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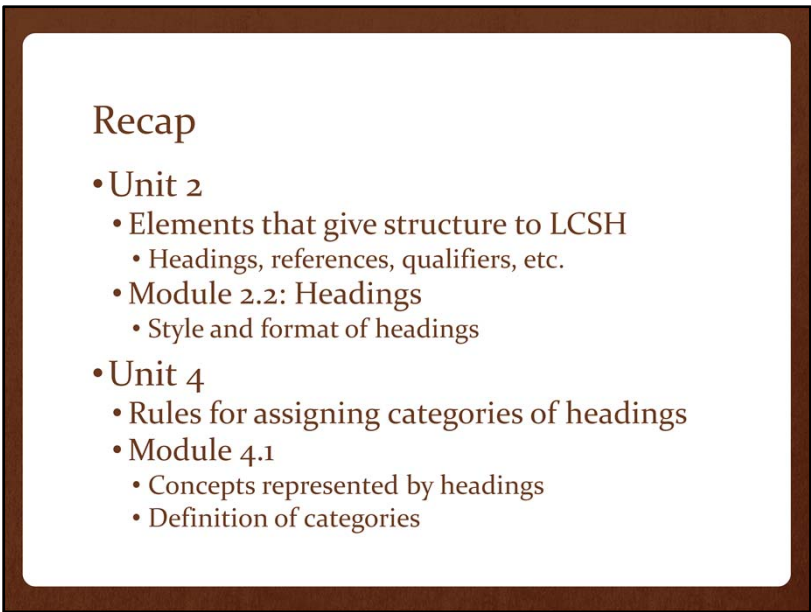
# Library of Congress Subject Headings

Module 4.1  
Categories of Headings

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Policy and Standards Division  
Library of Congress  
October 2016



Recap

- Unit 2
  - Elements that give structure to LCSH
    - Headings, references, qualifiers, etc.
  - Module 2.2: Headings
    - Style and format of headings
- Unit 4
  - Rules for assigning categories of headings
  - Module 4.1
    - Concepts represented by headings
    - Definition of categories

In Unit 2, we provided overviews of the various elements that give structure to LCSH, including headings, references, qualifiers, and scope notes. Module 2.2 on headings showed you the various ways that headings can be formatted: they can consist of a single word or a phrase; they can be inverted or in natural-language order; and so on.

In this module we will look more closely at the types of concepts that are represented by LC subject headings. We will also explain how the headings are arranged into categories that determine how they are assigned and subdivided.

Each of the other modules in this unit is devoted to a particular category of headings, and explores the rules for assigning them.

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- Concrete objects
- Abstract concepts
- Philosophies
- Disciplines
- Activities, processes
- Organisms
- Classes of persons
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

A wide variety of concepts is represented by headings established in LCSH.

Concrete objects are well represented, including headings such as

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- Abstract concepts
- Philosophies
- Disciplines
- Activities, processes
- Organisms
- Classes of persons
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

**Knives, Rivers, and Automobiles.**

Abstract concepts such as

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- **Grace (Aesthetics)**
- Philosophies
- Disciplines
- Activities, processes
- Organisms
- Classes of persons
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

Abstract concepts such as **Grace (Aesthetics)**; **Bad news**; **Loneliness** are also represented.

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- **Grace (Aesthetics)**
- **Expressionism**
- Disciplines
- Activities, processes
- Organisms
- Classes of persons
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

Philosophies such as **Expressionism**, **Humanism**, **Anti-realism**, and **Positivism** are also established,

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- **Grace (Aesthetics)**
- **Expressionism**
- **Library science**
- Activities, processes
- Organisms
- Classes of persons
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

as are disciplines such as **Library science, Political science, Science, and History.**

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- **Grace (Aesthetics)**
- **Expressionism**
- **Library science**
- **Cataloging; Erosion; Fencing**
- **Organisms**
- Classes of persons
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

Activities and processes, such as **Cataloging, Erosion, Welding, and Strategic planning** are also present.

