

Introduction to Omeka

Juniper Johnson & Ana Abraham
INSH 2102: Bostonography
Prof. Parr & Prof. Nelson



Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

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during the presentation!*

Workshop Agenda

- Introduction: what is Omeka and what are digital archives?
- Review and Discussion of digital projects built with Omeka
- Working with Omeka: navigation, metadata, organization
- Demonstration: Omeka S Sandbox
- Small group activity + class discussion

Slides and handout available at

<http://bit.ly/sp23-parr-insh2102-omeka>



Introduction to Omeka



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Introduction to Omeka



- Developed by the [Corporation for Digital Scholarship](#) (CDS), a non-profit started in 2009 at the [Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media](#) at George Mason University.
- CDS maintains and funds a host of open access tools for researchers and cultural heritage institutions including: [Zotero](#), Trophy, PressForward, Sourcery, and Omeka.



What is Omeka?

- Omeka is a **web publishing platform** for **items, exhibits, and collections**
- Designed with scholars, librarians, educators and archivists in mind, Omeka emphasizes the role of **metadata** in **archiving** and **curation**
- Omeka offers the ability to contextualize items & bring them in conversation with one another
- Omeka makes it easy to create and update metadata using **Dublin Core** standards



Digital Archive Vocabulary

- **Collections:** group of items arranged around a particular subject.
- **Exhibits:** pages created to showcase archival items or collections around subjects, to tell a story or narrative, or convey a specific message. Materials are accompanied by interpretive text.
- **Metadata:** fields or types of data that provides information about or describes data, like the fields “author,” “title,” and “place of publication” for a book in a library catalog system.



Group Activity: Omeka Projects



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Example Omeka Projects

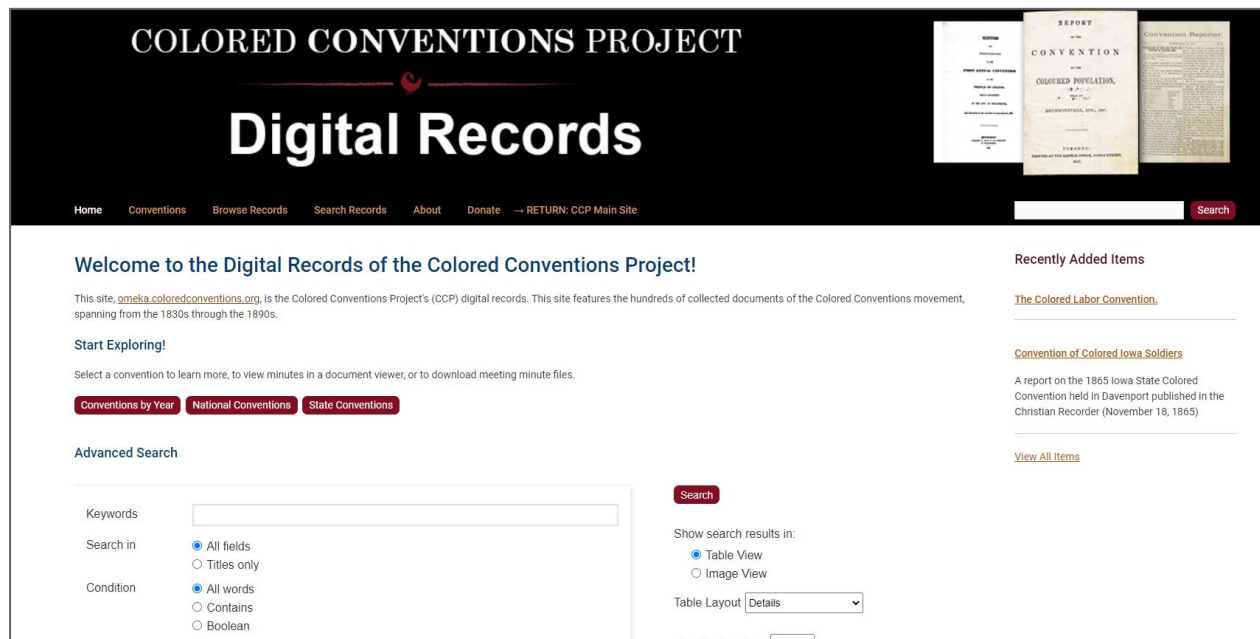
Many different projects use Omeka to organize, describe, and exhibit archival materials. Here are a few examples we will be looking at today:

- Colored Conventions Project: <https://omeka.coloredconventions.org/>
- The Pattern Maker's Vice: <https://patternmaker.omeka.net/>
- Texts of Taste: <http://www.textsoftaste.com/>
- Round the Globe: Travel Routes of Children's Literature: <https://roundtheglobe.omeka.net/>



