

# What's that book about?

By scott virtues

This is an edited version of the Dewey decimal system, and is handy for generating book topics in medieval to futuristic roleplaying games. It seems that characters are always rummaging through libraries looking for rare books, and now you can keep rolling up books until they find what they're looking for. You'd be surprised just how many subjects would never cross your mind.

Roll 3d10 to generate a number from 000 to 999. Since the broad topics all end in zero, it's a good idea to roll 2d10(x10) twice for any library to find out what they specialize in, or what the owner's collection focuses on. Then, 50% of books will be in these categories, and the rest can be anything from the list.

Example: overall roll 250 (Christian orders and local church) and 740 (Drawing & decorative arts). Now, half of the books will be in these categories, half can be anything else.

If you are running alternate world games, feel free to replace references to real-world religions or languages with whatever religions or languages exist in your world. Maybe Latin is elvish, South America is the Western Isles.

If you roll a topic that hasn't been discovered yet, just go up in the list until you find one that fits. In futuristic games, feel free to subdivide a result like "Modern physics" into anything you think would be applicable, like "Forcefield mechanics", "Hyperdrive systems", etc.

I hope this helps add some color to your game. The next time the players start rummaging, you can answer a question like, "What's the main focus of this library?" or "How about this book? Or that one?"

Enjoy.

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## The 000 s

000 Generalities	050-059 General serials & their indexes
001 Knowledge	060-069 Museum science
002 The book	070-079 News media, journalism, publishing
003 Systems	080-089 General collections
004 Data processing Computer science	090-099 Manuscripts & rare books
005 Computer programming, programs, data	
006 Special computer methods	
010-019 Bibliographies	
020-029 Library & information sciences	

030-039 General encyclopedic works	
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### The 100 s

100-109 Philosophy  110 Metaphysics: 111 Ontology 113 Cosmology (Philosophy of nature) 114 Space 115 Time 116 Change 117 Structure 118 Force & Energy 119 Number & quantity  120-129 Epistemology, causation, humankind  130 Paranormal phenomena: 131 Occult methods for achieving well-being 133 Parapsychology & occultism 135 Dreams & mysteries 137 Divinatory graphology 138 Physiognomy 139 Phrenology  140-149 Specific philosophical schools	150 Psychology 152 Perception, movement, emotions, drives 153 Mental processes & intelligence 154 Subconscious & altered states 155 Differential & developmental psychology 156 Comparative psychology 158 Applied psychology  160-169 Logic  170-179 Ethics (Moral philosophy)  180 Ancient, medieval, Oriental philosophy: 181 Oriental philosophy 182 Pre-Socratic Greek philosophies 183 Sophistic & Socratic philosophies 184 Platonic philosophy 185 Aristotelian philosophy 186 Skeptic and Neoplatonic philosophies 187 Epicurean philosophy 188 Stoic philosophy 189 Medieval Western philosophy  190-199 Modern Western philosophy
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### The 200 s

200-209 Religions  210-219 Theology  220-229 Bible  230-239 Christian theology  240-249 Christian morality	250-259 Christian orders & local church  260-269 Christian social theology  270-279 Christian church history  280-289 Christian denominations & sects  290-299 Other & comparative religions
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### The 300 s

300 Social sciences 301 Sociology & anthropology 302 Social interaction 303 Social processes 304 Factors affecting social behavior 305 Social groups 306 Culture & institutions 307 Communities	350 Public administration 351 Of central governments 352 Of local governments 353 of U.S. federal & state governments 354 Of specific central governments 355 Military science 356 Foot forces & warfare 357 Mounted forces & warfare 358 Other specialized forces & services
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<p>310-319 General statistics &amp; demographics</p> <p>320 Political science</p> <p>321 Systems of governments &amp; states</p> <p>322 Relation of state to organized groups</p> <p>323 Civil &amp; political rights</p> <p>324 The political process</p> <p>325 International migration &amp; colonization</p> <p>326 Slavery &amp; emancipation</p> <p>327 International relations</p> <p>328 The legislative process</p> <p>330 Economics</p> <p>331 Labor economics</p> <p>332 Financial economics</p> <p>333 Land economics</p> <p>334 Cooperatives</p> <p>335 Socialism &amp; related systems</p> <p>336 Public finance</p> <p>337 International economics</p> <p>338 Production</p> <p>339 Macroeconomics &amp; related topics</p> <p>340 Law</p> <p>341 International law</p> <p>342 Constitutional &amp; administrative law</p> <p>343 Military, tax, trade, industrial law</p> <p>344 Social, labor, welfare, &amp; related law</p> <p>345 Criminal law</p> <p>346 Private law</p> <p>347 Civil procedure &amp; courts</p> <p>348 Law (Statutes), regulations, cases</p> <p>349 Law of specific jurisdictions &amp; areas</p>	<p>359 Sea (Naval) forces &amp; warfare</p> <p>360 Social services; association</p> <p>361 General social problems &amp; services</p> <p>362 Social welfare problems &amp; services</p> <p>363 Other social problems &amp; services</p> <p>364 Criminology</p> <p>365 Penal &amp; related institutions</p> <p>366 Association</p> <p>367 General clubs</p> <p>368 Insurance</p> <p>369 Miscellaneous associations</p> <p>370 Education</p> <p>371 School management; special education</p> <p>372 Elementary education</p> <p>373 Secondary education</p> <p>374 Adult education</p> <p>375 Curriculums</p> <p>376 Education of women</p> <p>377 Schools &amp; religion</p> <p>378 Higher education</p> <p>379 Government regulation, control, support</p> <p>380 Commerce, communications, transport</p> <p>381 Internal commerce (Domestic trade)</p> <p>382 International commerce (Foreign trade)</p> <p>383 Postal communication</p> <p>384 Communications Telecommunication</p> <p>385 Railroad transportation</p> <p>386 Inland waterway &amp; ferry transportation</p> <p>387 Water, air, space transportation</p> <p>388 Transportation Ground transportation</p> <p>389 Metrology &amp; standardization</p> <p>390 Customs, etiquette, folklore</p> <p>391 Costume &amp; personal appearance</p> <p>392 Customs of life cycle &amp; domestic life</p> <p>393 Death customs</p> <p>394 General customs</p> <p>395 Etiquette (Manners)</p> <p>398 Folklore</p> <p>399 Customs of war &amp; diplomacy</p>
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### The 400 s

