

Chapter 8 Supplement

VRA Core: The Visual Resources Association Core Categories

Questions for Review, Study, or Discussion

1. Although this may be beginning to change to some extent, how and why have museum culture and traditions tended to differ from those of libraries in terms of standardization in resource description and exchanging metadata about their collections among institutions?
 2. In addition to the kinds of metadata elements examined in previous chapters of this book, museums are also often be interested in maintaining what other kinds of information about their resources?
 3. What are some of the most important structure, content, and value standards used by some museums today?
 4. What are some notable characteristics of the VRA 3.0 Core Categories that strike you, especially in comparison to Dublin Core and MODS? In terms of number and type of elements? In terms of structure and encoding?
 5. In what way does VRA 3.0 closely adhere to the One-to-One Principle? How does that related to the VRA 3.0 *Record Type* element?
 6. What are some notable characteristics of the VRA 4.0 Core Categories that strike you, especially in comparison to VRA 3.0, Dublin Core, and MODS? In terms of number and type of elements? In terms of structure and encoding?
 7. What does it mean to say that the VRA 4.0 *work, collection, or image* element is a wrapper element? How does the use of this element enforce the One-to-One Principle?
 8. What are *Set* wrapper elements in VRA 4.0 and how do they function?
 9. What distinction does VRA 4.0 make between data for *display* and data for *indexing*?
 10. How does the flexibility of VRA 4.0 compare to that of DC, MODS, and VRA 3.0 in terms of element requirements and degree of required complexity? As with those schemes, who decides how many elements and attributes to use, which are required, and the like?
-

Recommended Readings and Resources for Reference or Further Study

VRA Core 3.0 Documentation

- Visual Resources Association, "VRA Projects - VRA Core 3.0." <http://www.vraweb.org/projects/vracore3/>.

VRA Core 4.0 Documentation

- Library of Congress, "VRA Core Schemas and Documentation." <http://www.loc.gov/standards/vracore/schemas.html>.
 - See especially: "VRA Core 4.0 Element Description and Tagging Examples."
- Visual Resources Association, "VRA Core Home Page." <http://www.vraweb.org/projects/vracore4/>.

Crosswalk

- "Metadata Standards Crosswalk." 2009. Research at the Getty. Last modified June 9. http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/standards/intrometadata/crosswalks.html.

CDWA Documentation

- Baca, Murtha, and Patricia Harpring, eds. 2009. *Categories for the Description of Works of Art*. Online version. J. Paul Getty Trust.
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/cdwa/index.html.

Content and Value Standards

- Baca, Murtha, Patricia Harpring, Elisa Lanzi, Linda McRae, Ann Whiteside, eds. 2006. *Cataloging Cultural Objects: A Guide to Describing Cultural Works and Their Images*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- The Getty Research Institute, Art & Architecture Thesaurus Online. The J. Paul Getty Trust.
<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/index.html>.
- The Getty Research Institute, Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names Online. The J. Paul Getty Trust.
<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/tgn/index.html>.
- The Getty Research Institute, Union List of Artist Names Online. The J. Paul Getty Trust.
<http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/ulan/index.html>.

Readings

- Layne, Sara Shatford. 2002. "Subject Access to Art Images." In *Introduction to Art Image Access Issues, Tools, Standards, Strategies*, edited by Murtha Baca. Getty Research Institute, 2002.
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/intro_aia/layne.html.
- Harpring, Patricia. 2002. "The Language of Images: Enhancing Access to Images by Applying Metadata Schemas and Structured Vocabularies." In *Introduction to Art Image Access Issues, Tools, Standards, Strategies*, edited by Murtha Baca. Getty Research Institute.
http://www.getty.edu/research/publications/electronic_publications/intro_aia/harpring.html.

Exercises

Recommended Exercises

1. Analyze the examples in this chapter and/or other examples provided on the VRA 3.0 and 4.0 Web sites. Do you find any noteworthy characteristics? Compare and contrast two or more the examples with one another, within one version of VRA or between the two versions.
2. Make some specific comparisons and contrasts among the VRA 3.0, VRA 4.0, Dublin Core, and MODS metadata schemes. What are some noteworthy similarities and differences?
3. Take an existing visual resource, whether a physical work or a digital image of a work found online or through some other source, and create your own VRA 3.0 and/or 4.0 record for it.

Suggestions for Instructors

4. Have students discuss their answers to Exercises 1 and 2, either in small groups or as an entire class. Consider providing them with the examples, or use the results of Exercise 5 below as an example.
5. Give students an image of a work of art, along with some descriptive information about that work, and have them create an original VRA 3.0 and/or VRA 4.0 record for it. Have them submit or share their records, discuss the results, and/or share your own completed record. After completion, share your completed record and invite students to ask questions or discuss the results.
6. Alternatively, create a full VRA 3.0 and/or VRA 4.0 record for the work yourself, replace selected elements and attribute names with blank spaces, and have students fill them in. After completion, share your completed record and invite students to ask questions or discuss the results.