Colored Conventions Project

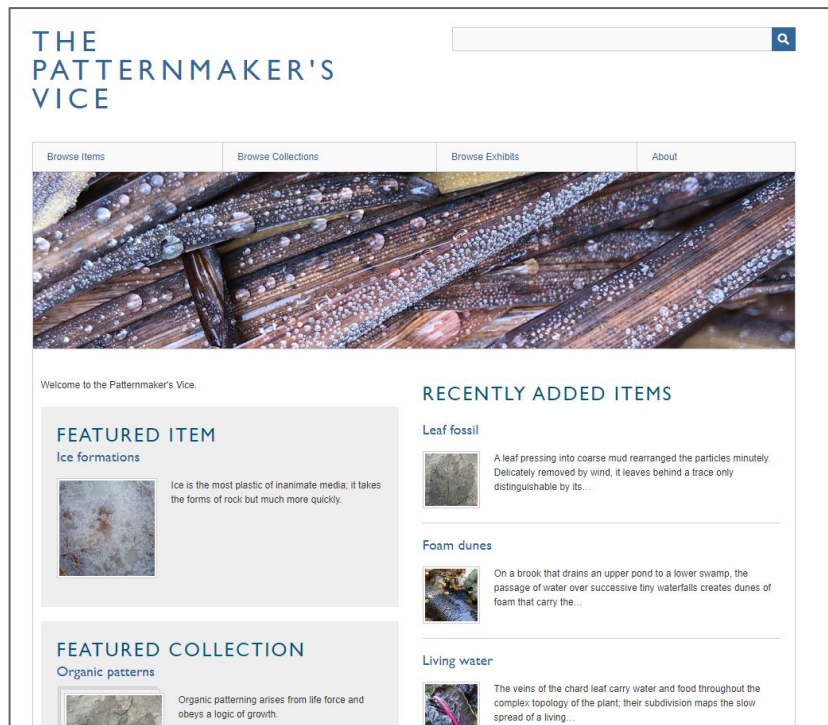
The Colored Conventions Project (CCP) is a digital humanities project led by students, faculty, and librarians featuring a digital archive of the Colored Conventions meeting notes, but exhibits, curriculum, and more.



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The Patternmaker's Vice



The Patternmaker's Vice is a digital exhibit created by Northeastern University faculty member Julia Flanders (Digital Scholarship Group) exploring images related to her work with textiles. She explores the connections between visual patterns in textiles and the natural world.



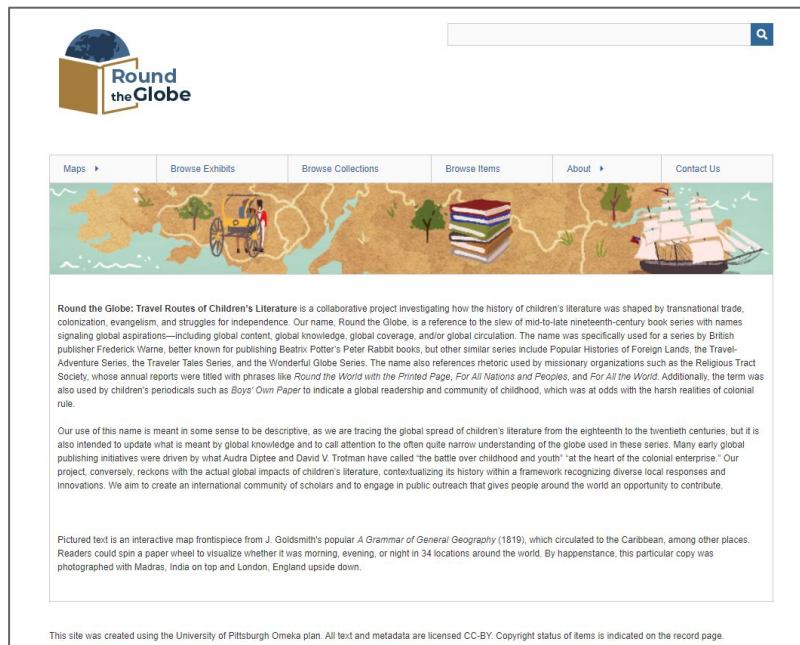
Texts of Taste

Texts of Taste is a digital archive created by Avery Blankenship, a PhD Student at Northeastern (English Department). The archive hosts annotated, marked-up, and otherwise notated 19C American recipes and cookbooks.



Round the Globe: Travel Routes of Children's Literature

Round the Globe: Travel Routes of Children's Literature is a collaborative project looking at the history of children's literature as shaped by transnational trade, colonialism, evangelism, and struggles for independence. The team includes Sreemoyee Dasgupta, Mehdi Farhoodinia, Gabriella Lee, and Courtney Weikle-Mills.



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Class Exploration: Omeka Projects

Many different projects use Omeka to organize, describe, and exhibit archival materials. Choose a project and explore it in your groups!

- Colored Conventions Project: <https://omeka.coloredconventions.org/>
- The Pattern Maker's Vice: <https://patternmaker.omeka.net/>
- Texts of Taste: <http://www.textsoftaste.com/>
- Round the Globe: Travel Routes of Children's Literature: <https://roundtheglobe.omeka.net/>



Your Turn: Explore Omeka Projects!

