph.

For works limited to a specific census add the date of the census to the subdivision.

Is our resource the statistics from a special census? Yes, so we can add the date to the heading **United States—Census**, much as was done in the example of the 1991 Census of India that you can see on the screen.

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2. *When to assign a census heading.* If a work consists of, or discusses, data abstracted from a census, assign census headings of the above type to the work.

Assign a heading for the jurisdiction conducting the official count. If the locality surveyed is different from the jurisdiction conducting the count, assign a heading for both. Designate the specific census if it is possible to do so. *Example:*

Title: The 1990 federal census of California : an analysis of the data.
651 #0 \$a United States \$x Census, 1990.
651 #0 \$a California \$x Census, 1990.

3. *Special topic and a census.* If the work contains information abstracted from a particular census on a special topic, assign a heading for the census and for the topic. *Example:*

Title: Census of housing (1990)
650 #0 \$a Housing \$z United States \$v Statistics.
651 #0 \$a United States \$v Census, 1990.

4. *Special topic, census, and locality.* If the work contains information abstracted from a particular national census on a topic and special locality within the country of the census, assign a heading for all three aspects, the national census, the topic, and the special locality. *Example:*

Title: Occupations in Virginia : data from the 1970 census.
650 #0 \$a Occupations \$z Virginia \$v Statistics.
651 #0 \$a Virginia \$v Census, 1970.
651 #0 \$a United States \$v Census, 1970.

5. *Genealogical works.* Works belonging to this genre consist of information taken from individual census returns for the sake of its genealogical value. They are not normally statistical in nature.

To such works assign both the genealogical headings required to bring out their special contents (see, for example, H 1631 and H 1845) and the census headings required by this instruction sheet. These headings include the following:

Section 2 states,

If a work consists of, or discusses, data abstracted from a census, assign census headings of the above type to the work.

Assign a heading for the jurisdiction conducting the official count. If the locality surveyed is different from the jurisdiction conducting the count, assign a heading for both. Designate the specific census if it is possible to do so.

Our resource is a census conducted by the United States government in Wyoming. We have already assigned **United States—Census, 2010**. According to section 2, we also need to assign **Wyoming—Census, 2010**.

Section 3 says,

If the work contains information abstracted from a particular census on a special topic, assign a heading for the census and for the topic.

Our resource is about housing, just like the example in section 3. Let's follow the pattern and assign another heading: **Housing—Wyoming—Statistics**.

The example shows us the heading, but note— you should always double-check headings that appear in the manual. The instruction sheets are not updated automatically if one of the headings used as an example is revised.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

2. *When to assign a census heading.* If a work consists of, or discusses, data abstracted from a census, assign census headings of the above type to the work.

Assign a heading for the jurisdiction conducting the official count. If the locality surveyed is different from the jurisdiction conducting the count, assign a heading for both. Designate the specific census if it is possible to do so. *Example:*

Title: The 1990 federal census of California : an analysis of the data.
651 #0 \$a United States \$x Census, 1990.
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5. *Genealogical works.* Works belonging to this genre consist of information taken from individual census returns for the sake of its genealogical value. They are not normally statistical in nature.

To such works assign both the genealogical headings required to bring out their special contents (see, for example, H 1631 and H 1845) and the census headings required by this instruction sheet. These headings include the following:

Moving on to section 4, it says,

If the work contains information abstracted from a particular national census on a topic and a special locality within the country of the census, assign a heading for all three aspects, the national census, the topic, and the special locality.

So this just reinforces the rules that we have already covered and the headings that we have already assigned.

Section 5 is relevant to genealogical resources. The resource we are cataloging is not genealogical, so we can skip it. And that is the end of the instruction sheet.

