WORLDCAT

What is WorldCat?

- Possibly the most popular database available via OCLC's FirstSearch service.
- One of 12 databases available through Nebraska's statewide FirstSearch subscription.
- A union catalog containing over 84 million records describing material owned by libraries around the world. Materials include:
    - Books, videos, sound recordings, maps, manuscripts, *and anything else libraries have cataloged using OCLC's cataloging services*.
- Records represent material in over 470 languages and material dating back to 1,000 B.C.
- A great place to go when you're trying to identify and locate an item you don't own locally (because you want to purchase it, refer a patron to it, or request it via ILL).

How can I access WorldCat?

- Through the unique FirstSearch account assigned to your library (click on the **FirstSearch** link in NebraskAccess).

- Through the streamlined WorldCat-only FirstSearch account customized by NLC (click on the **WorldCat** link in NebraskAccess).

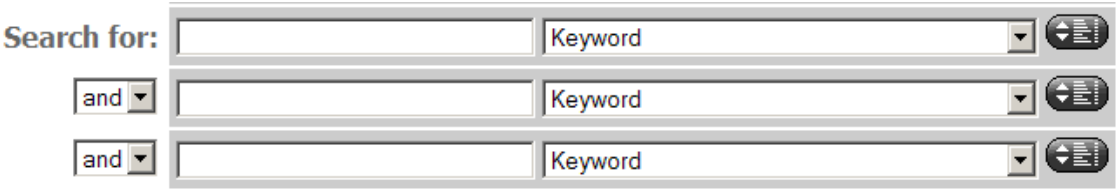
What's the advantage of the WorldCat-only account?

When you login to FirstSearch using the WorldCat link in NebraskAccess, you will be taken directly to the WorldCat Advanced Search screen. The Advanced Search screen contains multiple limit options that can be applied to your search. As a rule, searches conducted via the Advanced Search screen retrieve fewer but more targeted results than those conducted via the Basic Search screen.

Advanced Search Screen

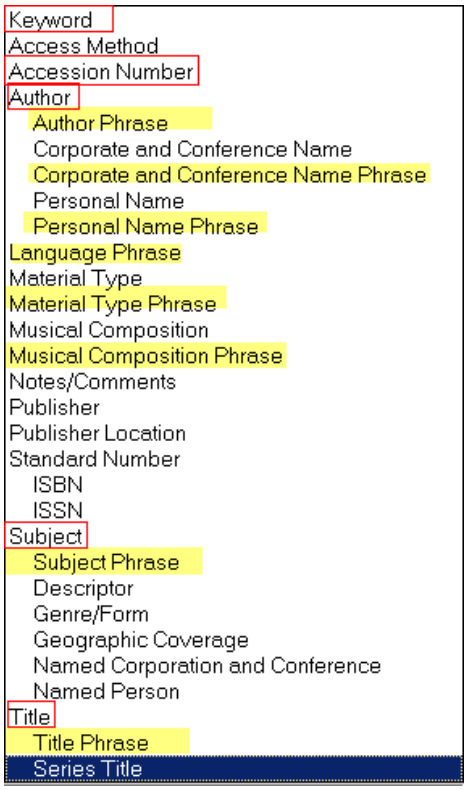
At the top of the Advanced Search screen you will see **three search boxes** into which you can type words or phrases. The contents of the search boxes can be combined using **Boolean operators** (AND, OR, or NOT).

To the right of each search box is a drop-down menu listing searchable indexes in WorldCat. Use the menu to select the index in which you'd like to search for your particular word or phrase.



Most searching can be successfully conducted using the following five indexes:

- **Keyword** – Searches multiple indexes, including the Author, Title, Notes, and Subject indexes. This is the default search index.
- **Author** – Searches all of the following indexes: Author, Corporate and Conference Name, and Personal Name. Name order doesn't matter.
- **Subject** – Searches the following indexes: Descriptor, Genre/Form, Geographic Coverage, Named Corporation and Conference, and Named Person.
- **Title** – Searches the Title index and the Series Title index.
- **Accession Number** – Each record in WorldCat is assigned a unique accession number. If you know the accession number assigned to the record you are interested in, an accession number search will retrieve just that record.