Organisms from the largest to the smallest are represented, including



Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- **Grace (Aesthetics)**
- **Expressionism**
- **Library science**
- **Cataloging; Erosion; Fencing**
- **Animals; Cows; Parasites**
- Classes of persons
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

**Dinosaurs, Cows, Parasites, Bacteria, and Paramecium.**

Numerous groups of people are also established in LCSH, including classes of persons such as

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- **Grace (Aesthetics)**
- **Expressionism**
- **Library science**
- **Cataloging; Erosion; Fencing**
- **Animals; Cows; Parasites**
- **Rabbis; Women**
- Ethnic groups
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

**Rabbis, Women, and Women rabbis,**

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- **Knives; Rivers**
- **Grace (Aesthetics)**
- **Expressionism**
- **Library science**
- **Cataloging; Erosion; Fencing**
- **Animals; Cows; Parasites**
- **Rabbis; Women**
- **Basques**
- Groups of fictitious and legendary characters
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

as well as ethnic groups like **Basques, Japanese, and German Americans.**

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- Knives; Rivers
- Grace (Aesthetics)
- Expressionism
- Library science
- Cataloging; Erosion; Fencing
- Animals; Cows; Parasites
- Rabbis; Women
- Basques
- Green children of Woolpit (Legendary characters)
- Fictitious places and corporate bodies

Groups of fictitious characters such as the **Green Children of Woolpit** and the **X-Men** are established,

as are fictitious places and corporate bodies, including

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- Knives; Rivers
- Grace (Aesthetics)
- Expressionism
- Library science
- Cataloging; Erosion; Fencing
- Animals; Cows; Parasites
- Rabbis; Women
- Basques
- Green children of Woolpit (Legendary characters)
- Middle Earth (Imaginary place)

**Middle Earth** and the **Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry**.

Selection of Concepts Represented by Subject Headings

- Named buildings  
**Stock Exchange Tower (Montréal, Québec)**
- Individual geographic features  
**Tibet, Plateau of**
- Individual events  
**Loma Prieta Earthquake, Calif., 1989**

But there are also others, such as named buildings like the Stock Exchange Tower in Montreal, the Empire State Building in New York City, and the Great Pyramid in Giza.

Headings for individual geographic features such as the Plateau of Tibet, the Ganges River, and the Alps are also provided, as are headings for individual events like the Loma Prieta Earthquake, the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 over the Indian Ocean in 2014, and Hurricane Katrina.

There are still more, though, because some headings that may be assigned are not established in LCSH at all, but they are in the LC/NACO Name Authority File. They include personal names, corporate names, jurisdictional names, titles, and name/title access points.

The structure of LCSH that we learned about in Unit 2 – the BTs, RTs, the UFs – organize what could easily devolve into chaos. But the structure does not help us to know how to assign the headings, or to know which subdivisions can be used with which headings. For that, we need to think about the broad categories into which most headings can be placed.

### Eight Categories of Subjects

- Established in the LC/NACO Name Authority File (NAF)
  - Personal names
  - Corporate names
  - Titles\*
  - Name/title access points\*

\*In some cases, titles and name/title access points may be “established” only through use on a bibliographic record

There are eight broad categories of headings that may be assigned as subjects.

Most access points established in the LC/NACO Name Authority File can be assigned as subject headings. This includes most personal and corporate names, as well as most titles and name/title access points.

They constitute four of the eight categories.

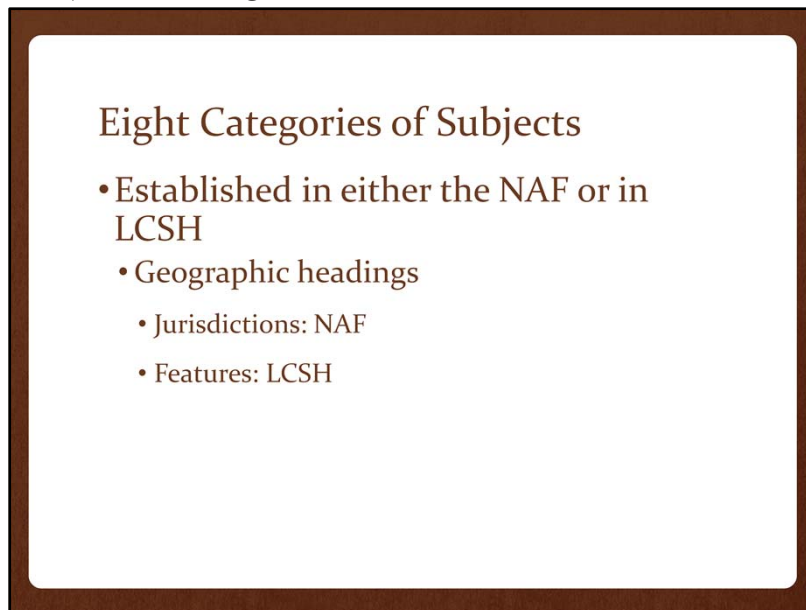
### Eight Categories of Subjects

- Established in *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH)
  - Topical headings
  - Chronological headings
  - Form headings

Three categories of headings are established in LCSH itself:

- topical headings,
- chronological headings, and
- form headings.