Interpreting Instruction Sheets

- Example

*Title: Housing in the State of Wyoming:
Statistics from the 2010 United States Census*

Instruction sheet: H 1366, Census

**Housing—Wyoming—Statistics.
United States—Census, 2010.
Wyoming—Census, 2010.**

By following the blueprint in the instruction sheet, then, we end up with the following headings:

- **Housing—Wyoming—Statistics.**
- **United States—Census, 2010.**
- and **Wyoming—Census, 2010.**

Interpreting Instruction Sheets

- Example

Title: *Mahatma Gandhi, Father of India: A Biography*

- About 70 percent is about Gandhi's personal life, from his childhood to his death
- About 30 percent is about his public persona

Instruction sheet: H 1330, Biography

Let's look at another resource, which is entitled, *Mahatma Gandhi, Father of India: a Biography*.

About 70 percent of this resource on Mahatma Gandhi is information about his personal life, and about 30 percent relates to his public life.

The title indicates that the author considers it a biography, but is it a biography according to LCSH policy?

To make that determination, we have to read the instruction sheet for Biographies: H 1330.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

Biography H 1330

BACKGROUND: *A work about an individual person may be either biographical, critical, or both. Biographical works focus on the personal aspects of the individual's life, critical works on the individual's professional, intellectual, or artistic achievements. The provisions in this instruction sheet do not apply to works that are predominantly critical, only to works that are predominantly biographical and in narrative form. For provisions dealing with other forms of material that are sometimes biographical in nature, such as correspondence, diaries, and interviews, see the appropriate specific instruction sheet, for example, H 1480, H 1538, H 1678. For classification of biography, see F 275 (General); F 605, sec. 1 (Government officials); and F 632 (Literary authors writing in more than one language).*

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions apply for purposes of this instruction sheet:

Biography (including Autobiography): A narrative work more than 50% of which recounts the personal aspects of the life of one or more individuals. (In the case of historical figures, particularly those from the distant past, where little is known of the personal details of their lives, the limitation of the definition to "personal aspects" does not apply.) **Personal aspects** include such details as the individual's early years, education, marriage and other personal relationships, personal habits and personality, family life, travels, personal experiences and tragedies, last years and death, etc. **Life** means a relatively large portion of the individual's life, not just a single brief incident.

Collective biography: A biography of two or more individuals.

Individual biography: A biography of one person.

Partial biography: A work that includes some, but less than 50%, biographical material.

This was a live demo. The slides on the handouts do not precisely match the slides in the audio-visual lecture.

The background statement says,

A work about an individual person may be either biographical, critical, or both. Biographical works focus on the personal aspects of the individual's life, critical works on the individual's professional, intellectual, or artistic achievements. The provisions in this instruction sheet do not apply to works that are predominantly critical, only to works that are predominantly biographical and in narrative form.

Recall that we said the resource is 70 percent about Gandhi's personal life. Does it sound like it fits the scope of this instruction sheet? The answer is yes, so we will continue to the next section, which provides definitions.

For the purposes of this instruction sheet:

Biography (including Autobiography) is defined as a narrative work more than 50% of which recounts the personal aspects of the life of one or more individuals. (In the case of historical figures though, particularly those from the distant past, where little is known of the personal details of their lives, the limitation of the definition to "personal aspects" does not apply.) **Personal aspects** include such details as the individual's early years, education, marriage and other personal relationships, personal habits and personality, family life, travels, personal experiences and tragedies, last years and death, etc. **Life** means a relatively large portion of the individual's life, not just a single brief incident.

A Collective biography is a biography of two or more individuals.

And logically enough, an *Individual biography* is a biography of one person.

A Partial biography is a work that includes some, but less than 50%, biographical material.

The resource fits the first definition, Biography, and also the third, Individual biography, making it an individual biography.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

1. General rule. Assign an appropriate combination of the following types of headings to a biography:

- the name heading(s) for the person(s) *[no more than four]*
- if appropriate, a "class of persons" heading with the free-floating form subdivision **-Biography**
- if appropriate, heading(s) to bring out the person's association with a place or organization, or involvement with a specific event
- topical headings, as appropriate for the work

Each of these headings is discussed specifically in sections 1.a.-1.d., below.