<p>400-409 Languages</p> <p>410-419 Linguistics</p> <p>420-429 English &amp; Old English</p> <p>430-439 Germanic languages</p> <p>440-449 Romance languages: French etc</p>	<p>450-459 Italian, Romanian, Rhaeto-Romantic</p> <p>460-469 Spanish &amp; Portugese languages</p> <p>470-479 Italic &amp; Latin</p> <p>480-489 Hellenic languages Classical Greek</p> <p>490 Other languages:</p> <p>491 East Indo-European &amp; Celtic languages</p> <p>492 Afro-Asiatic languages Semitic</p> <p>493 Non-Semitic Afro-Asiatic languages</p> <p>494 Ural-Altaic, Paleosiberian, Dravidian</p> <p>495 Languages of East &amp; Southeast Asia</p>
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	496 African languages 497 North American native languages 498 South American native languages 499 Miscellaneous languages
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**The 500 s**

500-509 Natural sciences & mathematics: general  510 Mathematics 511 General principles 512 Algebra & number theory 513 Arithmetic 514 Topology 515 Analysis 516 Geometry 519 Probabilities & applied mathematics  520 Astronomy & allied sciences 521 Celestial mechanics 522 Techniques, equipment, materials 523 Specific celestial bodies & phenomena 525 Earth (Astronomical geography) 526 Mathematical geography 527 Celestial navigation 528 Ephemerides 529 Chronology  530 Physics 531 Classical mechanics Solid mechanics 532 Fluid mechanics Liquid mechanics 533 Gas mechanics 534 Sound & related vibrations 535 Light & parafhotic phenomena 536 Heat 537 Electricity & electronics 538 Magnetism 539 Modern physics  540 Chemistry & allied sciences 541 Physical & theoretical chemistry 542 Techniques, equipment, materials 543 Analytical chemistry 544 Qualitative analysis 545 Quantitative analysis 546 Inorganic chemistry 547 Organic chemistry 548 Crystallography 549 Mineralogy	550 Earth sciences 551 Geology, hydrology, meteorology 552 Petrology 553 Economic geology 554-59 Earth sciences by region  560-569 Paleontology: Fossils by order  570 Life sciences 572 Human races 573 Physical anthropology 574 Biology 575 Evolution & genetics 576 Microbiology 577 General nature of life 578 Microscopy in biology 579 Collection and preservation  580-589 Botany  590-599 Zoology
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**The 600 s**