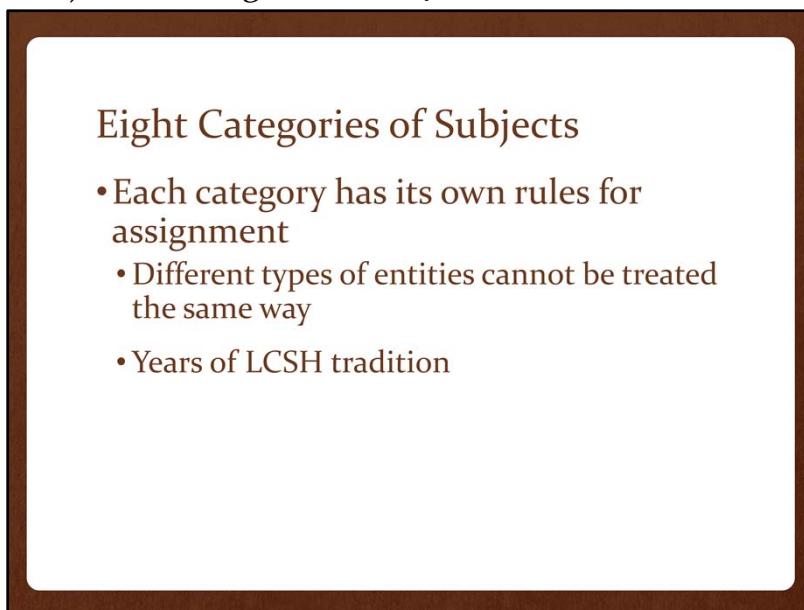
**Eight Categories of Subjects**

- Established in either the NAF or in LCSH
  - Geographic headings
    - Jurisdictions: NAF
    - Features: LCSH

There is also another category of headings, geographic headings, that can be established in either the NAF or in LCSH, depending on what type of geographic heading it is.

Simply speaking, places that are jurisdictional, such as countries, states, and cities, are established in the NAF.

Geographic features, such as rivers, mountains, and plateaus, are established in LCSH.



Each of these eight categories has its own rules for assignment, which are often based on the characteristics of the entities represented by the headings.

For example, how do you decide what subject heading to assign to a resource about a person with two or more bibliographic identities, that is, a person who uses two or more names when creating resources?

What about a resource that covers the history of a company whose name has changed over time?

Or a resource that is about a particular title written by a particular person?

Or a resource about a specific time period, or ethnic group, or species of animal?

Other times, the rules for a particular category are based on tradition that has developed over the past 100 years of LC subject heading assignment. For example, can the heading **Middle Ages**, which describes a general time period, be assigned to a particular resource? Or how do we decide among the very similar subdivisions –**History and criticism**, –**Criticism and interpretation**, and –**Criticism, interpretation, etc.**?

All of these questions, and more, can be answered by knowing which category is represented by a heading, because each category has its own rules for the assignment of headings and subdivisions.

### Eight Categories of Subjects

- Each category has its own rules for assignment
  - Different types of entities cannot be treated the same way
  - Years of LCSH tradition

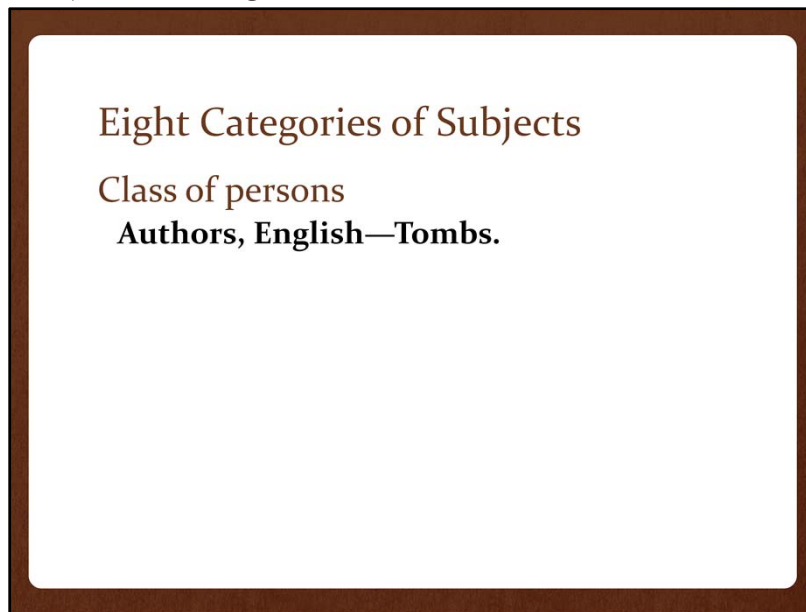
In this module, we will provide you with the information you need to be able to determine which headings fit which category.