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H 1330 Biography

1. General rule. (Continued)

a. Name heading for the person. Assign the heading as established in BDA form in the

Let's then continue with the general rule. It begins,

Assign an appropriate combination of the following types of headings to a biography:

- the name heading for the person
- if appropriate, a "class of persons" heading with the free-floating form subdivision – **Biography**
- if appropriate, headings to bring out the person's association with a place or organization, or involvement with a specific event, and
- topical headings, as appropriate for the work

As you can see, the general rule gives us our overall approach to the resource, but we do need to continue with the rest of the instruction sheet. So let's do that.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

1. *General rule. (Continued)*

a. *Name heading for the person.* Assign the heading as established in RDA form in the name authority file. Do not subdivide the name by **–Biography**.

Exception: --Biography has been established and may be used under the names of four individuals: Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616; Muhammad, Prophet, -632; Jesus Christ; and Mary, Blessed Virgin, Saint. Do not submit a proposal to establish --Biography under the name of any other individual.

If the biography focuses on a specific aspect of the person's life subdivide the name heading using the appropriate topical subdivision from H 1110, for example, **–Childhood and youth**, **–Health**, **–Death and burial**. Assign this heading as the first heading.

Literary authors. For literary authors who write under various names and have more than one name heading, use the heading that serves as the "base heading" for the author, that is, the heading having the complete set of references for the author. Free-floating use of the subdivision **–Biography** after headings for individual literary authors was discontinued in 1998. The subdivision is established under **Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616**, and continues to be used under that heading as an exceptional practice.

Official name heading vs. personal name heading. For individuals who have both an official name heading and a personal name heading, use the personal name heading. For example, use **Reagan, Ronald** rather than **United States, President (1981-1989 : Reagan)**.

Collective biography. If the work is about two, three, or four persons, assign the name heading for each. If the work is about more than four persons, omit the name headings.

b. *[Class of persons]–Biography.* This heading designates the group of people to which the biographee belongs, as discussed in the work being cataloged, for example, **Muslims, Heads of state, Football players, Jews, Bishops, and saints.**

Section 1.a says that we should use the established form of the personal name. But look at the second sentence. It says we should not subdivide the name by biography. There is an exception listed: The subdivision **–Biography** has been established under four people William Shakespeare, the Prophet Muhammad, Jesus Christ, and the Blessed Virgin Mary. But we cannot use the subdivision **–Biography** under any other personal name. Therefore we cannot use it under Gandhi's heading.

The section continues, If a biography focuses on a specific aspect of the person's life, subdivide the name heading, using the appropriate topical subdivision from H 1110. For example, **–Childhood and youth**, **–Health**, **–Death and burial**. Assign this heading as the first heading.

The resource we are cataloging, though, does not focus on one particular aspect of Gandhi's life, so we can skip that and continue. Is Gandhi a literary author? No, so we can skip that paragraph.

What about the next paragraph, official name heading vs. personal name heading? It says, For individuals who have both an official name heading and a personal name heading, use the personal name heading. And then it gives the example of Ronald Reagan, his personal name, as well as his official name heading as United States President.

Since Gandhi was not a head of state, he does not have an official name heading. We can skip this paragraph.

For the next paragraph, we need to consider whether this is a collective biography. It is not. Biographies by their nature discuss multiple people, but we are cataloging by the intent of the resource. I'm sure this resource discusses Gandhi's marriage and therefore his wife, but it is not a biography of his wife. Therefore, this paragraph is not pertinent, either.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

b. [Class of persons]—Biography. This heading designates the group of people to which the biographee belongs, as discussed in the work being cataloged, for example, **Musicians, Heads of state, Football coaches, Italy—Kings and rulers**, etc.

Note: This heading is assigned to individual biographies primarily for the benefit of public library users who are seeking biographies of a particular type of person rather than a particular individual. The heading should be selected with that in mind. If the biographee belongs to no discernable class of persons of the type judged likely to be sought by the typical public library user, it may be omitted.

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Biography H 1330

1. General rule.

b. [Class of persons]—Biography. (Continued)

Section 1.b reads, This heading **[class of persons]—Biography** designates the group of people to which the biographee belongs, as discussed in the work being cataloged, for example, **Musicians, Heads of state, Football coaches, Italy—Kings and rulers**, and so forth.