600 Technology (Applied sciences) 601 Philosophy & theory 602 Miscellany 603 Dictionaries & encyclopedias	650 Management & auxiliary services 651 Office services 652 Processes of written communication 653 Shorthand
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<p>604 Special topics  605 Serial publications  606 Organizations  607 Education, research, related topics  608 Invention &amp; patents  609 Historical, areas, persons treatment</p> <p>610 Medical sciences Medicine  611 Human anatomy, cytology, histology  612 Human physiology  613 Promotion of health  614 Incidence &amp; prevention of disease  615 Pharmacology &amp; therapeutics  616 Diseases  617 Surgery &amp; related medical specialities  618 Gynecology &amp; other medical specialities  619 Experimental medicine</p> <p>620 Engineering &amp; allied operations  621 Applied physics  622 Mining &amp; related operations  623 Military &amp; nautical engineering  624 Civil engineering  625 Engineering of railroads, roads  627 Hydraulic engineering  628 Sanitary &amp; municipal engineering  629 Other branches of engineering</p> <p>630 Agriculture  631 Techniques, equipment, materials  632 Plant injuries, diseases, pests  633 Field &amp; plantation crops  634 Orchards, fruits, forestry  635 Garden crops (Horticulture)  636 Animal husbandry  637 Processing dairy &amp; related products  638 Insect culture  639 Hunting, fishing, conservation</p> <p>640 Home economics &amp; family living  641 Food &amp; drink  642 Meals &amp; table service  643 Housing &amp; household equipment  644 Household utilities  645 Household furnishings  646 Sewing, clothing, personal living  647 Management of public households  648 Housekeeping  649 Child rearing &amp; home care of sick</p>	<p>657 Accounting  658 General management  659 Advertising &amp; public relations</p> <p>660 Chemical engineering  661 Industrial chemicals technology  662 Explosives, fuels technology  663 Beverage technology  664 Food technology  665 Industrial oils, fats, waxes, gases  666 Ceramic &amp; allied technologies  667 Cleaning, color, related technologies  668 Technology of other organic products  669 Metallurgy</p> <p>670 Manufacturing  671 Metalworking &amp; metal products  672 Iron, steel, other iron alloys  673 Nonferrous metals  674 Lumber processing, wood products, cork  675 Leather &amp; fur processing  676 Pulp &amp; paper technology  677 Textiles  678 Elastomers &amp; elastomer products  679 Other products of specific materials</p> <p>680 Manufacture for specific uses  681 Precision instruments &amp; other devices  682 Small forge work (Blacksmithing)  683 Hardware &amp; household appliances  684 Furnishings &amp; home workshops  685 Leather, fur, related products  686 Printing &amp; related activities  687 Clothing  688 Other final products &amp; packaging</p> <p>690 Buildings  691 Building materials  692 Auxiliary construction practices  693 Specific materials &amp; purposes  694 Wood construction Carpentry  695 Roof covering  696 Utilities  697 Heating, ventilating, air-conditioning  698 Detail finishing</p>
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### The 700 s

<p>700 The arts  701 Arts: Philosophy &amp; theory  702 Arts: Miscellany  703 Arts: Dictionaries &amp; encyclopedias  704 Arts: Special topics  705 Arts: Serial publications  706 Arts: Organizations &amp; management  707 Arts: Education, research, related topics</p>	<p>750-759 Painting techniques</p> <p>760 Graphic arts Printmaking &amp; prints  761 Relief processes (Block printing)  762 Not assigned or no longer used  763 Lithographic (Planographic) processes  764 Chromolithography &amp; serigraphy  765 Metal engraving</p>
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708 Arts: Galleries, museums, private collections 709 Arts: Historical, areas, persons treatment  710 Civic & landscape art 711 Area planning (Civic art) 712 Landscape architecture 713 Landscape architecture of trafficways 714 Water features 715 Woody plants 716 Herbaceous plants 717 Structures 718 Landscape design of cemeteries 719 Natural landscapes  720-729 Architecture  730 Plastic arts Sculpture 731-735 Sculpture by style or period 736 Carving & carvings 737 Numismatics & sigillography 738 Ceramic arts 739 Art metalwork  740 Drawing & decorative arts 741-744 Drawing & drawings 745 Decorative arts 746 Textile arts 747 Interior decoration 748 Glass 749 Furniture & accessories	766 Mezzotinting & related processes 767 Etching & drypoint 769 Prints  770-779 Photography  780-789 Music  790 Recreational & performing arts 791 Public performances 792 Stage presentations 793 Indoor games & amusements 794 Indoor games of skill 795 Games of chance 796 Athletic & outdoor sports & games 797 Aquatic & air sports 798 Equestrian sports & animal racing 799 Fishing, hunting, shooting
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### The 800 s

800-809 Literature & rhetoric  810-819 American literature in English  820-829 English & Old English literatures  830-839 Literatures of Germanic languages  840-849 Literatures of Romance languages	850-859 Italian literature  860-869 Spanish & Portuguese literatures  870-879 Italic & Latin literatures  880-889 Hellenic literatures Classical Greek  890 Literatures of other languages 891 East Indo-European & Celtic 892 Afro-Asiatic literatures Semitic 893 Non-Semitic Afro-Asiatic literatures 894 Ural-Altaic, Paleosiberian, Dravidian 895 Literatures of East & Southeast Asia 896 African literatures 897 North American native literatures 898 South American native literatures 899 Other literatures
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### The 900 s

900-909 Geography & history, by region  910-919 Geography & travel, by region	950-959 General history of Asia Far East  960-969 General history of Africa
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920-929 Biography, genealogy, insignia	970-979 General history of North America
930-939 History of ancient world, by region	980-989 General history of South America
940-949 General history of Europe	990-998 General history of other areas
	999 Extraterrestrial worlds