In groups of 6 or 7, select one of the Omeka projects to click through and explore. Look at the about pages, exhibits, collections, items. When exploring, consider these questions:

- What do you notice about this site?
- What kind of materials are they organizing?
- What information do you notice in the metadata?
- Is there anything distinguishing about the sites?
- What are some of your first impressions and/or observations of the projects?



Omeka: Versions, Hosting, and Functionality



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Versions of Omeka

There are three different versions of Omeka, each with their own benefits for different types of audiences, institutions, and users.

Omeka.net: version of Omeka that includes a free and priced plan options, including support *and* hosting by Omeka (CDS).

Omeka Classic: version of Omeka built for individuals or educators where each site requires a different installation, including separate hosting (domain/URL).

Omeka S: version of Omeka for institutions managing a sharable resource pool across multiple sites or other collections and resources.



Properties of Omeka

Like other web-publishing platforms (like Wix or WordPress), different versions of Omeka come with customization features, like **plugins** and **themes**.

- **Plugins:** pieces of software that add new features or functionality to existing applications.
- **Themes:** foundational design of a website, including typography, color palettes, layout, header and footers, backgrounds, etc.



Web-Publishing Platform Vocabulary

- **Domain:** a domain name is the unique URL that leads to a website.
- **Navigation:** the way a user moves through your website using menus, buttons, and links.
- **Menus:** the collection of hyperlinked pages used to navigate through a website. Menus are usually located at the top of a website or on the left or right side of the webpage.
- **Hosting:** the process or business of housing, serving, and maintaining files for a website. This can be done locally, institutionally, or via larger servers.



Website Hosting

- Paid versions of Omeka include **hosting** and support of maintenance on the CDS servers.
- **Omeka.net** includes a free “trial” account to build a single page with limited themes and plugins, but uses the same code as Omeka Classic without a time limit.
- Hosting is important because it is integral to site sustainability, maintenance, domain URL, project identity.
- **Reclaim Hosting**: an organization used by many academics for web hosting with domain registration. Plans are lower costs with high customer support to be accessible for students.



Reclaim Hosting

Reclaim Hosting: founded in 2013, this organization provides educators and institutions an easy way for students to control and own their domains and web hosting for digital projects/identities. There is still a cost for hosting and paid plans, but it is specifically made to be accessible for students.

- Reclaim Hosting has a discord and very communicative customer support, working to empower educators and projects with public facing, open access projects to own and control their work.
- Supports popular applications including: WordPress, Omeka, Scalar, Drupal, phpBB, Canvas, and more. (Over 100+ applications!)



Tool Demonstration: Omeka S Sandbox



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Omeka Demonstration: Sandbox

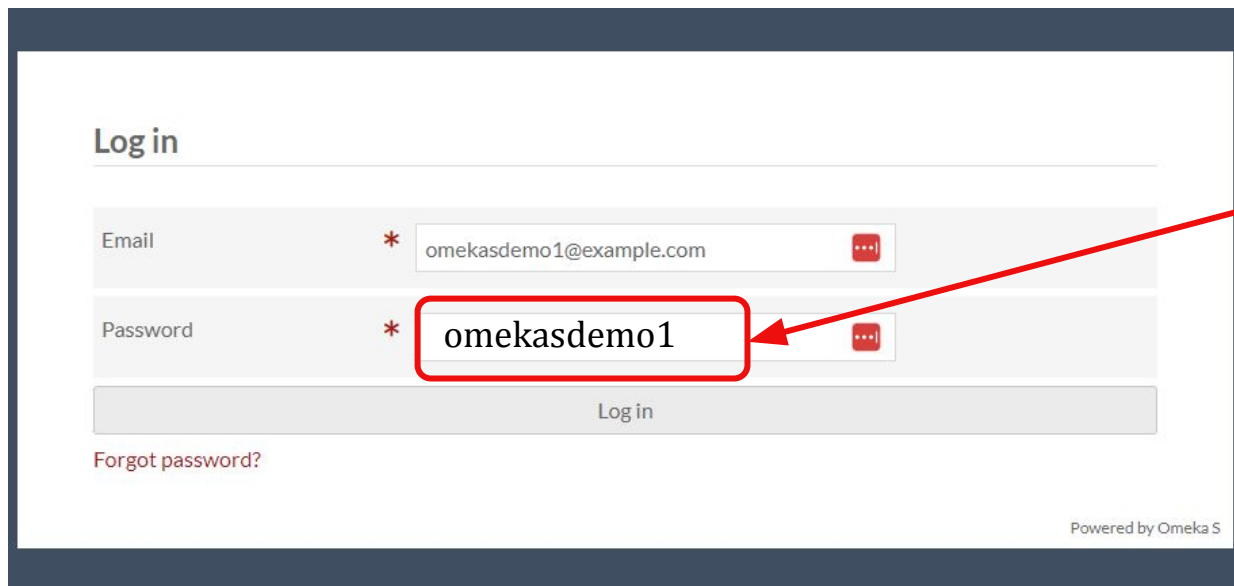
To get a feeling for Omeka, we will be using the Omeka S sandbox, a free platform that Omeka provides to explore the tool: <http://dev.omeka.org/omeka-s-sandbox/login>

This sandbox allows users to test the functionality of Omeka before creating an account. It is reset three times a week.