There is a note. It says, This heading is assigned to individual biographies primarily for the benefit of public library users who are seeking biographies of a particular type of person rather than a particular individual. The heading should be selected with that in mind. If the biographee belongs to no discernable class of persons of the type judged likely to be sought by the typical public library user, it may be omitted.

We have to ask ourselves, what groups does Gandhi fall into, and are they the types of groups that public library users would look for? Well, he was a lawyer and a social reformer, and the resource we are cataloging discusses both aspects of his life. And lawyers and social reformers are the types of groups of people that public library users may be interested in. But can we assign two classes of persons headings?

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

b. [Class of persons]-Biography. (Continued)

Persons with multifaceted lives or careers. For a biography that discusses the entire life of a person, select the single heading that best encompasses his or her career or lifelong pursuits. In order to achieve consistency, check the bibliographic database first to determine the heading that has been used on other biographies of the same person. If a single heading cannot adequately encompass the person's career or lifelong pursuits, assign more than one heading, provided that the work being cataloged discusses the various aspects of the person's life designated by the headings assigned. If the work focuses on only one facet, assign only that one heading. For example, if a work discusses Albert Schweitzer's experiences only as a medical missionary, assign a heading for only that aspect of his career.

Headings qualified by sex or ethnic group. Assign headings that specify the sex or ethnic group of the class of persons, such as **Women architects**, **African American lawyers**, etc., if that is a significant aspect of the work. When assigning this heading, assign it *in addition to the unqualified heading for the class of persons*. Examples:

Title: "Just make them beautiful": the many worlds of a designing woman / by Helen Rose.
600 10 \$a Rose, Helen.
650 #0 \$a Costume designers \$z California \$z Los Angeles \$v Biography.
650 #0 \$a Women costume designers \$z California \$z Los Angeles \$v Biography.

For the answer to that question, we have to read the following paragraph, “persons with multifaceted lives or careers.” It says, For a biography that discusses the entire life of a person, select the single heading that best encompasses his or her career or lifelong pursuits. In order to achieve consistency, check the bibliographic database first to determine the heading that has been used on other biographies of the same person. If a single heading cannot adequately encompass the person's career or lifelong pursuits, assign more than one heading, provided that the work being cataloged discusses the various aspects of the person's life designated by the headings assigned. If the work focuses on only one facet, assign only that one heading. For example, if a work discusses Albert Schweitzer’s experiences only as a medical missionary, assign a heading for only that aspect of his career.

Okay, it looks like we have good news there: we can assign two headings, **Lawyers** and **Social reformers**, if the resource discusses both aspects. And it does, so let’s assign both.

Now, what about the next paragraph, “Headings qualified by sex or ethnic group.” It says, Assign headings that specify the sex or ethnic group of the class of persons, such as **Women architects**, **African American lawyers**, etc., if that is a significant aspect of the work. When assigning this heading, assign it *in addition to the unqualified heading for the class of persons*.

Is Gandhi’s sex or ethnic group important? Probably not, so let’s continue with the next paragraph. It is about collective biographies. We can skip it, because it is not pertinent, we can therefore move on to section 1.c.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

b. [Class of persons]-Biography. (Continued)

Collective biography with no class of persons. If a collective biography encompasses a group of people for which a heading representing a class of persons does not exist and cannot be formulated, establish the subdivision **-Biography** under the appropriate topical heading. For example, establish **Art-Biography** for a collective biography of artists, dealers, collectors, museum personnel, etc.

c. Headings for place, organization, or event. Assign headings of this type, with the subdivision **-Biography**, in addition to the class of persons heading described above, if that is a significant aspect of the work. *Examples:*

651 #0 \$a Ohio \$v Biography.
610 10 \$a United States. \$b Department of Agriculture
\$x Officials and employees \$v Biography.
650 #0 \$a World War, 1939-1945 \$v Biography.

d. Topical headings. Assign headings for other topics discussed in the work, using appropriate subject headings without biographical subdivisions.