⚠ **Phrase Indexes:** In addition to the five indexes listed above, the drop-down menu lists a number of "Phrase" indexes (e.g. *Author Phrase, Subject Phrase, Title Phrase*). Phrase indexes are useful when you need precision (e.g. two authors share the same name and you need to be able to specify which one you're interested in), but they are also unforgiving. If the search string you type in varies even slightly from the contents of the indexed field, you won't retrieve the record(s) you are searching for. For example, an Author Phrase search for ***Baum, Frank*** won't retrieve records containing ***Baum, L. Frank*** in the Author field.

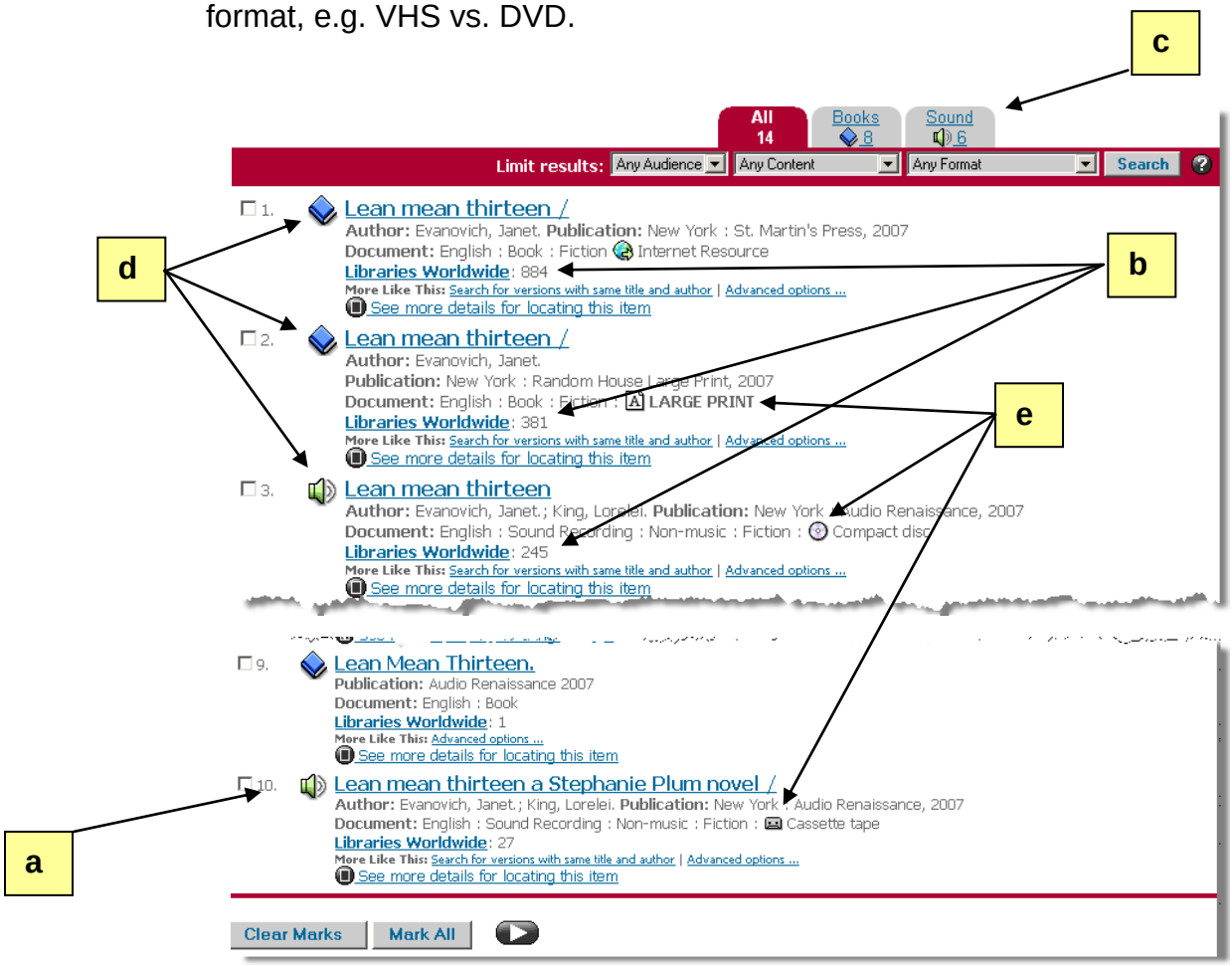
STOP & SEARCH

Search #1 – Perform an AUTHOR / TITLE search to retrieve records describing *Lean Mean Thirteen* by Janet Evanovich

