Parts of the Book

Parts of a Book

Books can be organized in many different ways. They might take the form of novels; they might be picture books; they might have fold-out illustrations; they might focus solely on research. For purposes of this discussion, the research or academic book is the focus. These sources typically have similar features and are arranged in a consistent manner. The book pages selected and illustrated here are from one of Google Books' public domain publications: *Some Principles of Literary Criticism*, by C. T. Winchester.

Title Page -- The title page gives the formal title for the book, which might differ from what is actually printed on the cover of the book in some cases. In addition to the book title, the title page might also provide the author's name, the place of publication, the publisher's name, and even the date of publication. The publishing information might not always be on the title page, but it will, in these cases, be on the verso (back side) of the title page. In the case of the book being used in this illustration, the author's title is also included on the title page. The information on the title page will be used to set up a reference for the book in a bibliography. Most reference styles will require the author's name, the title of the book, the place of publication, the publisher's name, and the date of publication for a full reference. In cases where the publishing information is not included on the title page, the verso of the page will likely have that information.

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Title Page Verso -- The back side of the title page is referred to as the verso. In most cases it includes publishing information, including a publishing history if the book has been through multiple editions. The example page gives the copyright date for the book and also provides information on when it was set up for printing. Additionally, the verso for this book also gives dates when the book was reprinted.

Table of Contents -- Books will usually include a table of contents at the beginning that will detail topics covered inside the book in the order that they are printed. The contents might be briefly outlined or might be explicitly detailed. In any case, the contents listing will provide page references for where the materials are presented. The example page shows the first page of a detailed table of contents listing that not only provides the main topic for each chapter but the individual sections within the chapters.
Typical Page -- Pages in a book might vary in layout, in the inclusion of illustrations or other materials, and in the style of documentation used in the case of books that reflect research. Some books might consist mostly of text and have very few illustrations, if any, while others might be profusely illustrated or include charts, graphs, tables, and other illustrative materials. Documentation style will vary depending on the subject matter and the publisher's guidelines. Many research publications will make use of footnotes. Others might use parenthetical documentation (documentation within the text). The sample page makes use of footnotes in order to document sources that are referred to within the body of the page. Small raised numbers within the text are keyed to numbered notes that appear at the bottom, or foot, of the page. A footnote indicates the original source of quoted or paraphrased material used in the book. In the example below, two footnotes are given, one for a source entitled "Critical Essays," the other for a source entitled "History of Elizabethan Literature." Following each reference are page numbers that will direct the reader back to the pages where the material was originally found.
Appendix -- An appendix to a book will contain additional information that has been referenced in the text of the book but which doesn’t need to be incorporated into the actual text of the book. This could include citations to other sources, books, articles, etc., additional textual information that can be helpful to the reader while reading the main text, or any other materials, like original documents, letters, etc., that the book’s author feels help explain or illustrate the main text. In the case of the example, the Appendix includes citations to works of literature and other critical sources related to the material discussed in the book.
Index -- An index is typically a listing of topics covered inside a book. Unlike the table of contents, which is organized to reflect the order of the book's contents, an index is usually arranged alphabetically without regard to the organization of the book. Some books have multiple indexes which might include an author name index, a date index, or even an index of illustrations.
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