2. Special situations.

a. Founders of major religions. Assign no heading to designate the class of persons.

b. Animals and pets. See H 1720, sec. 3.

c. Spouses of famous people. For a biographical work about a famous person's spouse who is or was active in a particular field, assign the heading for the class of persons that designates the spouse's own field. If the spouse has no special career of his or her own, and the work describes personal experiences as the spouse of a more famous person and his or her career, assign the heading for the specific category of spouses, for example,

It says, Assign headings for a place, organization, or event, with the subdivision **-Biography**, in addition to the class of persons heading described above, if that is a significant aspect of the work.

There is not a place, organization, or event discussed in this resource. We could probably assign **India—Biography**, but **India** will be brought out through the assignment of a subdivision in the classes of persons heading, so it is not necessary to do so.

Section 1.d asks whether there are any other topics discussed in the resource. Any topic would have to represent at least 20 percent of the resource to merit a subject heading. We will cover that rule in a later unit.

As you can see, then, Section 1 covers all of the basic situations – it's the "general rule" – and now section 2 covers special situations. Is Gandhi the founder of a major religion? No. Is this resource about his animals or pets? No. Is he the spouse of a famous person? Let's read that paragraph and see what it says.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 3.3

<p><i>c. Spouses of famous people.</i> For a biographical work about a famous person's spouse who is or was active in a particular field, assign the heading for the class of persons that designates the spouse's own field. If the spouse has no special career of his or her own, and the work describes personal experiences as the spouse of a more famous person and his or her career, assign the heading for the specific category of spouses, for example, Ambassadors' spouses, Entertainers' spouses, etc., as the "class of persons" heading. If appropriate, also assign headings for the name of the more famous person and the class of persons to which he or she belongs.</p> <p><i>d. Immigrants.</i> See H 1581, sec. 3.c.</p> <p><i>H 1330 Page 4 September 2013</i></p>	<p><i>Subject Headings Manual</i></p>
<p>Biography H 1330</p> <p><i>3. Partial biography.</i> To works about an individual person that are less than 50% biographical, assign only the name of the person, subdivided if appropriate by subdivisions listed in H 1110, and the appropriate topical headings. Do not assign headings to designate the class of persons,</p>	

For a biographical work about a famous person's spouse who is or was active in a particular field, assign the heading for the class of persons that designates the spouse's own field. If the spouse has no special career of his or her own, and the work describes personal experiences as the spouse of a more famous person and his or her career, assign the heading for the specific category of spouses, for example, **Ambassadors' spouses**, **Entertainers' spouses**, etc., as the "class of persons" heading. If appropriate, also assign headings for the name of the more famous person and the class of persons to which he or she belongs.

Let's ask ourselves here. Is Gandhi famous in his own right, or is he famous as the husband of his wife? He is famous in his own right, so this paragraph, Section 2.c, does not apply.

Was Gandhi an immigrant? No, so that section does not apply either.

And finally, is this a partial biography? Well, let's read Section 3 to find out. It says, To works about an individual person that are less than 50% biographical....

Wait. Ok. Hold on a minute! Hold on a minute. We've already decided that this resource is 70 percent biographical, so this paragraph does not apply either.

And that is the end of the instruction sheet. We can now look at the headings that we have compiled to assign to this resource.

Interpreting Instruction Sheets

- **Example**

Title: Mahatma Gandhi, Father of India: A Biography

Instruction sheet: H 1330, Biography

Gandhi, Mahatma, 1869-1948.
Lawyers—India—Biography.
Social reformers—India—Biography.

We have assigned

- **Gandhi, Mahatma, 1869-1948.** (Notice that it is *not* subdivided by biography because the instruction sheet explicitly told us not to do that.)

We have also assigned two classes of persons headings, subdivided by biography. They are

- **Lawyers—India—Biography.**
- and **Social reformers—India—Biography.**

The subdivision **—India** in both of those headings is authorized by the rules for geographic subdivision, which we will discuss in Unit 6.