

Your Library Today



Mr. Breitsprecher's Edition

September 2008

FREE!

Doin' Dewey: Think Like A Baby

Want to make learning easy? Think about new information in terms of what you already know. Think in terms of what you are already comfortable with.

Melvil Dewey used this to organize libraries and make it easy to find information. The Dewey Decimal System is based on a topic we all understand – **OURSELVES!**

100s – Who Am I? Books About Us. The first section in Dewey are books that are numbered from 100-199. The most important thing most people are interested in is themselves. Some call this taking care of #1. Dewey started by creating a group for books that are about who we are. This means how we think and act. These are the things that make us human.

200s – Who Made Me? After we think about ourselves, many want to think about how we got here. The next group that Dewey created is about religion and Myths. These books try to explain how people got on earth and why we are here.

300s – Who Is My Neighbor? The next thing that interests people are the others around us. Dewey knew there would need to be a groups of people to share information with. These are books about how people live, the things we do, and folklore.

400s – How Do I Communicate With My Neighbors? If we have things to share with our neighbors, we need to be able to talk to them. This group of Dewey numbers is about languages, how we write, and grammar.

500s – What Will I Talk About? Natural Sciences. Now that we know our neighbor and how to

Meet Melvil Dewey

Libraries have many, many books. Librarians need to know what books are in the library. A list of books in the library is called a “catalog.” Today, libraries keep this catalog on computers.

Librarians group books by what they are about – the subject matter. This is how they are placed on shelves. This is called “classification.”

Melvil Dewey, who lived from 1851 to 1931, invented a way to do this. His Dewey Decimal System is still used today. Melville Louis Kossuth Dewey, the youngest of five children, was born on December 10, 1851, in a small town in northern New York.

Later he shortened his first name to Melvil, dropped his middle names and, for a short time, even spelled his last name as Dui. As a child, Dewey loved to organize and sort things and also had a talent for mathematics.

What Melvil Dewey did was think about what each book was about. He knew that when we look for books in the library, we are interested in books by topic or subject. Instead of organizing books based on the cost of the book, he organized books based on what each book was about.



communicate, we need things to talk about. Dewey made this group for books about math and science.

600s – What Will I Do With Science? Applied Sciences. After we learn about numbers and science, we need to find ways to use it. The next Dewey grouping is about APPLIED SCIENCE. It is about how we use science in medicine and technology.

700s – Time For a Break! What Will I Do For FUN? We have covered a lot of ground – almost everything we need to understand ourselves, share with our neighbors, and use science. Dewey knew that we would also want to relax and have fun. This group is about arts and recreation.

800s – Time to Get Serious Again: Authors and Books That Make Me Who I Am. After a fun break, we look at the important books we read, which we call literature. Famous authors and famous books have special section in

the Dewey Decimal System. Plays, poetry books, and even some novels are here.

900's – Who, What, Where, When, Why? How Did Everything Happen? In order to understand everything else, we need to answer these questions. Dewey created a section for geography and history

000-099s. Everything Else - Room to Grow! Remember, Dewey lived a long time ago. He could never have imagined many of the things we talk and read about today. He knew this, so he created a special grouping for everything else that would come along. This includes topics such as aliens and software.

Learning is easier if we think about what we already know. Want to find information, nonfiction, in the library? Do what Melvil Dewey did. Think like a baby!