- **How many records did you retrieve?** _____
- **What formats are available?** _____

List of Records

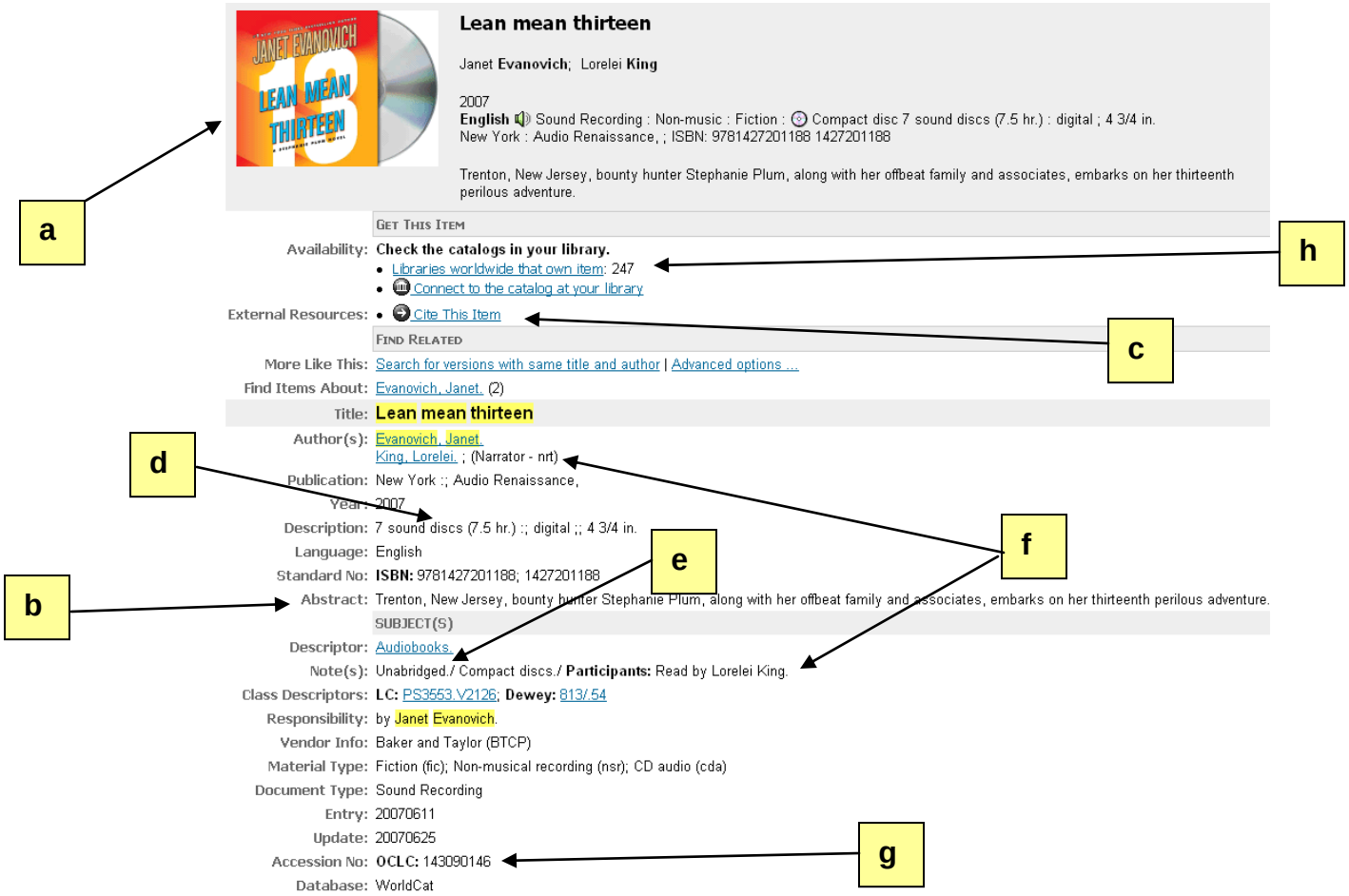
a. Records are displayed 10 per screen.
b. Records are listed by the number of libraries that hold the item. Commonly held items (items held by the most libraries) display higher in the list.
c. Document type tabs break results down by document type. Click on a tab to display only records for that document type.
d. Document type icons to the left of each record indicate item format.
e. Smaller icons within the brief record may provide additional information about format, e.g. VHS vs. DVD.