Omeka Sandbox Login

To access the Omeka Sandbox login, you will need to login with one of the three accounts listed. Here is the sample login information:



Log in

Email * omekaskdemo1@example.com

Password * omekaskdemo1

Log in

[Forgot password?](#)

Powered by Omeka S

NOTE: The password for the demo sites is the same text as the email without the "@example.com." See:

omekaskdemo2@example.com

Password: omekaskdemo2

omekaskdemo3@example.com

Password: omekaskdemo3



Metadata Standards: Dublin Core

Metadata Standards: a shared system used by projects and institutions to structure and understand data, including principles and rules for implementing the description and categorization of data.

[Dublin Core](#): first created in 1995, this standard includes elements to describe items in information systems and is used by many groups.



Dublin Core Specifics

- Dublin Core was created to reject siloed cultural memory and enable radically open cultural heritage data.
- It is designed to be simple and flexible, which has both advantages and disadvantages.
- Fields include: title, contributor, creator, date, subject, description, format, identifier, language, publisher, relation, rights, source, and type.



Dublin Core Best Practices

- All the fields are optional, so you can choose which you want to use to describe the items in your archive; be strategic about which fields you select!
- It is essential to have consistency in metadata fields across your items: both in which you select and in how you fill those in (for instance, you don't want to have "Firstname Lastname" in half your "creator" fields and "Lastname, Firstname" in the other half)

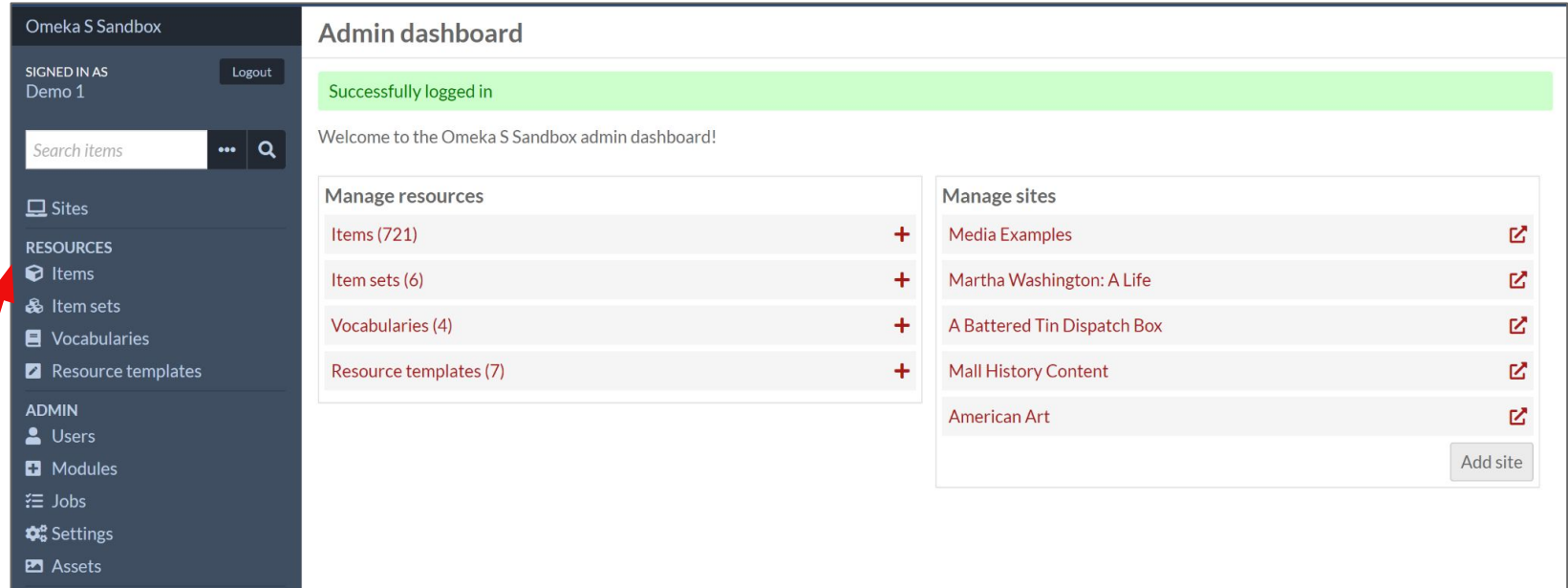


Key Omeka Terms

- **Items:** the different individual files, artifacts, books, or discrete pieces of data added to Omeka.
- **Item Types:** different categorizations given to items in Omeka that can include things like text, still image, person, email, building, etc.
- **Exhibits:** pages created to showcase archival items or collections around subjects, to tell a story or narrative, or convey a specific message in interpretive text.
- **Exhibit Pages:** website pages on Omeka for different exhibits, complete with different formats including gallery, text, file, etc.
- **Tags:** a description “marker” added to items that is used in web-based approaches for managing information across collections and exhibits in Omeka.