We need to be very clear, though: In the next unit, Unit 5, we will explain the principles of heading assignment, and you will hear phrases such as “20 percent rule,” “intent of the author,” “concepts in the title,” and so forth. *That* unit is about determining which concepts to *bring out* in subject headings.

*This* module is about figuring out which headings fall into which categories so that you know which rules to apply after you have figured out what concepts are important in the resource.

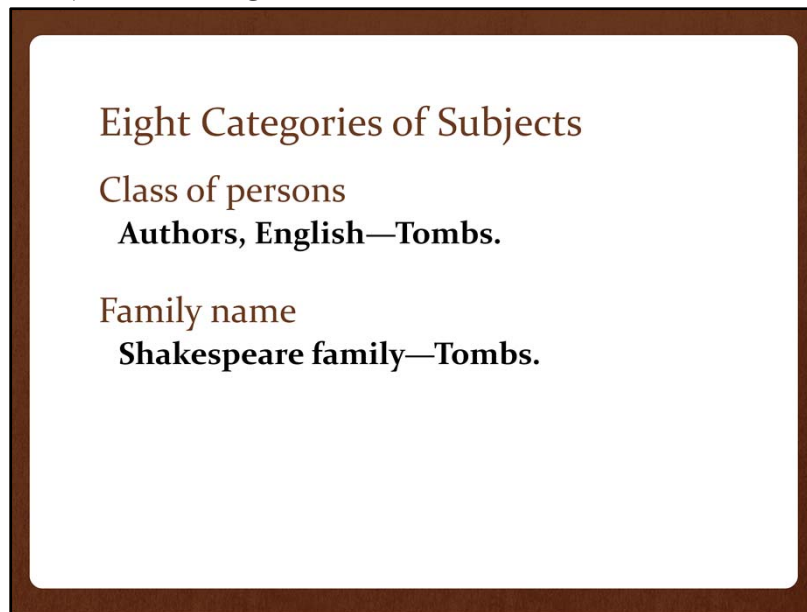
Rules tell us which headings we are and are not allowed to use in certain situations, which subdivisions can be assigned with those headings, and so on.

The remainder of the modules in Unit 4 will provide instruction on some of the rules for assigning particular categories of headings.

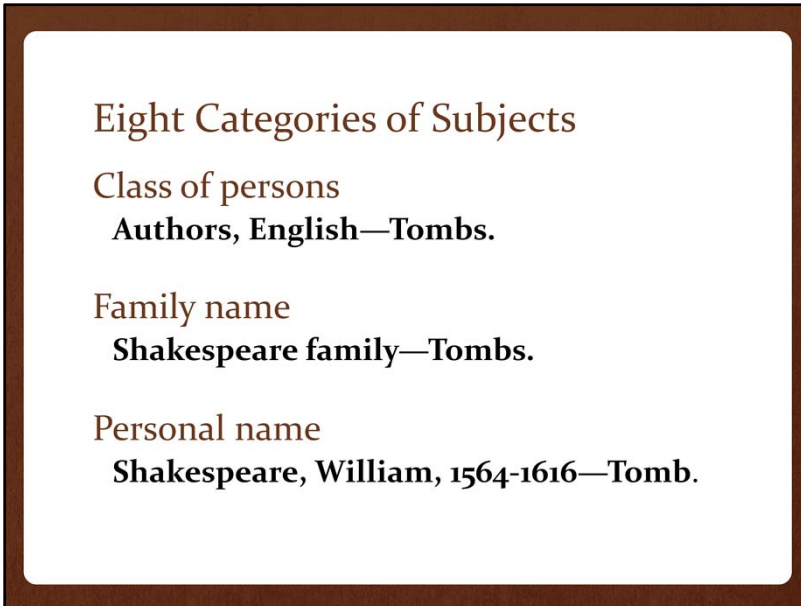


Before we begin, we would like to provide an example to show you why rules for assignment are dependent on the category to which a heading belongs.

For example, a resource may be about tombs in which members of a particular class, such as English authors, are buried.



The members of a family may be buried in one or more tombs, so it makes sense to subdivide the name of a family by **–Tombs.**



Eight Categories of Subjects

Class of persons  
**Authors, English—Tombs.**

Family name  
**Shakespeare family—Tombs.**

Personal name  
**Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616—Tomb.**

And the body of an individual person may be buried in a tomb, so it also makes sense to subdivide a personal name by **—Tomb**.

