

Thema version 1.4 update (April 2020)

The latest update to *Thema* has been published as version 1.4. and as with all updates to *Thema* this one remains fully backward compatible with previous versions. No code has been deprecated or deleted and if you receive version 1.4 codes, but you are using version 1.3 or earlier, you can use the category code one level up.

A *Thema* v1.4 working group started work early in the summer of 2019 and has reviewed all the multiple proposals for both suggested new categories and modifications (the largest part of these were modifications). The WG spent a lot of time looking at the merits and needs of each proposal within the book supply chain and for the categories they agreed to add, the group looked at where would be the best place in the hierarchy to add these codes. The work was submitted to the different national groups and then ratified by the *Thema* International Steering Committee at a virtual meeting in March 2020.

In summary there are 143 new core subject categories that have been added to *Thema* v1.4, taking the total number of core subject categories to 3114. There are also 627 modifications to core subject categories – most of which are just revisions of the notes and some headings, all of which are meant to add greater clarity to meaning or usage of these categories but not to change the meaning of the category. All the additions and modifications are clearly marked on the various documents.

Thema category	New categories	Modifications
A – The Arts	21	82
C – Language & Linguistics	2	13
D – Biography, Literature & Literary studies	8	22
F – Fiction & Related items	8	24
G – Reference, Information & Interdisciplinary subjects	–	9
J – Society & Social Sciences	15	86
K – Economics, Finance, Business & Management	4	29
L – Law	3	17
M – Medicine & Nursing	8	37
N – History & Archaeology	3	29
P – Mathematics & Science	–	8
Q – Philosophy & Religion	11	39
R – Earth Sciences, Geography, Environment, Planning	2	20
S – Sports & Active outdoor recreation	2	8
T – Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, Industrial processes	6	18
U – Computing & Information Technology	5	9
V – Health, Relationships & Personal development	10	24
W – Lifestyle, Hobbies & Leisure	12	51
X – Graphic novels, Comic books, Cartoons	1	9
Y – Children’s, Teenage & Educational	22	93

For Qualifiers, there are 549 new qualifier codes, the vast majority of which are new national extensions. For the 299 new PLACE 1* Qualifiers there are 289 new national extensions (7 for the Netherlands, 4 for the UK, 38 for Austria, 118 for Germany, 32 for Switzerland, 87 for Norway, 2 for Colombia). In the new EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE 4* Qualifiers, there are 68 new national qualifiers (36 for Australia, 5 for Colombia, 18 for the UK, 6 for Mexico, 7 for the Caribbean region). There are 505 modifications to Qualifiers, the vast majority of these are updates to notes or standardisation of presentation of headers.

Thema Qualifier	New categories	Modifications
1 – Place qualifiers	299	159
2 – Language qualifiers	66	37
3 – Time period qualifiers	46	135
4 – Educational purpose qualifiers	89	52
5 – Interest qualifiers	32	31
6 – Style qualifiers	17	91

This revision has added relatively few new core categories but has a lot of modifications. These come from questions that have been asked about the use of particular *Thema* categories or where to classify a particular title, or from remarks or feedback about comprehension of words in English, especially from groups that have translated *Thema*. All the modifications are intended to help users of *Thema* by improving the explanations and guidance associated with a category and do not change the meaning of any existing category.

In this update there are 22 Qualifier codes that have a change of parent code. This means the code remains the same, but it is given a new parent code, so it appears one level down in the hierarchy. Effectively the existing 'parent code', becomes its 'grandparent'. You can always find the correct parent code in the column labelled 'Parent'. There is no change of code or meaning, it is only a change of placement in the hierarchy. As an example, Norway has new regions, that are made up of old regions, so these old regions have become the 'child' codes of these new regions. The codes do not change and remain constant. You can see these by filtering in column 'Changes since 1.4' and choosing 'Modification v1.4 – Change of parent code'. This is in line with what was previously done for the place qualifiers for France and the code for Tibet. The other area where this has been done is in the 5HC section. This kind of modification has only ever been done to Qualifiers and only when the display hierarchy has to change.

The notes are an important part of *Thema*, and all the additions serve to clarify the scope or usage of the particular category. These maybe of a type of notes *Class here:* – these add common subjects or alternative names for the heading to give extra guidance. As an example: **MQTC Creative therapy** – the new note reads: **Class here: art, music, drama therapy**, all of which are common terms associated with creative therapy. This kind of note does not exclude other topics covered by the main heading, as it is simply meant to give examples of some common terms.

We have added a lot more of the guidance notes of the type, *Use for*: these tend to give extra information about the type of works that could use this code. These have been added to add extra information and as an alternative to extending the heading. As an example: **AJCP Photography and self-portraiture** – the new note reads: **Use for: works that present an individual or individuals and groups through photos, including selfies, individual models as well as works on portrait photography.**

We have also added a lot of notes on usage, of the type *Use with*. These give suggestions of using code combinations to create particular meanings. While many *Thema* codes can be combined with other codes, these are to help with specific use cases.

