BACKGROUND: In 1999, several changes were made in subject cataloging practice for works about, or bibliographies of, reference books: (1) For works about reference books on specific topics, the practice of dividing the heading **Reference books** *by those topics was discontinued in favor of the use under subjects of a newly established free-floating topical subdivision* **–Reference books**; *(2) For bibliographies of reference books on particular topics, the practice of assigning two headings, one of the type* **Reference books –[topic]–Bibliography** *and a second of the type* **[topic]–Bibliography** *was discontinued in favor of the assignment of the single heading* **[topic]–Reference books–Bibliography**; *(3) For works on reference books published or used in a particular place, the heading* **Reference books** *was authorized to be divided by place,   and the practice of assigning the heading* **[place]–Imprints** *as an additional heading to bibliographies of such books was discontinued.   This instruction sheet provides guidelines for the usage of the heading* **Reference books** *and the free-floating topical subdivision* **–Reference books**.

1. General.   Treat the heading **Reference books** *(May Subd Geog)* as a topical heading, assigning it only to works *about* reference books.   *Example:*

> *Title: Introduction to the use of reference books.*
> ```
>       650 #0 $a Reference books.
> ```

2. Qualification by language.   For general works about reference books in languages other than English, assign the heading **Reference books** qualified by the name of the language, for example, **Reference books, French**.

Do not construct headings of the type **Reference books, Canadian** or **Reference books, Brazilian**, where the qualifiers represent names of places rather than languages.

3.   Reference books published or used in specific places.   For works about reference books published or used in specific places, subdivide the heading by the name of the place.   *Example:*

> *Title: Thai reference books and their history.*
> ```
>       650 #0 $a Reference books $z Thailand.
> ```

Add a heading of the type **Reference books, [*name of language*]** only if the language is not the primary language spoken in the place shown in the subdivision.   For example, for a work on Czech language reference books published in the United States, the headings **Reference books–United States** and **Reference books, Czech** would be assigned.   However, for a work on French language reference books published in France, only the heading **Reference books–France** would be assigned.

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*4. **Reference books in specific fields**.*   Assign headings subdivided by the free-floating topical subdivision **–Reference books** to works about reference books in particular fields.   *Examples:*

```
650 #0 $a Science $x Reference books.
650 #0 $a Life insurance $x Reference books.
600 10 $a Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616 $x Reference books.
651 #0 $a Canada $x Politics and government $x Reference books.
651 #0 $a San Francisco (Calif.) $x Reference books.
```

*5. **Bibliographies of reference books**.*

*a. **Non-topical bibliographies**.*   Assign the heading **Reference books–Bibliography** to general bibliographies of reference books as well as to bibliographies of English-language reference books.   If a work is a general bibliography of reference books in a specific language other than English, assign a heading of the type **Reference books, [*name of language*]– Bibliography**.   If a work is a general bibliography of reference books published or used in a specific place, assign the heading **Reference books– [*place*]–Bibliography**.   *Examples:*

> *Title:*   *Home reference books in print.*
> ```
> 650 #0 $a Reference books $v Bibliography.
> ```

> *Title:*   *Spanish language reference books : an annotated bibliography.*
> ```
> 650 #0 $a Reference books, Spanish $v Bibliography.
> ```

> *Title:*   *A brief guide to reference books listed in the Nigerian national bibliography.*
> ```
> 650 #0 $a Reference books $z Nigeria $v Bibliography.
> ```

5. Bibliographies of reference books.   (Continued)

b. Bibliographies in specific fields.   Assign the heading **[*topic*]–Reference books–Bibliography** to bibliographies of the reference sources in particular fields.   *Example:*

> *Title: Economics : a bibliographic guide to reference books.*
> ```
> 650 #0 $a Economics $x Reference books
>        $v Bibliography.
> ```

If a bibliography is limited to reference books in a specific language other than English, assign an additional heading of the type **Reference books, [*language qualifier*]–Bibliography**.   *Example:*

> *Title: Reference books on Canada : a bibliography of French-*
> *language works.*
> ```
> 651 #0 $a Canada $x Reference books $v Bibliography.
> 650 #0 $a Reference books, French $v Bibliography.
> ```

Do not assign an additional heading of the type **Reference books–[*place*]–Bibliography** unless the work emphasizes the place of publication or availability.