Dewey and the Alien

A story to explain the Dewey Decimal Classification System
One day, while Melvil Dewey was walking in Central Park, he saw a UFO. He became terrified of it, and ran to take cover.
The UFO approached Central Park with a loud noise and bright lights surrounding it. A weird looking creature stepped out of the space craft. Dewey got up from the ground and peeked out from behind a tree.
They stood staring at each other, and then they got up enough nerve to ask. We think about ourselves.
Melvil and the alien looked at each other with puzzled expressions and noticed how different they were from each other. As they stood, they wondered to themselves:

We wonder about each other’s creators: 200 – Religion and Mythology.
People learn to get along together: Dewey realized that the alien's world must be very different from the United States. He decided to take him to learn about our government.
Dewey knew that the alien would need to learn how to communicate with people.

We communicate with each other.
• We learn about Nature and the world around us: Dewey and the alien began to stroll around, and Dewey explained life on Planet Earth.
How we can make Nature useful? Dewey explained to the alien that humans have changed Nature to make life easier.
Dewey explained to the alien that technology has made life easier on Planet Earth. It gives us more free time to do what we want. Dewey and the alien took a spare moment to shoot hoops.
Dewey told the alien that over the years, with all this spare time, people have written poems, stories, and plays.

Nature, nature, always green,
You're so beautiful to be seen.
We mean you no harm.
Yet we use you for land to farm.
We clear you for a brand new building,
Though your fruits are still yielding.
We'll now leave you alone, leave you at peace.
When we come near you, we'll come at ease.
So, grow, little plant, grow all you can.
Someday, you'll be as strong as a man.
• Dewey and the alien had a fabulous day. He invited the alien to visit the library where he worked. Dewey gave him a tour of the library and explained how his decimal classification system worked.

• While there, they decided to make a memory of their day on Planet Earth by making a scrapbook. They wrote what will become history sooner or later - their day together!
As the Alien prepared to leave, he told Dewey, "When I get back to my planet, I want to group all my books in this new awesome way. But, which hundred group should I put my scrapbook in?"

Dewey replied, "That's easy! You would put it in the 000s - General Works. That's where we put encyclopedias because they contain so much information that you can't describe them in one category!"
• Dewey and the Alien PowerPoint adapted from the ThinkQuest website
• http://library.thinkquest.org/5002/Alien/alien.htm
• Accessed on 2/2/08