As an example: **YFM – Children’s / Teenage fiction: Relationship stories** – the new note reads: **Use for: stories that deal with all kinds of relationships with others. Use with: YX* to give details of kinds of relationships as appropriate, for example, YXHB for stories about friendships, or YXHL for romance or love stories or YXH for stories about relationships in peer groups.** Here the *Use with* complements the instructions in *Use for* by giving two specific combinations for common terms. Another example of this is **5LKE – Relating to early adulthood** the addition to the note reads: **Use with: FR* for ‘New Adult Romance’ or ‘College Romance’, FP for ‘New Adult Erotica’, FM* for ‘New Adult Fantasy’.** Again, these are common terms in some markets, and it is hoped this will help users find the right codes.

For the top level notes, (A, D, 1, 2 etc) we have added more instruction about what the nature of these codes are. This information was already in the published User Guide, but we are proposing adding part of this information to the notes, as these are the most visible to users and also there are many who may never read the user guide.

T – Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, Industrial processes – Class here: associated skills, trades and professions. Use all T* codes for: academic, technical, specialist and general adult titles. DO NOT USE: code ‘T’ itself, but select specific categories from section T*. Use all T* codes with: other subject categories and qualifiers where appropriate, in particular EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE 4* qualifiers for vocational, professional or apprenticeship style education titles.

Subject codes

In the A* section, there are a lot of revisions, mostly to add clarity. There are a new set of categories under **ATM – Film, television, radio and performing arts genres**, that can be used with any of the AT* codes for works about one of these genres in that area.

In the C* section these are again mostly clarifications in the notes, with just two new categories under CJA* to make a distinction between first or native language learning and second or additional language learning.

In the D* section there are clarifications to make it clearer what existing category can be used for and a new section on Poetry: by form. This comes out of a request from Japan where it is very common to classify haiku and tanka together.

In the F* section, this is mostly about clarification with notes but there are a few additions. There are two new codes under FN to cater for the expanding market for fiction inspired by or based on fairy tales or on myths and legends. There are two new, broad narrative theme codes, which it is felt would be useful in various markets and cover a sufficiently large number of titles:

FXN – Narrative theme: Identity / belonging – Use for : fiction where the identity, or the search for identity, of the main character(s) is the main, or one of the main themes of the story. Use with: other subject codes and INTEREST 5* Qualifiers as appropriate and **FXQ – Narrative theme: displacement, exile, migration – Use for: fiction that has themes relating to diasporas, dispersion, asylum, deracination, forced relocation, cultural transitions, forced journeys, etc**

There are three new FY – Special features codes: **FYQ – Fiction: special features: Yaoi / BL novels** (not the same thing as the Yaoi manga) and **FYS – Fiction: special features: light novels / ranobe** (short – novella length – works of fiction, with manga style illustrations). The third new code for FY is for **FYW – Fiction: special features: game-related** which carries a note **Class here: LitRPG, GameLit, RoLit. Use for: fiction that is structured like a videogame, or features the same kind of challenges as would be found in a game, or is about or set in a videogame. Use with: other F* codes especially FL* or FM* as appropriate.**

In the G* section, there are only revisions for clarification.

In the J* section, this is where there were the most proposals, as the social sciences can have so many different names and concepts for similar things. A lot of work has been done on notes here, to avoid adding too many new categories and trying to give greater clarity and more guidance on using categories with others, for example, the category **JBFA – Social discrimination and equal treatment** has a revised note with examples of categories that could be used with it. There are 15 new categories in this section.

In the K* section there four new categories, reflecting a growth in the number of titles about these subjects. The majority of the revisions are for clarity.

In the L* section, there are 3 new categories and various proposed modifications to add clarity.

In the M* section we have added more detail or alternative names to the notes to add greater clarity, plus a few new categories for dentistry and veterinary medicine.

In the N* section, there are mostly revisions to give greater clarity to some categories, especially those that carry a notion of a period, but where that period has no fixed dates, for example **NHC – Ancient history** or **NHWF – Early Modern warfare**. We have modified the heading and added a new note for **NHQ** to be clearer what this code actually covers. We have revised **NHTB – Social and cultural history** by adding a note that includes some suggested categories it can be used with..

There are three new categories, including **NHTX – Violence, intolerance and persecution in history – Class here: Purges, pogroms, violent repression, cruelties, atrocities, massacres etc. Use for: works that examine these themes in history, aspects of these topics or specific events in different societies, cultures or regions** which could be used for very many history books and avoids creating multiple categories for the various types of violence in history.

