

Education Level

Definition

Dublin Core - a general statement describing the education or training context. Alternatively, a more specific statement of the location of the audience in terms of its progression through an education or training context.

Usage

- **NSDL usage** - an appropriate learning level or range, for training or formal or informal education, associated with a resource
- **Field usage** - strongly recommend; always include the corresponding broad-group term when using finer-level terms
- **Number of occurrences** - repeat the field as necessary

Controlled vocabulary terms and definitions

Terms are in bold italics. Definitions are included. A hierarchy is implied in this vocabulary, with seven broad-group terms encompassing finer-level terms. When a finer-level term is used, repeat the Education Level metadata field to include the corresponding broad-group term.

- **Pre-Kindergarten** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for child learners engaged in activities and/or experiences that are intended to effect developmental changes from birth to entrance in kindergarten (or grade 1 when kindergarten is not attended)
- **Elementary School** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in kindergarten through grade 5
 - **Early Elementary** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in kindergarten through grade 2
 - **Kindergarten** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners who are generally four-year-old to six-year-old children being introduced to school
 - **Grade 1** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 1
 - **Grade 2** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 2
 - **Upper Elementary** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grades 3 through 5
 - **Grade 3** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 3
 - **Grade 4** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 4
 - **Grade 5** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 5
- **Middle School** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grades 6 through 8
 - **Grade 6** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 6
 - **Grade 7** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 7
 - **Grade 8** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 8
- **High School** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grades 9 through 12
 - **Grade 9** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 9
 - **Grade 10** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 10
 - **Grade 11** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 11
 - **Grade 12** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in grade 12
- **Higher Education** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for postsecondary learners pursuing a degree or certificate
 - **Undergraduate (Lower Division)** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners engaged in lower-level introductory coursework in an undergraduate college or university program
 - **Grade 13** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners engaged in courses typically offered in the first year of undergraduate study; may also be used to designate a level of coursework as introductory general survey
 - **Grade 14** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners engaged in introductory coursework typically offered in the second year of undergraduate study
 - **Undergraduate (Upper Division)** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners engaged in advanced coursework in an undergraduate college or university program
 - **Grade 15** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners taking advanced coursework in undergraduate study
 - **Grade 16** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in the final year of undergraduate study; may also be used to designate the most advanced undergraduate coursework or capstone courses
 - **Technical Education (Lower Division)** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners engaged in lower-level or introductory courses in a technical/vocational program
 - **Technical Education (Upper Division)** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners engaged in advanced coursework in a technical/vocational program
 - **Graduate/Professional** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners pursuing an advanced or professional degree that requires a degree from a lower-level postsecondary program in either undergraduate or technical education
- **Informal Education** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learning driven by the individual (free-choice learning) out of interest or curiosity, taking place outside the realm of formal education [e.g., museums; amateur groups (astronomy, geology, paleontology, etc.); science centers, parks-and-recreation programs; zoos and aquaria; youth groups (Scouts, 4H, after-school clubs, etc.); local and national government agencies (NSF, NASA, USGS, etc.); public libraries; educational radio/television/webcast developers; newspapers/magazines; nonprofit organizations (Earthwatch, Audubon Society, Sierra Club, etc.); and others]
 - **Elementary School Programming** - an educational level indicating a resource represents educational programming from organizations of informal education designed to enrich and support formal education at the elementary-school level
 - **Middle School Programming** - an educational level indicating a resource represents educational programming from organizations of informal education designed to enrich and support formal education at the middle-school level
 - **High School Programming** - an educational level indicating a resource represents educational programming from organizations of informal education designed to enrich and support formal education at the high-school level
 - **General Public** - an educational level indicating a resource represents informal educational programming designed for a general audience, of diverse ages (adults or adults with children) and knowledge levels
 - **Youth Public** - an educational level indicating a resource represents informal educational programming designed specifically for children from the general public up to age 17
- **Vocational/Professional Development Education** - an educational level indicating a resource is appropriate for learners in job-related or work-related professional development, continuing education programs, or skill training