Navigating Omeka S



The screenshot shows the Omeka S Admin dashboard. On the left is a dark sidebar with the following sections:

- Omeka S Sandbox**
- SIGNED IN AS Demo 1** with a **Logout** button.
- Search items** with a search bar and a magnifying glass icon.
- Sites** (with a computer icon)
- RESOURCES**
 - Items** (with a folder icon, highlighted by a red arrow)
 - Item sets** (with a document icon)
 - Vocabularies** (with a list icon)
 - Resource templates** (with a checkmark icon)
- ADMIN**
 - Users** (with a person icon)
 - Modules** (with a plus icon)
 - Jobs** (with a list icon)
 - Settings** (with a gear icon)
 - Assets** (with a folder icon)

The main content area is titled **Admin dashboard** and includes:

- A green banner: **Successfully logged in**
- A welcome message: **Welcome to the Omeka S Sandbox admin dashboard!**
- Manage resources** section:

Items (721)	+
Item sets (6)	+
Vocabularies (4)	+
Resource templates (7)	+
- Manage sites** section:

Media Examples	↗
Martha Washington: A Life	↗
A Battered Tin Dispatch Box	↗
Mall History Content	↗
American Art	↗
Add site	



Add New Items

Omeka S Sandbox

SIGNED IN AS Demo 1 [Logout](#)

[...](#) [Q](#)

[Sites](#)

RESOURCES

- [Items](#)
 - Media
- [Item sets](#)
- [Vocabularies](#)
- [Resource templates](#)








ADMIN

- [Users](#)
- [Modules](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Settings](#)
- [Assets](#)

Items

1 of 19 [<](#) [>](#) 1-40 of 721 [Q Advanced search](#) [Created](#) [Descending](#) [Sort](#)

[Batch actions](#) [Go](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title	Resource class	Owner	Created
<input type="checkbox"/>	test ✎	✎ 🗑 ⋮	Demo 1	Jan 20, 2023
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Rejected design for the Statue of Freedom	✎ 🗑 ⋮ Still Image		Jun 5, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Statue of Freedom	✎ 🗑 ⋮		Jun 5, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	 The Wedding	✎ 🗑 ⋮ Event		Jun 5, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	 White House Weddings	✎ 🗑 ⋮ Event		Jun 5, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Mall Weddings	✎ 🗑 ⋮ Event		Jun 5, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Smithsonian grounds neglected	✎ 🗑 ⋮ Still Image		Jun 5, 2017
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Smithsonian Garden Shed	✎ 🗑 ⋮ Still Image		Jun 5, 2017



New Item Interface

Omeka S Sandbox

SIGNED IN AS Demo 1

Logout

Search items

...

🔍

Sites

RESOURCES

Items

Media

Item sets

Vocabularies

Resource templates

ADMIN

Users

Modules

Jobs

Settings

Assets

ITEMS

New item

Values

Media

Item sets

Sites

Advanced

Mapping

Resource template ▾

Select a template

Class ▾

Select a class

Title ▾

A name given to the resource.

dcterms:title

+

Text

Omeka resource

URI

Description ▾

An account of the resource.

dcterms:description

+

Text

Omeka resource

URI

👁

Cancel

Add

Click on a property to add it to the edit panel.

Filter properties

DUBLIN CORE (55)

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ONTOLOGY (67)

FRIEND OF A FRIEND (62)



Your Turn!

Log into to the Omeka Sandbox:

<http://dev.omeka.org/omeka-s-sandbox/login>.

Use one of the following logins:

Email: omekasmemo1@example.com

Password: omekasmemo1

Email: omekasmemo2@example.com

Password: omekasmemo2

Email: omekasmemo3@example.com

Password: omekasmemo3

In your groups, look through any existing items that have been added and try to add an item of your own using a Boston landmark or Northeastern campus building. Consider:

- What metadata fields are surprising to you?
- What are the challenges in understanding metadata fields?
- What kind of tags do you see people using? What kinds of tags would you use to describe buildings and architecture?
- What are some interesting observations you had in working with this tool?



Questions?