Detailed Records

To retrieve the detailed record for item #3 in the result list pictured above, click on its title. In addition to providing traditional bibliographic information, such as author, title, publisher, etc., detailed records may also include:

a. Cover art
b. Abstract
c. Cite This Item link
d. Item length (# of pages / discs / hours)
e. Abridged / Unabridged
f. Narrator – appears in author and notes field
g. Accession number
h. Libraries worldwide that own item link



Libraries Worldwide That Own Item

Click on this link to see a list of libraries that own this item. Depending on the number of libraries that own the item, and their geographic distribution, you will be presented with one of three holdings displays:

1. **Nebraska** – if lots of Nebraska libraries own the item, you will initially see just a list of Nebraska libraries.
2. **Regional** – if just a few Nebraska libraries own the item, but lots of libraries in neighboring states (CO, IA, KS, MO, SD, WY) own it, you will initially see a list of regional libraries.
3. **All libraries** – if just a few Nebraska libraries and just a few regional libraries own the item, you will see a list of ALL libraries.

Click on **Display All Libraries** to override a Nebraska or Regional holdings display and view ALL libraries that own the item.

Title: Lean mean thirteen **Author:** Evanovich, Janet **Accession Number:** 143090146

Display All Libraries

Libraries with Item: "Lean mean thirteen"(Record for Item | Get This Item)

Location	Library	Code
US,NE	BELLEVUE PUB LIBR	BLL
US,NE	BLAIR PUB LIBR	B9F
US,NE	KILGORE MEM LIBR	YNB
US,NE	LINCOLN CITY LIBR	NLN
US,NE	OMAHA PUB LIBR	NBO
US,NE	PLATTSMOUTH PUB LIBR	PM@
US,NE	WILSON PUB LIBR	CZQ
US,CO	BUD WERNER LIBR	HEV
US,CO	DENVER PUB LIBR	DPL
US,CO	LAFAYETTE PUB LIBR	FIU
US,CO	LONGMONT PUB LIBR	CNL
US,CO	RANGEVIEW LIBR DIST	BYV
US,CO	VAIL PUB LIBR	HFZ
US,CO	WELD LIBR DIST	SO$
US,IA	ALTOONA PUB LIBR	FQ2
US,IA	BURLINGTON PUB LIBR	BUP

If a library name appears as a link, click on it to go to the library's OPAC. Clicking on the **LINCOLN CITY LIBR** link in the above holdings display jumps you directly to the item record in Lincoln City Library's OPAC, where you can scroll down and see the following "Copy/Holding" information. (Note: Results vary by OPAC; in some cases clicking on a linked library name will just take you to the OPAC search screen where you will have to redo your search.)

Lean mean thirteen
Author: Evanovich, Janet

Session timeout: 25:07

Return

Copy/Holding information

Location	Collection	Call No.	Status	Due Date	
Bennett Martin Public Library	Adult Compact Discs	Compact disc Evanovich (M) (Unabridg)	Item being held		Add Copy to MyList
Bennett Martin Public Library	Adult Compact Discs	Compact disc Evanovich (M) (Unabridg)	Item being held		Add Copy to MyList
Bennett Martin Public Library	Adult Compact Discs	Compact disc Evanovich (M) (Unabridg)	Checked out	07/24/2007	Add Copy to MyList

If the first few lines of information are any indicator, you won't have much luck finding a copy of Janet Evanovich's latest release here!

Holdings information is **ONLY** available for libraries that use OCLC's cataloging service!

Don't assume an item is not available from a library just because that library doesn't appear in the "Libraries with item" list associated with a particular record. If the item is available in multiple editions/formats (e.g., hardback, paperback), remember to check the holdings information associated with those other editions/formats too.