Notice that the subdivision in this case is singular, not plural, because it is quite rare actually for an individual to have more than one tomb!

Eight Categories of Subjects

Name/title access point

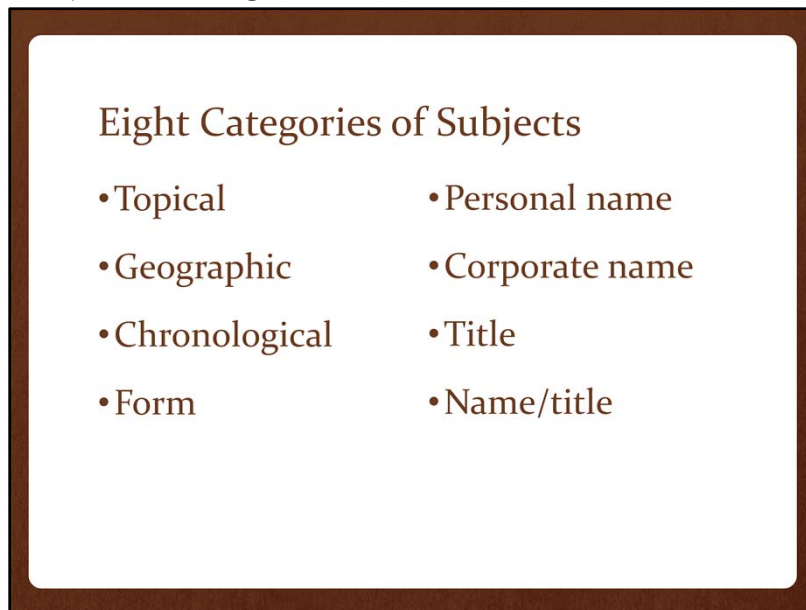
✘ Shakespeare, William, 1654-1616.  
Macbeth—Tombs.

Corporate name

✘ Chamberlain's Men (Theater company)  
—Tombs.

But resources such as Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* are not buried in tombs, and neither are corporate bodies like William Shakespeare's theater company, Lord Chamberlain's Men.

The categories for name/title access points and corporate names do not include the subdivision – **Tombs**, because in each case the heading-subdivision combination would be nonsensical.



In that example, we began to see that there are actually more than the eight categories that we mentioned earlier.

The example showed a personal name, a name/title entry, and a corporate name (which we covered), but also a class of persons and a family name, neither of which are on the list on your screen.



### Eight Categories of Subjects

- Each category consists of two or more subcategories
- Defined by *Subject Headings Manual* instruction sheets H 1095-H 1200
- Categories of free-floating and pattern subdivisions that may be used with any heading that fits the category, subject to some restrictions

The fact is that the eight categories each have subcategories, which are defined by the SHM instruction sheets that list free-floating and pattern subdivisions, H 1095-H 1200.

Each of these 35 instruction sheets is devoted to a category or subcategory, and the subdivisions in each instruction sheet are valid for use under any heading that fits the category or subcategory, with some caveats that we will cover in Unit 6.

## The Subcategories

- Example 1
  - H 1105, Corporate Bodies
  - H 1151, Individual Educational Institutions
  - H 1155, Legislative Bodies
  - H 1159, Military Services
  - H 1186, Religious and Monastic Orders
  - H 1187, Christian Denominations

For example, there are six instruction sheets for corporate bodies. H 1105 covers corporate bodies in general, but the SHM also defines five subcategories of corporate bodies: individual educational institutions, legislative bodies, military services, religious and monastic orders, and Christian denominations.

Each of these instruction sheets includes subdivisions that are specific to the category being covered. For example, H 1151, which lists the subdivisions that can be used with individual educational institutions, includes the subdivisions –**Benefactors**, –**Curricula**, –**Student housing**, and dozens more that relate to specific concerns of individual educational institutions.

On the other hand, instruction sheet H 1155, Legislative Bodies, includes subdivisions like –**Contested elections**, –**Freedom of debate**, and –**Term of office**. H 1159 has subdivisions like –**Guided missile personnel**, –**Intelligence specialists**, and –**Operational readiness**.

H 1186 includes –**Liturgy**, –**Prayers and devotions**, and –**Rules**. Finally, H 1187, Christian Denominations, includes –**Bishops**, –**Doctrines**, –**Liturgy**, and –**Sermons**.

You can see that there is not much overlap among the instruction sheets for the subcategories of corporate bodies. H 1105 is the general instruction sheet whose subdivisions can be used with any corporate body (again, subject to some restrictions). It includes the type of subdivisions that you would expect, like –**Employees** (because what would a corporate body be without employees?), –**Membership**, and even –**Security measures**.