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Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact DITI at nulab.info@gmail.com

DITI Office Hours: <https://calendly.com/diti-nu/>

We'd love your feedback! Please fill out a short survey here:

<https://bit.ly/diti-feedback>

Developed by: Juniper Johnson, Dipa Desai, Talia Brenner, Adam Tomasi, Sarah Connell, and Patrick Murray-John

Slides, handouts, and data available at <http://bit.ly/sp23-parr-insh2102-omeka>



Omeka.net Step-by-Step Tutorial



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Creating Your Omeka Account

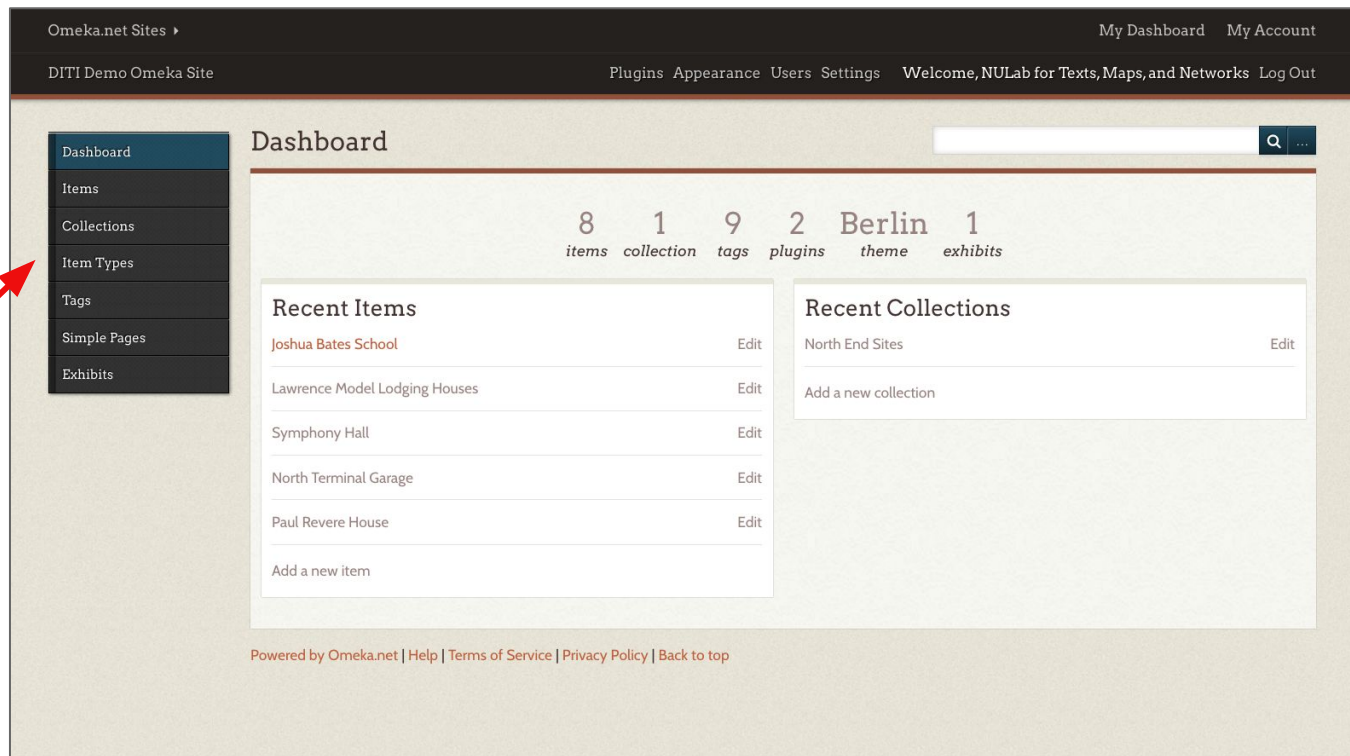
- Go to: <https://www.omeka.net/signup>
- Choose a trial plan
- Click on the activation link sent to your email
- Then, under “Add a Site,” enter a subdomain name (for the URL), site title, and site description
- Once you create the site (with the trial on Omeka.net) you can't set it to private. But you can control whether individual items, exhibits, or pages are private. We will learn how to do that soon!

Add a Site

Subdomain Name *	DITIdemo .omeka.net
Site Title *	DITI Demo Omeka Site
Site Description	An <u>Omeka</u> demonstration site created for use in classes visited by Northeastern's Digital Integration Teaching Initiative.



Omeka Dashboard



Omeka.net Sites ▸ My Dashboard My Account

DITI Demo Omeka Site Plugins Appearance Users Settings Welcome, NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks Log Out

Dashboard

8 1 9 2 Berlin 1
items collection tags plugins theme exhibits

Recent Items

Joshua Bates School	Edit
Lawrence Model Lodging Houses	Edit
Symphony Hall	Edit
North Terminal Garage	Edit
Paul Revere House	Edit
Add a new item	