Advanced Search Screen Limit Options

Being able to limit searches in a large database like WorldCat is very useful. The WorldCat Advanced Search screen offers the following limit options:

1. Year
2. Language
3. Number of Libraries
4. Document Type
5. Audience
6. Content
7. Format
8. Library Code

STOP & SEARCH

Search #2 – Perform an AUTHOR / TITLE search to retrieve records describing *Holes* by Louis Sachar.

- **How many records did you retrieve?** _____

Redo your search, only this time limit it to Spanish-language print editions.

- **Now how many records did you retrieve?** _____
- **How many Nebraska libraries own Spanish-language print editions?**

  Please list them here: _____

Subject Searching

So far we've searched WorldCat for know items using author/title searches. Now I'd like to switch gears and show you how you can use WorldCat to search for material on particular topics when you don't have a specific author or title in mind. This is useful for collection development, as well as when you are trying to identify material to request via interlibrary loan for a patron.

STOP & SEARCH

Search #3 – A local teacher is looking for up-to-date non-fiction books on weather to use with her students. She'd like publication dates of 2000 or later. Using WorldCat, can you retrieve a list of titles that might work for her?

- **What search term(s) did you use?** _____
- **Which index did you select from the drop-down menu?** _____
- **What search limiters did you use?** _____

  _____

  _____

- **How many records did you retrieve?** _____

Redo your search, only this time also limit to items owned by Grand Island Public Library (Library Code: GIP).

- **Now how many records did you retrieve?** _____

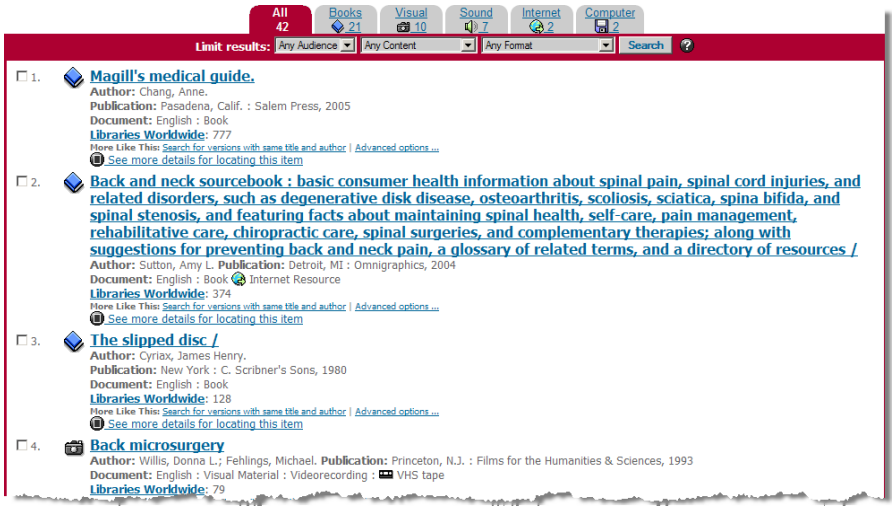
Identifying Official Subject Headings

If your initial search terms retrieve satisfactory results you probably don't need to concern yourself with "official" subject headings. However, if you're not happy with your results, taking the time to identify and use official subject headings can make a huge difference in their quality!

There are two main strategies you can use to identify official subject headings. The easiest strategy may be to identify one item that is really "on topic." Once you've done this, pull up the detailed record for the item. Scroll down to the Descriptor field to see which official subject headings have been assigned to it. If one of these subject headings looks spot on, then redo your search using that subject heading.

For example, say you are looking for books for a patron who has been diagnosed with a slipped disk.

A keyword search on *slipped disk* produces less than stellar results—a total of 42 records, 21 of which are books.