The question is: how do you know whether the heading you want to assign belongs to a particular category?

**The Subcategories**

- **Example 1**
  - Each instruction sheet includes a scope statement

**H 1155, Legislative Bodies**

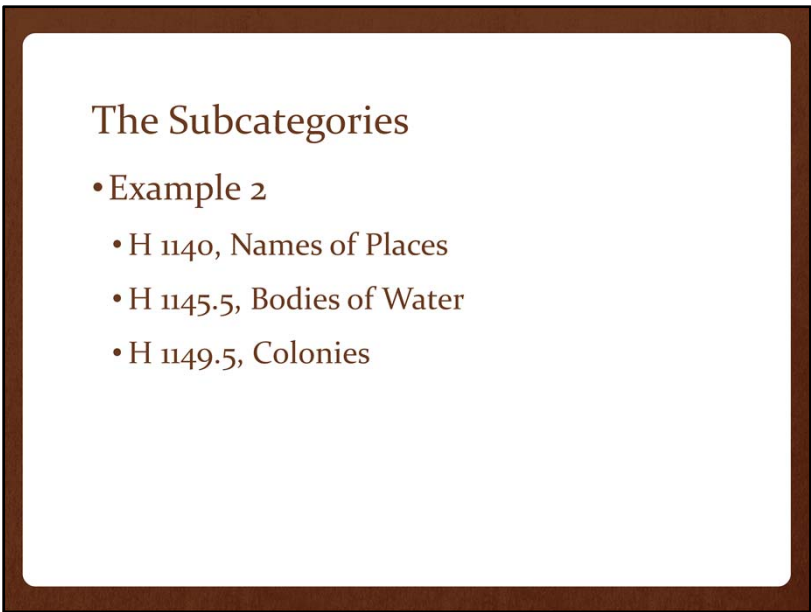
Names of individual legislative bodies, including their individual chambers, established as corporate bodies in the name authority file. *Examples:* **Great Britain. Parliament; California. Legislature. Assembly; Germany (West). Bundestag; Germany. Reichstag.**

Each of the instruction sheets includes a scope statement. This is the scope statement for H 1155, Legislative Bodies.

It says that the instruction sheet covers

Names of individual legislative bodies, including their individual chambers, established as corporate bodies in the name authority file. For example:

- Great Britain. Parliament**
- California. Legislature. Assembly**
- Germany (West). Bundestag**
- Germany. Reichstag.**



The Subcategories

- Example 2
  - H 1140, Names of Places
  - H 1145.5, Bodies of Water
  - H 1149.5, Colonies

Here is another example.

There are three instruction sheets specific to geographic places.

H 1140 covers the category of geographic places in general, and includes the subdivisions

- Climate**,
- Ethnic relations**, and
- Kings and rulers**, among many others.

The other two instruction sheets for geographic places are subcategories.

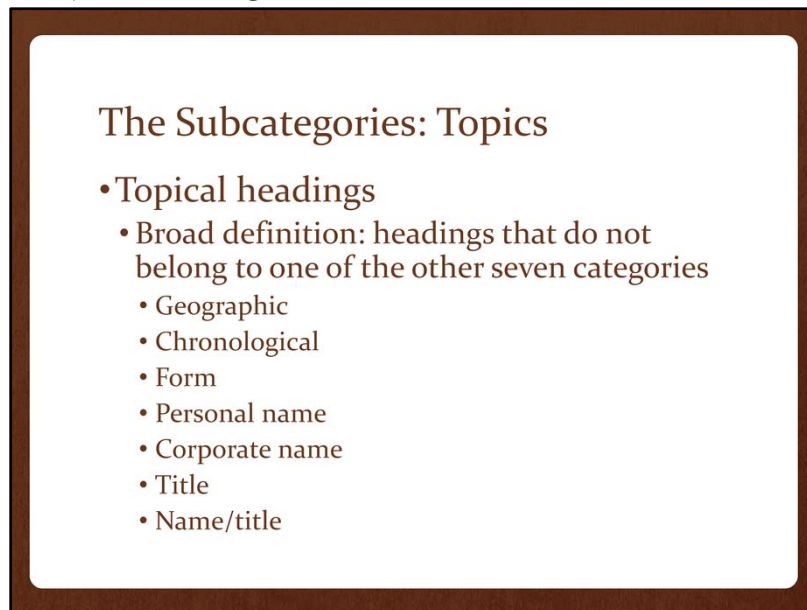
H 1145.5 includes subdivisions that are appropriate to bodies of water, such as

- Navigation** and
- Water rights**.