In the P* section the revisions are to add clarity to existing categories.

In the Q* section there has been revisions to the philosophy section to add clarity to the headings, plus two new categories for two specific schools of philosophy **QDHL – Jewish philosophy** and **QDHP – African philosophy**.

In the QR* section there has been quite a few revisions of headers and notes to give greater clarity to meanings or to the type of works that can be categorised using these categories.

In the R* section, these are mostly adding greater clarity to existing categories.

In the S* section, there are again mostly revisions for clarity. One of the two new categories added in this section is a general code that can be used with any title about sport that has a world championship **SFCB – World Cups and World championships**.

In the T* section there are revisions to make usage clearer, especially the fact that these categories can also be used for vocational or technical education (to avoid recreating the same categories in the YP section).

In the U* section, there are a few modifications for clarity and one additional code in the UB* section, which is for more general works, to include more aspects of the changing digital world and works about these.

In the V* section there have been quite a few modifications for clarity.

There are a handful of new code proposals, such as **VSU – Survivalism / Preparing for disasters** to reflect growing publishing trends and increasing number of available titles.

In the W* section there are a large number of proposals to add clarity. As an example, **WBJK – Vegan cookery and veganism**, so it is clearer that it can be used for various aspects of a plant-based food diet and not just recipes. **WC– Antiques, vintage and collectables – Use all WC* codes for: titles about the objects themselves, as well as collecting them** where we have added the notion of 'vintage' and try to add clarity about the use of all WC codes.

There are two new travel guides categories. **WTHL – Travel guides: cities** – there is a demand for a way to separate guides specifically for cities from those that are for areas, as these are often classified separately and the PLACE 1* qualifiers do not indicate if it is a city or region. Countries and continents are easier to identify with PLACE 1* qualifiers. The other new one is **WTHV – Travel guides: rail travel** as this is a growing publishing trend.

There is one new code under WZ – **WZSJ – Thematic journals and notebooks – Use for: journals that you fill in, which have some pre-printed text or images to inspire what to write or note down. Use with: another secondary code indicating a subject as appropriate** as these seem to be really popular category at the moment.

There were suggestions for new codes for types of games, jigsaw puzzles as sub-categories of WZ, but it was felt that ONIX already describes products very well and the notion of presentation or format should be in ONIX, not *Thema*. The WZ codes can be used as basic indications but ONIX will give the detail.

We did make a few revisions in the WD section to add extra categories and also to remove any notion of format. It is perfectly acceptable, to use the *Thema* categories to categorize anything in the global publishing supply chain, including actual games or jigsaw puzzles. There is NO obligation to use *Thema* for these, but if a publisher and / or retailer wishes to, they can do so.

In the X* section, there are clarifications to the categories, such as greater clarity that X* codes can be used for young and old alike. **XQ – Graphic novel, Comic book and Manga: genres**, we have added manga to the header to make it clearer this section is for ALL types of comic book. There is one new code **XQAY – Graphic novel / Comic book / Manga: Educational – Use for: titles published as comics or manga where the content is primarily non-fiction and aimed at educating people about the subject. Use with: YN* codes if for young people or other relevant non-fiction codes for titles aimed at adults. Use with: relevant XA* code to indicate type.**

In the Y* section there has been quite a lot of work done looking at clarifications and adding greater detail to existing categories. As an example, the code YB has caused confusion in some translations. It currently reads **Books for very young children, children's picture books & activity books**. This is a main heading and refers to the different sets of codes underneath it, however it was not meant to mean Picture books and activity books can only be used for very young children. The new wording is **YB – Children's: picture books, activity books, early learning concepts**.

To give clarity to usage we have added a new note to **YBCS – Picture Storybooks. Use for: fully illustrated storybooks for children where the narrative is told mostly or entirely through pictures and where any text is totally dependent on the illustrations. Use with: relevant YF* codes to indicate the genre of story, as appropriate, or YN* or YX* categories as secondary codes for stories with specific themes. YBCS should usually be the primary or main subject when used with YF*, YN* or YX* categories. Prefer: X* codes for stories told in comic book or manga form.**

YBG – Children's interactive and activity books and kits. Use all YBG* codes for: children's (of any age group) activity and interactive products; works where the primary purpose and main content of the product is an activity that requires participation and interaction, i.e. something to do or make, whether single use (e.g. press out and make) or repeatable (e.g. touch and feel). Use all YBG* codes with: other

Y* codes as appropriate. Prefer: other Y* codes as the main category when the primary content (story or the subject) is more important than the interactivity. (Detailed format information is always described in other metadata)

The note has been revised to give greater clarity to this section as there have been a lot of questions about using this category.