Recent Collections

North End Sites	Edit
Add a new collection	

Powered by Omeka.net | Help | Terms of Service | Privacy Policy | Back to top

Navigation

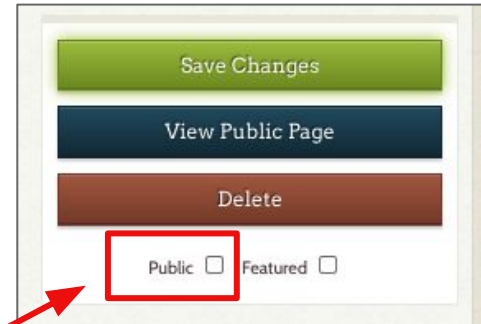
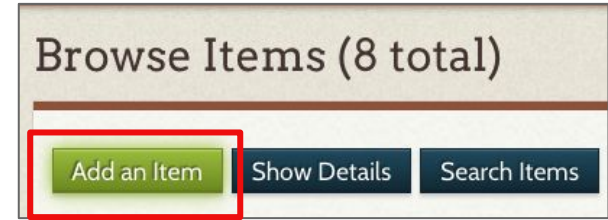


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Adding Items

- Under the “Items” tab, click “Add an Item”
 - You can upload multiple files for one item
 - You can choose whether to make an item public or not
 - You can edit items once they are added
- Then, add metadata!



Adding Metadata

- Dublin Core vs. Item Type Metadata
 - Dublin Core is the basic information that will be relevant **across items**
 - Item Type Metadata is additional information that is likely to be **relevant for specific item types** (e.g. duration for moving images, or subject line for emails)
- You can add additional input fields (for both types of metadata)
- Formatting text in metadata fields
 - If you click "Use HTML" you will get more formatting options
 - You can also enter basic HTML to make formatting edits that are not available in the default editor; for more information on the HTML editor, visit [this page](#).



The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Add an Item". Below the title is a horizontal row of four tabs: "Dublin Core", "Item Type Metadata", "Files", and "Tags". The "Dublin Core" and "Item Type Metadata" tabs are highlighted with red rectangular boxes, indicating they are the primary focus of the presentation.



Dublin Core

- Dublin Core is a set of metadata standards (fun fact: it was named after Dublin, Ohio, not Dublin, Ireland!)
- It was created to reject siloed cultural memory and enable radically open cultural heritage data
- It is designed to be simple and flexible, which has both advantages and disadvantages



Dublin Core Best Practices

- All the fields are optional, so you can choose which you want to use to describe the items in your archive; be strategic about which fields you select!
- It is essential to have consistency in metadata fields across your items: both in which you select and in how you fill those in (for instance, you don't want to have "Firstname Lastname" in half your "creator" fields and "Lastname, Firstname" in the other half)



Adding Files to Items

- You can add multiple files to an item
- If you have more than one file, you can drag the order of files to change which one appears as the key image



Add files here



File-Specific Metadata

- You can add metadata for the **files** that you attach to your **items**
 - In this instance, the item is Old North Church, the building, and the file attached to the item is the image of it
- **File metadata does not appear automatically.** Once you upload an image, you need to click “edit” to get to the metadata.

Edit file-specific metadata here

The screenshot shows a web interface for a digital archive. At the top, the file is identified as 'File #5: "Old North Church fr...'. Below this is a large image of the Old North Church. To the right of the image are three buttons: 'Edit' (highlighted with a red box and an arrow from the text 'Edit file-specific metadata here'), 'View Public Page', and 'Delete'. Below the image is a section titled 'Dublin Core' containing a table of metadata. To the right of this is a section titled 'Format Metadata' containing file details. A red arrow points from the text 'File-specific metadata' to the 'Dublin Core' section.

Dublin Core	
Title	Old North Church from Paul Revere Mall
Creator	Rhododendrites
Source	Wikimedia Commons
Rights	CC BY-SA 4.0

Format Metadata

Filename: 1b101deef1d2542ceef731a9545fe43.jpg

Original Filename: Old_North_Church_from_Paul_Revere_Mall_(36201).jpg

File Size: 11052425 bytes

File-specific metadata



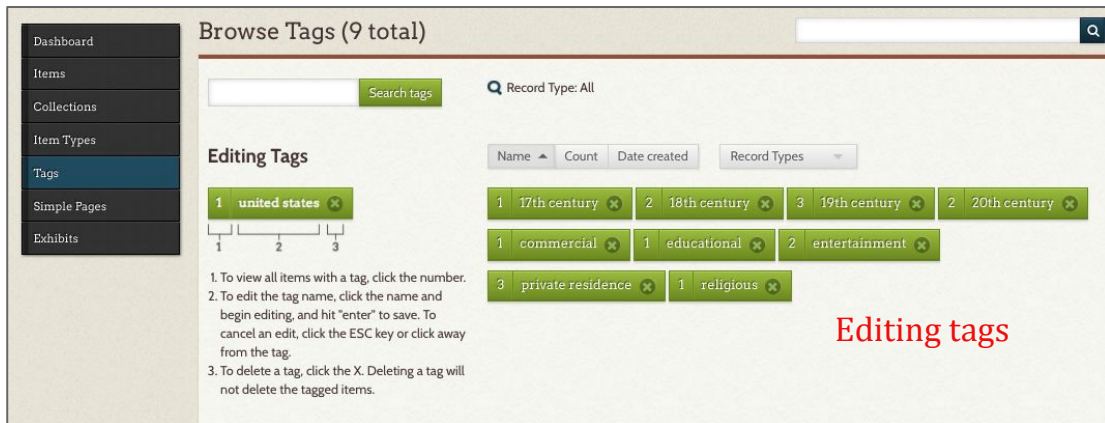
Organizing Items: Tags and Collections

- Items can have **multiple** tags, but they can only have **one** collection
- Origin: Tagging is more of a web-focused approach to managing information, whereas collections are from physical archiving, where every item needs a collection