In other words, subdivisions that would make sense only when they are used with bodies of water.

H 1149.5 includes subdivisions appropriate to colonies, like

- Defenses** and
- Social policy**.



The Subcategories: Topics

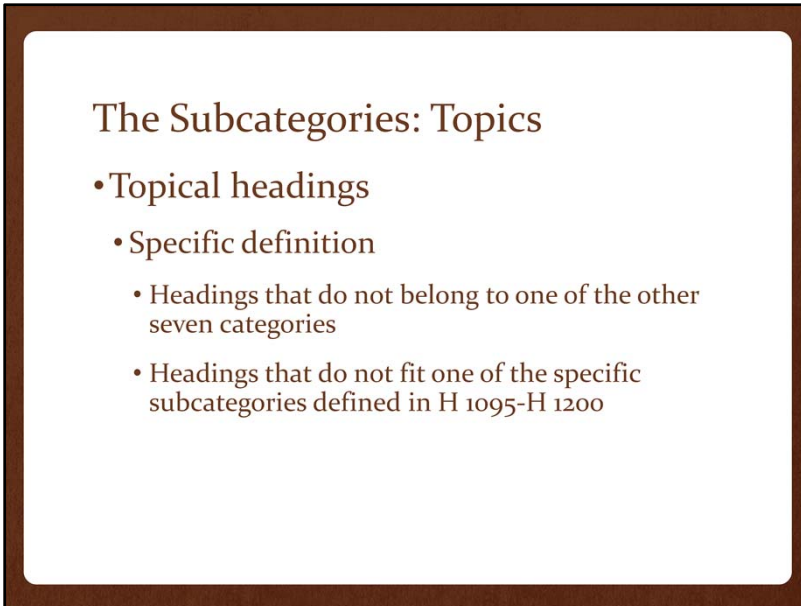
- Topical headings
  - Broad definition: headings that do not belong to one of the other seven categories
    - Geographic
    - Chronological
    - Form
    - Personal name
    - Corporate name
    - Title
    - Name/title

The two examples that we have seen so far were for particular categories: corporate names and names of geographic places.

The largest category of headings that is established in LCSH (as opposed to in the NAF) is the topical headings.

Here is an important thing to remember, though: the phrase “topical heading” is used in two very different ways.

Broadly speaking, “topical heading” is the phrase we use to refer to headings that do not fall into one of the other seven categories of headings which are listed on the screen.



### The Subcategories: Topics

- Topical headings
  - Specific definition
    - Headings that do not belong to one of the other seven categories
    - Headings that do not fit one of the specific subcategories defined in H 1095-H 1200

More precisely, though, topical headings are those that do not belong to one of the other categories, and *also* do not fit into any of the subcategories defined by the free-floating and pattern instruction sheets.

The Subcategories: Topics

- Topical headings

**French poetry**

- ✗ H 1149, Chemicals
- ✗ H 1153, Industries
- ✗ H 1154.5, Legal Topics
- ✓ H 1156, Literatures

**French poetry** is a literature heading, not a topical heading.

The heading **French poetry** is not the name of a person, corporate body, or place. It is not a title or a name/title access point. It therefore fits the broad definition of “topical heading.” But does it fit the more specific definition?

For that, we have to look at the list of free-floating and pattern instruction sheets to see if it fits any of those categories.

An abbreviated list of those instruction sheets is on your screen.

Is French literature a chemical? No. Is it an industry? No. Is it a legal topic? No. Is it a type of literature? Yes, most definitely.

Therefore, **French poetry** does not fit the stricter definition. For subject and subdivision assignment purposes, **French poetry** is not treated as a topical heading.

Now, please note: we are not talking about MARC coding here. In MARC format, French poetry is coded as a topical heading, but MARC’s definition of a topical heading is different from LCSH’s.

The Subcategories: Topics

- Topical headings

**Airplanes**

- ✗ H 1103, Ethnic Groups
- ✗ H 1146, Animals
- ✗ H 1150, Diseases
- ✗ H 1164, Organs and Regions of the Body
- ✗ H 1195, Land Vehicles

**Airplanes** is a topical heading.

Here is another example.

Like **French poetry**, the heading **Airplanes** is not the name of a person, corporate body, or place, and it is also not a title or a name/title access point. It therefore does fit the broad definition of “topical heading.”

But, what about the more specific definition? The heading **Airplanes** does not represent an ethnic group, an animal, a disease, an organ or region of the body, or a land vehicle – although airplanes are vehicles, they are not land vehicles.