There are 22 new categories, including a new category, **YBD – Children’s / Teenage: Chapter books (transitional storybooks) – Use for: children’s storybooks that are primarily text, but still contain plentiful illustrations. Usually of a relatively short length and low complexity, divided into very short chapters, and intended for transitioning readers – those moving on from picture storybooks. Use with: relevant YF* codes to indicate the genre of story, as appropriate, or YN* or YX* categories as secondary codes for stories with specific themes. Prefer: X* codes for stories told in comic book or manga form.** This category was added to indicate those titles that transition young readers from picture books to full novels. In children’s publishing these are very specific kinds of titles and this new category is not meant to be used on every novel that is divided into Chapters, sometimes these are known as ‘First readers’ or ‘Read aloud’ or other names.

Qualifiers

In the PLACE 1* qualifiers there are new national extensions from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Norway and some additions for the UK and the Netherlands. The UK has also revised a lot of categories with new notes.

In the LANGUAGE 2* qualifiers, there has been the addition of notes or modifications of headings for clarity, especially for groupings of languages. There have been 51 new language categories added for North American indigenous languages, from the Canadian groups. This is based on needs in these markets. We have also added into the notes for these languages the reference of the ISO 639-2 or 639-3 codes to help with translation and understanding. As an example, for the proposal **2ADWD – Ladin (Equivalent of ISO 639-3 lld)** and **2ADSR – Judeo-Spanish / Ladino (Equivalent of ISO 639-2 lad)** as Ladin translated into Spanish would be ‘Ladino’ but is not the same language as Judeo-Spanish / Ladino, the iso codes should help clarify which is which.

In the TIME PERIOD 3* qualifiers, all of the national extensions have been revised and standardised to put the period dates first (as this is a section about periods of time, not places or events). Also, exact dates are now always presented using the en dash, e.g. **1569–1795 (period of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth)**, whereas non exact dates will have at least one c (circa) and the word to, e.g. **c 1618 to c 1648 (period of the Thirty Years War)**. We have also added a basic set of geological time terms and to allow for shorter periods of time in the earlier time periods, centuries or half-centuries.

In the EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE 4* qualifiers, there are new national extensions from the Australian group, new categories for Mexico and Colombia and also additional categories for the UK and the Caribbean curricula. The top level headers of the 4Z* section have all been standardised to the same wording in English. All the other 4 qualifiers have been reviewed and revised when this was appropriate. There are some new values in this section to allow

for greater detail, for example new categories under 4CP to allow for more detail, such as **4CPG – For Recruitment, Professional Aptitude or Reasoning tests** or **4CPK – For tests of general knowledge or culture**.

Also, in the 4* section there are two new sets of high level categories, under 4CX and 4TY, to allow for some indication that the content of the learning material is for a certain level. These are for content, usually aimed at adults but outside a structured curriculum level or specific graded levels. These are intentionally simple, as many publishers will have their own notion of level, often tied up in the names of collections, and are not intended to be used instead of structured and official levelling, such as CEFR codes for language learning, that are international and can be sent in ONIX.

In the INTEREST 5* qualifiers there are some new categories and revisions. Under 5H* – Holidays, events and seasonal interest, there are new broad categories to cover celebrations that have similar names in many countries. New national qualifiers have been added under some of these and existing national qualifiers have been ‘re-parented’. NB this means the code does not change, but they are now the child of a new code and the original ‘parent’ code becomes the ‘grand-parent’. This is to change the display and hierarchy ordering but does not change the use or meaning of the code and there is no need to revise titles already using these codes.

There have been revisions in the 5L* section to give greater clarity to use of these ‘stages of life’ qualifiers, especially for 5LKE, giving examples of use with the term ‘new adult’ which is used in some markets for the age group from about 16 years to the late 20s. Some other markets use the term young adult here, but this is also used for books for 12 to 16 in some markets, so it is a hard term to use.

The 5P section has some additions for broad groups that can be used with PLACE 1* qualifiers as appropriate in any market.

There are three new groups of people’s codes added under 5PB: **5PBA – Relating to indigenous peoples**, **5PBC – Relating to migrant groups / communities**, **5PBD – Relating to peoples of African descent** that can be used on their own or with place qualifiers and cover requests from several sources.

There is a whole new section under **5PM – Relating to people with visible or hidden disabilities, impairments or conditions**. This allows you to use these categories with any subject code and it was felt these would be more useful, than adding sub-categories under several existing categories for disabilities and impairments.

The 5X qualifier has been revised to give greater clarity to its use in *Thema*.

The STYLE 6* qualifiers have all been reviewed. There are a few additions of new categories, but most of the revisions have been about new notes, giving alternative names for the style, or new DO NOT USE: notes for each top level. The codes that are 6AX, 6BX, 6CX etc will all be reserved codes to create a secondary hierarchy for any letter that runs out of first level codes.

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