Appendix: The Survey Instrument

The four classification categories described by Katz* below have been used in one format or another by many libraries for years. Each type of category is defined and brief examples provided below.

Katz Classifications Descriptions / Examples

Directional - General or directional information; rarely requires more than geographical knowledge of key locations; e.g., Where is the catalog?

Ready Reference - Requires single, straightforward answer such as those found in standard reference works in print or online; e.g., How long is the Amazon River?

Specific-search - Queries usually require multiple resources; e.g., Where can I find information about gender bias in business?

Research - Lengthy detailed assistance; may require a specialist.


The questions or information queries that follow are typical of those received at the reference desk at many institutions. Some of these questions may not be typical of those asked at your particular institution but, using your overall reference experience, please try to categorize each question as you think you would if you were in that type of library environment.

Using the categories described by Katz, please assign each reference question to one, and only one, category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Directional</th>
<th>Ready Reference</th>
<th>Specific Search</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>I am unable to place this into a category</th>
<th>I would not record this as a reference question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have laptop computers available for checkout?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>I need to find critical analyses of books by Alice Walker.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have one of the blue sheets that talk about business resources?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>I’m trying to access FirstSearch from home and it’s asking me for a password. What am I doing wrong?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have the Wall Street Journal for January of this year?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know how Joan of Arc was executed?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>I need help using the microfilm reader.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>How do I use the computer to register for a course or workshop?</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>I need the section where I would find information on the economy of France.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Non-resource based</td>
<td>Skill based</td>
<td>Strategy Based</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you own the book entitled Broken Trust?</td>
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<td>How do I renew my books?</td>
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<td>How late is the fitness center open today?</td>
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<td>There is a strange person bothering me on the second floor—can you help?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do I change my margins in a Word document?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do I cite a government document in APA style?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I need books and articles about censorship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May I use your stapler?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I need articles about innocent people who were wrongly given the death penalty.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where do I find call number 811.54?</td>
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<td>How do I access the wireless network?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The four categories below comprise the new classification devised by Warner** in 2001. Each type of category is defined and brief examples provided below.

traditions in Africa.
I need a recipe for sweet potato casserole.
How do I cite a web page in MLA style?
How do I get a book from another library?
Do you have the latest issue of the journal Contemporary Psychology?
Do you have that orange piece of paper that lists educational web sites on it?
How do I use the computer to check my property taxes?
May I borrow a pencil?
How do I connect my laptop to the library computer network?
I need information on how religion has affected children’s literature.
Do you have a scanner I can use?
Where can I find critiques of Shakespeare’s Hamlet?
I need the section of the library where I can find books on Greek mythology.
Can you show me how to reduce on the copier?

Demographic information:

Q3 Please select one category that best fits your library:
  public
  academic
  special
  school
  other

Q4 Please provide the approximate size of your library collection:
  0-9,999 volumes
  10,000-49,999 volumes
  50,000-99,999 volumes
  100,000-249,999 volumes
  250,000-499,999 volumes
  500,000-999,999 volumes
  Over 1,000,000 volumes

Q5 How many years have you been working at a reference desk?
  0-2 years
  3-5 years
  6-10 years
  11-20 years
  more than 20 years

Q6 Please indicate your educational background (check all that apply):
  Associate degree
  Baccalaureate degree
  Graduate student in library and information science (MLS)
  Master’s degree in library and information science (MLS)
  Master’s degree in a subject other than library and information science
  PhD in library science
  PhD in a subject other than library and information science
  Other

Q7 Please select the position description that best fits your current position:
  Graduate assistant in library and information science

Q8 Please select your age group:
  24 & under
  25-29
  30-39
Graduate student in library and information science 40-49
Library clerk 50-59
Library technical assistant 60-69
Librarian (MLS) over 70
Professor in a school of library and information science
Other

Q9 Do you have any comments that you would like to add about classifying reference questions?