Cataloging best practices

- Use this field to associate an education level (formal or informal), learning level, or training level with a resource.
- Choose the resource's dominant education level(s) (i.e., those that best describe or fit the resource).
- If a resource is appropriate for multiple education levels, repeat this field to describe them.
- When selecting for the Education Level field, choose terms to the finest level of granularity appropriate for the resource. For example, if a resource only applies to **Grade 2**, then use that. If a resource applies to other terms in the broad-group **Early Elementary**, select as appropriate (along with the broad-group term) or simply select **Early Elementary**.
- When using the finer-level terms, like **Grade 10**, always include the broad-group term as well (e.g., for **Grade 10**, also include **High School**).
- Where two layers/levels of hierarchy encompass a finer-level term in the vocabulary, you need additionally select *only* the broad-group term that immediately corresponds to the finer-level term (e.g., for **Grade 2**, additionally select only **Early Elementary**; it is unnecessary to select **Elementary School** as well).
- Use at least one NSDL term. It is good practice to use other terms from Dublin Core (DCMI) or local collection vocabularies as well.
- If a resource is either ambiguously self-identified or exceedingly broad-based, do not choose every Education Level term that could conceivably be used to describe it. In such a case, a cataloger's judgment may dictate the selection of broad-group term or terms.
- When the education level is not explicitly identified by the resource itself, the cataloger may nonetheless select an Education Level term if it can reasonably be divined from the resource's context and content.
- Do not automatically select **General Public** or **Youth Public** as catch-all terms for resources that do not explicitly specify a grade level (see above).
- However, use **General Public** and/or **Youth Public** if it is apparent that a resource creator did not have in mind a particular grade level and if assignment of a formal grade-level term would be inappropriate.
- Use **General Public** and/or **Youth Public** if a resource is general in nature (e.g., photos of sunsets, factsheets, datasets, certain images, certain glossaries), and if grade-level appropriateness associated with the resource is highly dependent on the resource's usage context.
- When using **General Public** or **Youth Public**, be particularly certain to populate the resource Type field as well. In such cases, users will often be more likely to find an appropriate resource via Type searching rather than Education Level.

Use and resource examples

- **General Public** - [Fog Harvesting](#); resource may be used in a variety of ways by all manner of audiences at various education levels, from atmospheric-science students learning about cloud types to informal learners seeking information about land use, climate zones, and natural resources.
- **Youth Public** - [Weather Glossary](#)
- **Technical Education (Lower Division)** - for training in [fire science](#)
- **Informal Education** - [Denver Museum of Nature and Science](#)
- Use **Pre-Kindergarten** for nursery school, pre-K, or preschool.
- Use **Vocational/ Professional Development Education** for professional development, regardless of whether college credit is awarded.
- Use **Vocational/ Professional Development Education** when a museum or similar informal educational institution offers professional development to educators.
- In choosing among the terms **Vocational/ Professional Development Education**, **Technical Education (Lower Division)**, and **Technical Education (Upper Division)**, use the technical education terms if a resource comprises coursework leading to a formal degree or certificate.
- Use **Undergraduate (Upper Division)** for upper-division coursework at a four-year college.
- Use **Undergraduate (Lower Division)** for lower-division coursework at a four-year college or for general coursework at a community college, junior college, or two-year college.
- Use **Higher Education** for college or university if a finer distinction cannot be determined.
- Use **General Public** and/or **Youth Public** for personal-enrichment resources.
- Use **Grade 16** to describe capstone courses.
- Use **Grade 13** to describe prerequisite and survey courses.
- Use **High School** and individual grade levels to describe vocational coursework at the high-school level.

XML tips and examples

- For the best search and discovery, use terms from the NSDL controlled vocabulary.
- When using finer-level terms, like **Grade 10**, always include the broad-group term as well (e.g., for **Grade 10**, also include **High School**).
- Where two layers/levels of hierarchy encompass a finer-level term in the vocabulary, you need additionally select *only* the broad-group term that immediately corresponds to the finer-level term (e.g., for **Grade 2**, additionally select only **Early Elementary**; it is unnecessary to select **Elementary School** as well).
- When using the NSDL vocabulary, indicate it in XML documents by using the 'nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel' refinement on the attribute xsi:type.
- When using non-NSDL vocabulary terms, do not use the 'nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel' refinement in XML documents.
- When mapping between this vocabulary and another vocabulary, attempt to use the finest level of terms first and then use broader terms like **Elementary School**, **Middle School**, **High School**, etc., if a distinction cannot be made to the finer level.

Using the controlled vocabulary

```
<dc:educationLevel xsi:type="nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel">Grade 10</dc:educationLevel>
<dc:educationLevel xsi:type="nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel">Middle School</dc:educationLevel>
<dc:educationLevel xsi:type="nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel">Undergraduate (Upper Division)</dc:educationLevel>
<dc:educationLevel xsi:type="nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel">Elementary School</dc:educationLevel>
<dc:educationLevel xsi:type="nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel">Informal Education</dc:educationLevel>
<dc:educationLevel xsi:type="nsdl_dc:NSDLEdLevel">Elementary Programming</dc:educationLevel>
```

Not using the controlled vocabulary

```
<dc:educationLevel>10th graders</dc:educationLevel>
<dc:educationLevel>4th-5th grade</dc:educationLevel>
<dc:educationLevel>secondary students</dc:educationLevel>
```

Credits

This controlled vocabulary was approved March 26, 2007.