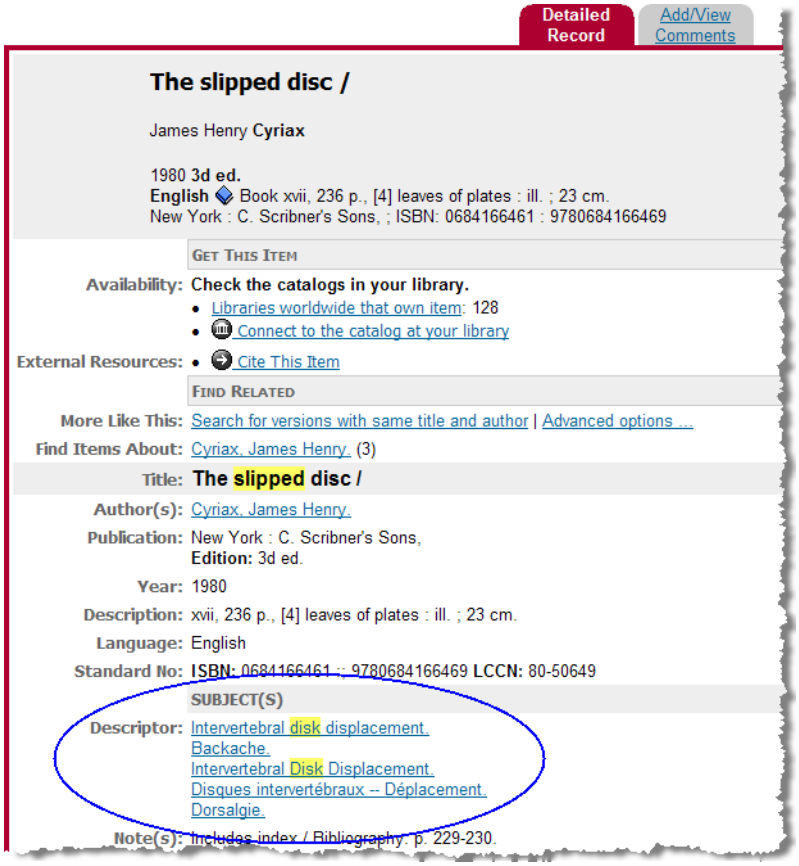
(Note: A search on *slipped disc* where disc is spelled with a "c" retrieves 349 records, but most describe compact *discs* that include songs containing the word *slipped*!)

Record #3 in the screenshot above looks like it is on our topic, even though the publication date may be a bit old. To see what subject headings have been assigned to this item, click on its title to retrieve the detailed record.

As you can see from the screenshot to the right, several official subject headings have been assigned to this item.

Of these, the one that looks like it would most likely be assigned to material about slipped disks is **Intervertebral disk displacement** – nothing you'd ever come up with on your own!

Now redo your search using this official subject heading. Do this by returning to the search screen, typing Intervertebral disk displacement in the first search box, and selecting SUBJECT from the drop-down menu, or just click on the subject heading within the record.



A SUBJECT search for **Intervertebral disk displacement** will retrieve approximately 260 records, 160 of which describe books. All retrieved records appear to be on the right topic!

STOP & SEARCH

Search #4 – A patron would like to get some "how-to" books on carving gourds. Using WorldCat, can you retrieve a list of titles that might work for her?

Start out with a KEYWORD or SUBJECT search on the term *gourds*.

- **How many results did you retrieve?** _____
- **How would you characterize them?** _____

Now try a KEYWORD search on *carving gourds*.

- **How many results did you retrieve?** _____

- **How would you characterize them?** _____

Scan your results in order to identify the item that comes closest to being a "how-to" book on carving gourds.

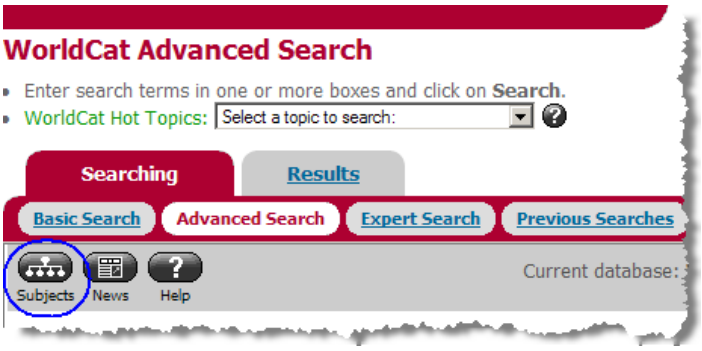
- **What is the title of the item?** _____
- **What subject heading has been assigned to it?** _____

Redo your search, only this time try a SUBJECT search using your newly identified subject heading.

