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NLS: That All May Read

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Location: Material Type

Learning Ally (formerly RFB&D) and Bookshare listings in the Union Catalog are seriously out of date. Please consult their separate catalogs for up-to-date search results.

General Help

Search terms can be single words or phrases. Do not omit words in a phrase. Use Lord of the Rings, not Lord Rings. Try using shorter searches, if you are getting no results. Use the question mark for wildcards. [Information on ordering books is available.](#)

Examples of Author Searches

Use for searching authors, narrators, editors, etc. Examples:

Logo



URL

https://www.loc.gov/cgi-bin/zgate.nls?ACTION=INIT&FORM_HOST_PORT=/prod/www/data/nls/catalog/index.html,z3950.loc.gov,7490&CI=072321

Subject

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped--Catalogs

Accessibility

Free

Language

English

Publisher

Library of Congress

Brief History

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) is a free library program of Braille and audio materials circulated to eligible borrowers in the United States by postage-free mail. The program is a service sponsored by the Library of Congress. People may be eligible for the program if they are blind, have a visual disability that prevents them from reading normal print, or a physical disability that keeps them from being able to hold a book. Library materials are distributed to regional and sub regional libraries and are then circulated to eligible patrons. The NLS was established by an act of Congress in 1931, and was amended in 1934 to include sound recordings (talking books). The program was expanded in 1952 to include blind children, in 1962 to include music materials, and in 1966 to include individuals with physical impairments that prevent the reading of standard print.

Scope and Coverage

In this LOC program, only blind and physically handicapped peoples are provided library services. For blind users there are lots of talking books, Braille books and other materials. For physically handicapped and blind users the materials are delivered to their addresses by post at free of cost. In this program the library extension services are provided to the users in United States. For fulfilling this program, the regional and local libraries help by circulating the materials to the users. In that case, LOC has delivered the documents to those libraries first. The NLS collection includes more than 200,000 audio and Braille titles that NLS provides, many regional and sub regional libraries add books and magazines of local interest. Some libraries loan videos with audio descriptions designed for those who cannot see.

While its extensive collection of Braille and talking books is available in the United States only through its cooperating libraries, NLS provides some services directly to patrons:

- Music scores in Braille and large print, and instructional materials in Braille and audio. This collection, which excludes musical performances, is the largest of its kind in the world, providing NLS patrons with more than 25,000 titles.
- Certification in Braille transcribing and proofreading, available through the National Federation of the Blind, Jernigan Institute. Courses are offered in literary, mathematics, and music transcribing as well as literary and mathematics proofreading.
- Overseas services to citizens of the United States living in other countries.
- Reference publications that provide information of interest to people with visual or physical disabilities and their families; educators; caregivers; and professionals.

Kind of Information

LOC for its NLS program provides OPAC search facilities through its website. The

NLS online catalog is a single database with two interfaces:

Voyager Interface: In this interface the search process is completed in three steps; like entering suitable search terms in the search bar, selection of quick limits from the top down menu which mainly contains material types in the collection. The last step is selection of search type. There is no option for choosing bibliographic fields in the search process. The following screen shot shows it in detail:

The screenshot shows the Voyager Interface search form. It has two tabs: "Basic Search" and "Guided Search". The form is divided into three steps:

- Step one, enter search terms:** A text input field.
- Step two, select quick limits (optional):** A dropdown menu with options: None, NLS sound recordings, NLS digital talking books, NLS books - This year, NLS nationally distributed books (RC, BR), NLS braille, and Web braille.
- Step three, choose type of search:** A dropdown menu with options: Keyword (match ALL words), Command Keyword, Title Index, Name (Author/Narrator) Index (limits not available), Subject Index (limits not available), Book Number Index (limits not available), and Series/Uniform Title Keyword (limits not available).

At the bottom right, there are two buttons: "Begin Search" and "Reset".

The voyager's interface has features to sort, save and manipulate search results as per requirements.

The search process produces a list where some bibliographic details are provided, like author name, title, publication year, location of the material, call number. The title is hyperlinked and by clicking this one can get more detail bibliographic information. The following screen shot gives an clear idea:

-- **Location:** NLS Digital Talking Book Collection

Book number: DB 20145 (May be available only for download)

Personal name: [Boorstin, Daniel J. \(Daniel Joseph\), 1914-2004.](#)

Main title: The discoverers [sound recording] / Daniel J. Boorstin.

Published/Created: Washington, D.C. : National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, L

Description: 1 online resource (audio (37 hours, 18 minutes))

Narrator: Narrated by Maurice Shroder. Introduction narrated by the author, Daniel J. Boorstin.

Annotation: History of discovery written by the Librarian of Congress focuses upon the men whose thi
countervailing myths and dogmas of their times. Also shows how key discoveries from pri
knowledge about time, geography, nature, and society.

Notes: Originally issued by NLS on cassette in 1984.
Digital talking book. 3 levels and 108 navigation points. Analog to digital conversion.

Additional formats: May also be available for loan on cartridge. Contact your cooperating library for more inf

Access advisory: Availability restricted to persons meeting the eligibility requirements of the National Librar

Links: [Downloadable talking book.](#)

LCCN: 2002997952

Text-only Interface: The text-only search interface does not use complex Web page design and does not have features to sort, save and manipulate search results, and some search limits available in the Voyager interface. The text-only interface may be preferred by searchers with specific needs of the author, title, subject variety.

Along with the selection of bibliographic fields the location and the type of materials has to be selected.

The search queries through this above process produce list which includes bibliographic details of desired documents. In this list user can get idea about the author name, title, publisher name, book number of the materials. Each title is hyperlinked with another web page of detailed bibliographic information. The following screen shot shows an entry with full bibliographic details:

```

Author:      Hardendorff, Jeanne B.
Title:      Libraries and how to use them / by Jeanne B.
             Hardendorff. [braille]
Published:  [Washington, D.C.] : NLS, 1983. (Cleveland
             Society for the Blind, Volunteer Braille Service,
             transcribing agency)
Description: 1 volume of handcopied braille ; 28 x 28 cm.
Series:      A First book
Book Number: BRA17492
Dewey No.:  j021
Notes:      Availability restricted to persons meeting the
             eligibility requirements of the National Library Service for
             the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress.
             A concise introduction by a former librarian and
             teacher of library science. Covers classification systems,
             book catalogs, library procedures, and reference books. For
             grades 4-7 and older readers.
             For grades 4-7. NLS/BPH
             Transcription of: New York : F. Watts, 1979.
             Contracted braille.
             Description based on the print edition used for
             the braille transcription.
             78012992
Subjects:   Libraries -- Juvenile literature.
             Nonfiction.
             Braille books. lcgft
Location:   DLC-B BRA17492 NLS/BPH
Control No.: 44262
    
```

Special Features

- Audio book can be down loaded through this website.
- Along with the above interfaces, there are two other search options, namely single term search; multiple term search.

Arrangement Pattern

Relevancy wise arrangement of materials in the search result. But users can re arrange the list by author, title, publication year.

Remarks

NLS is a free library services for blind and physically handicapped individuals, all applications must be based on a visual or physical handicap, including applications accepted under the terms "learning disabilities" (the broader term), "dyslexia," or "reading disability." The certifying authority, as defined by Public Law 89-522—which governs the program—must determine that the reading disability prevents reading regular print in a normal manner and must be medically able to judge whether the disability has a physical or organic basis.

Date of Access

April 14th , 2017