Take our word for it that the heading does not fit into any of the other subcategories of headings in H 1095-H 1200, either.

**Airplanes** is therefore considered to be a topical heading for subject assignment purposes.

This distinction is important because of the way one of the instruction sheets, H 1095, is worded.



The Subcategories: Topics

From H 1095, Form and Topical Subdivisions of General Application

**Folklore**  
Use under names of countries, cities, etc., and under classes of persons, ethnic groups, uniform titles of sacred works, and topical headings for works discussing those topics as themes in folklore and for collections of folklore texts on those subjects.

We will talk in much more detail about H 1095 in Module 5.5, but for now, just be aware that H 1095 consists of subdivisions that do not belong into one of the other free-floating and pattern lists, or those that could fit into all of them. It is a hodgepodge.

For this reason, it includes instructions that are worded in very specific and yet very vague ways.

Take this instruction, for example. It says,

Use [**Folklore**] under names of countries, cities, etc., and under classes of persons, ethnic groups, uniform titles of sacred works, and topical headings for works discussing those topics as themes in folklore and for collections of folklore texts on those subjects.

The Subcategories: Topics

From H 1095, Form and Topical Subdivisions of General Application

**sv Folklore**  
Use under names of countries, cities, etc., and under classes of persons, ethnic groups, uniform titles of sacred works, and topical headings for works discussing those topics as themes in folklore and for collections of folklore texts on those subjects.

The first four categories of headings under which the subfield –**Folklore** may be used are names of places, classes of persons, ethnic groups, and uniform titles of sacred works.

Each of those is a subcategory that has its own instruction sheet.

The Subcategories: Topics

From H 1095, Form and Topical Subdivisions of General Application

**sv Folklore**  
Use under names of countries, cities, etc., and under classes of persons, ethnic groups, uniform titles of sacred works, **and topical headings** for works discussing those topics as themes in folklore and for collections of folklore texts on those subjects.

The “and topical headings” refers to those headings that are established in LCSH that are not chronological headings or geographic headings, or form headings AND that do not have their own instruction sheet.

The Subcategories: Topics

From H 1095, Form and Topical Subdivisions of General Application

**sv Folklore**  
Use under names of countries, cities, etc., and under classes of persons, ethnic groups, uniform titles of sacred works, and topical headings for works discussing those topics as themes in folklore and for collections of folklore texts on those subjects.

**✗ Construction industry—Folklore.**  
**✓ Monsters—Folklore.**

For example, **Construction industry** is covered by the pattern instruction sheet for industries, and **—Folklore** does not appear in that instruction sheet, so we cannot assign **—Folklore** after it.

But **Monsters** is not covered by any of the free-floating or pattern instruction sheets, so we *can* assign **Monsters—Folklore**.

H 1095: “Use under subjects”

- The subdivision may be used with subject headings of all types

§v Congresses (*H 1460*)  
Use under subjects.

§x Congresses §x Attendance (*H 1460*)  
Use under subjects.

H 1095 also includes instructions reading “Use under subjects.”

Those subdivisions can be used under any subject heading at all, regardless of the category or subcategory to which it belongs.

This means that “Use under topical headings” and “Use under subjects” are NOT equivalent instructions. You should keep in mind that they mean very different things.

**Instruction Sheets on Specific Topics**

- Provide additional information on heading assignment
  - Examples
    - H 620, Chronological Headings
    - H 1945.5, Posters
    - H 1998, Religious Aspects of Topics
    - H 2220, Translations

There are many dozens of instruction sheets that provide additional information about the assignment of headings for specific topics, and it is important to consider whether a heading is covered by one or more of those instruction sheets.

For example, do you think you want to assign a chronological heading? Then you should consult H 620, which is devoted to chronological headings, but you also should consult H 1647, which covers the policies for assigning headings to resources about history and topics treated from a historical standpoint.

Are you cataloging a poster, or a resource about posters? Consult H 1945.5 for guidance.

Maybe you are cataloging a translation. In that case, H 2220 will be useful to you.

**Summary**

- Eight categories of subject headings
  - Established in LCSH or the NAF
  - Divided into subcategories
    - Determine the rules for assigning the headings
  - Dozens of instruction sheets about specific topics provide further information

In summary, there are eight categories of subject headings, some of which are established in LCSH. In other cases, the access point for the entity is established in the NAF but may be used as a subject.

The eight broad categories are further divided into subcategories, and the subcategory to which a heading belongs determines the rules for assigning the heading.

There are also dozens of instruction sheets on special topics, and they provide specific guidance on the assignment of headings for those topics.