

History Harvest Metadata Example

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with Jennifer Arnold and the *JOTPY* Curatorial Collective¹

Below is an annotated version of the [Dublin Core codex](#) published by Omeka.org. We include examples and descriptions of how we used some of these common metadata fields. Note: This is only a partial list of the available metadata fields.

Resource Template

Omeka-S has a default template for metadata fields. These are highly customizable and you can create a template suitable to the fields that you need to fill. I've created a generic template of common fields called "**Workshop Template**" and explained them in detail below.

Class

Official: A type for the resource. Different types have different default properties attached to them.

Tips: Stick with the general types listed under "Dublin Core."

Title

Omeka Definition: A name given to the resource.

Tips: The title should help users locate your artifact should the artifact and its metadata ever become separated.

- If the item has a formal title, use it (e.g. it would be hard to call the "Mona Lisa" anything else).
- If someone has submitted an item through your submission portal (optional), honor their original title and only correct for obvious errors or for clarity.
- If you need to create a title, then use a brief descriptive title.

Example: Christmas telegram from Marvin Anderson to his family.

¹ The first version of this document was coauthored with Jennifer Arnold, at the time an undergraduate student at Macalester College ('19). Many fields and descriptions adapted from the *JOTPY* Curating Checklist produced by the Curatorial Collective.

Description

Omeka Definition: An account of the resource.

Tips: The description should be in complete sentences, no longer than three sentences. A popular strategy is to describe the item as if the viewer cannot see it.

Example: A Western Union telegram Marvin Anderson sent to his family on his first Christmas away from home while he studied at Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA.

Date

Omeka Definition: A point or period of time associated with an event in the lifecycle of the resource. Date may be used to express temporal information at any level of granularity. Recommended best practice is to use an encoding scheme, such as the W3CDTF profile of ISO 8601 [W3CDTF]. Date is one of the trickiest fields to fill. You will want to decide how best to use it for your project for consistency. There is an open text field for date so that you can reflect the type of date information you have whether it is a very specific date MM-DD/YYYY or if it is "circa 1940".

Tips: Dates typically follow the MM-DD-YYYY format. If you are entering the date manually, it is important to maintain consistency. For instance, the computer will only read what you tell it: ca. 1940 is different from circa 1940, which is different from 1940s. Whatever convention you choose, stick to it!

Example: 12/25/1961

Creator

Omeka Definition: An entity primarily responsible for making the resource. Examples: Author/authors; artists; photographers; institutional authors or producers, such as university or federal agency.

Tips: This field describes the individual or institution that created the original item.

- If there is more than one Creator, you will need to separate these into two text entry fields.
- If the Creator is "unknown" or "anonymous," leave the entry blank.

- In the event that the item refers to an article with multiple authors, it is appropriate to add the name of each individual author in a separate Creator field (even if the list is long); this allows the archive to be searched for each author / creator name.

Example: In the case of Mr. Anderson's telegram, the Creator would be "Marvin Anderson." By the same token, *Hamlet* Creator would be William Shakespeare, toy nutcrackers might be FAO Schwarz, and a bottle of hair conditioner might be Proctor & Gamble (though if you're collecting bottles of conditioner, you're probably advertising your History Harvest incorrectly).

Contributor

Omeka Definition: An entity responsible for making contributions to the resource. Examples: person who contributed a story or file for an Omeka collecting project; owner or donor of collected objects.

Tips: If you are actively collecting items from a discrete community(ies), this field captures the individual that submitted the item to the archive. If they chose to remain anonymous, leave the contributor field blank. Double-check to see if they are also the Creator of the item; if so, hide the creator field by clicking the privacy eyeball. It is important to maintain anonymity when requested. For historically collected items, it will be the individual(s) who originally collected the items.

Example: In the case of Mr. Anderson's telegram, he was also the Creator.

Identifier

Omeka Definition: An unambiguous reference to the resource within a given context.

Tips: This field is most useful for an archive that spans multiple events or semesters to keep a record of the acquisition. You may choose to make this field public or not.

Example: University of Cincinnati, HIST 3064, Fall 2022 or UIC Demo 2022

Type

Omeka Definition: The nature or genre of the resource.

Tips: Recommended best practice is to use a controlled vocabulary such as the DCMI Type Vocabulary, such as Document, Moving Image, Oral History, Sound, Still Image, Website, Event, Email, Lesson Plan, Hyperlink, Person, or Interactive Resource. However, the “Class” field really already does this for you, so you can choose to either:

- leave it blank; or,
- go wild and create your own type classifications

Example: You may want to add a type for “memes” or “telegrams” or anything else relevant to your collection / community(ies).

Source

Omeka Description: A related resource from which the described resource is derived.

Example: A item-level photograph that’s part of a larger

Publisher

Omeka Description: An entity responsible for making the resource available.

Example: University of North Carolina Press, *New York Times*, etc.

Subject

Omeka Description: The topic of the resource.

Tips: Recommended best practice is to use a customized controlled vocabulary. There is a module that will let you create a dropdown menu of choices for Omeka-S.

Example: Our Rondo-specific subject headings include: Architecture, The Arts, Business and Industry, Clothing and Accessories, Community Organizations, Education, Family Life, Food and Drink, Labor, Politics and Government, Religion, Social Issues, Sports and Recreation, and Transportation.

Topic_Interest

Omeka Description: A thing of interest to this person.

Tips: You can change the title of the category if you'd like to something like "Folksonomy." If you are doing online submissions, this is a great category to use for a folksonomy. You do not need to control the vocabulary in this instant, instead leaving it as a true folksonomy.

Example: Someone may choose to tag something "Cats of Omeka" as a play on "Cats of Instagram." You can preserve their humor and see the connections they're making in their head about their objects.

Provenance

Omeka Description: A statement of any changes in ownership and custody of the resource since its creation that are significant for its authenticity, integrity, and interpretation.

Tips: It is good practice to keep notes about submissions as you enter them into the archive or curate the online submissions. You can set this category so it's visible only to other users on the website and not online.