- **How many records did you retrieve?** _____
- **How would you characterize them?** _____

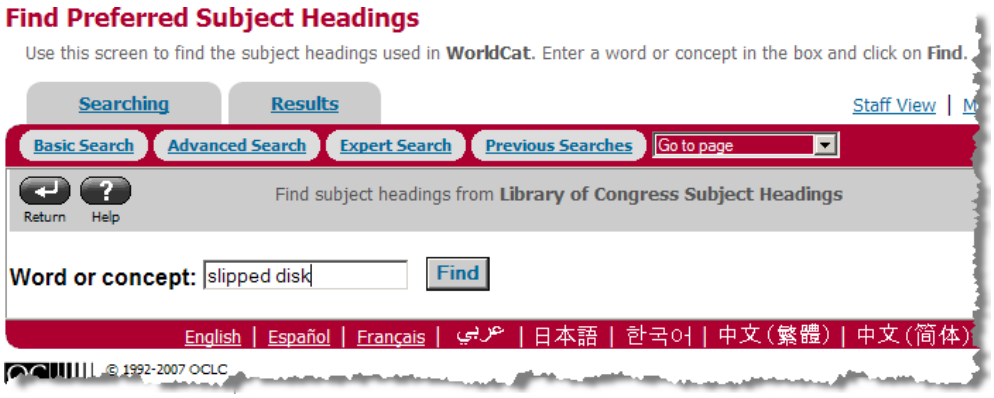
Find Preferred Subject Headings

A second method of identifying official subject headings is to use the "Find preferred subjects" button. This button appears in the upper-left-hand portion of the WorldCat Advanced Search screen.

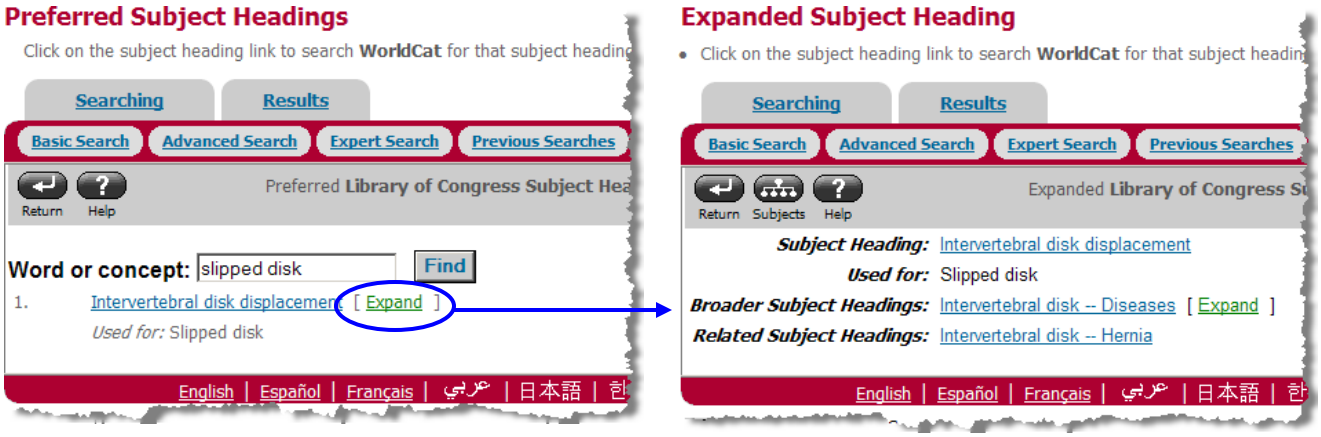


Click on the button to go to the Find Preferred Subject Headings screen.

This screen consists of a single search box into which you are prompted to type a word or concept. If we wanted to try to find the official subject heading to use when searching for material about slipped disks, for instance, we could type in *slipped disk* and click on **Find**.



Since *slipped disk* is a "Used for" term for the official subject heading, we get a referral to *Intervertebral disk displacement*. At this point we can click directly on the official subject heading to launch a new search, or we can click on the green **Expand** link to display broader, narrower, and related subject headings.



STOP & SEARCH

Search #5 – A patron is worried about his wife who is experiencing a lot of stress at work. Use the "Find preferred subjects" button to identify an official subject heading that will retrieve works on this topic.

- **What is the official subject heading?** _____
- **Can you also identify a broader subject heading?** _____
- **How about a narrower subject heading?** _____