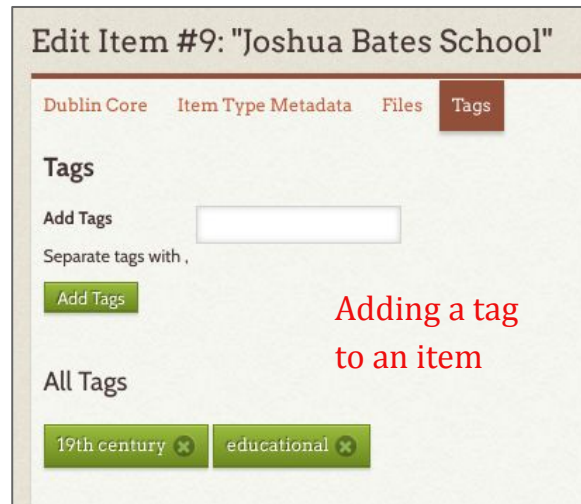
Adding and Editing Tags

- You **tag items** through editing an item
- You **edit tags** through the “tags” tab



The screenshot shows the 'Browse Tags' interface with a sidebar on the left containing links to Dashboard, Items, Collections, Item Types, Tags (highlighted), Simple Pages, and Exhibits. The main area is titled 'Browse Tags (9 total)' and includes a search bar and a 'Search tags' button. Below this is the 'Editing Tags' section, which displays a list of tags in a grid. Each tag is represented by a green box with a number, the tag name, and a close icon (X). The tags are: 1 united states, 1 17th century, 2 18th century, 3 19th century, 2 20th century, 1 commercial, 1 educational, 2 entertainment, 3 private residence, and 1 religious. To the left of the tags is a diagram showing a sequence of numbers 1, 2, 3. Below the tags, there are three numbered instructions: 1. To view all items with a tag, click the number. 2. To edit the tag name, click the name and begin editing, and hit "enter" to save. To cancel an edit, click the ESC key or click away from the tag. 3. To delete a tag, click the X. Deleting a tag will not delete the tagged items.

Editing tags



The screenshot shows the 'Edit Item #9: Joshua Bates School' interface. At the top, there are tabs for Dublin Core, Item Type Metadata, Files, and Tags (highlighted). Below the tabs is the 'Tags' section, which includes an 'Add Tags' input field and a green 'Add Tags' button. Below this is the 'All Tags' section, which displays a list of tags in green boxes: 19th century and educational. To the right of the 'Add Tags' button, there is a red text overlay that reads 'Adding a tag to an item'.

Adding a tag to an item



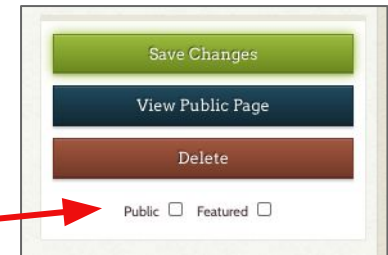
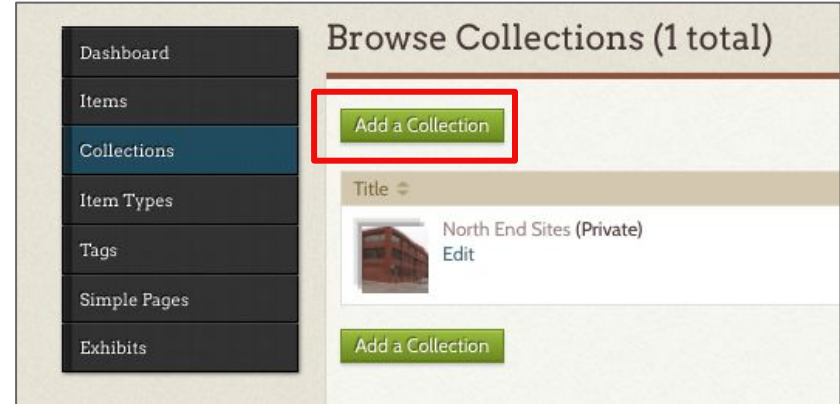
Editing Tags, continued

Make sure your tags are consistent!

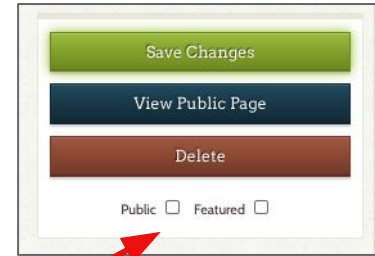
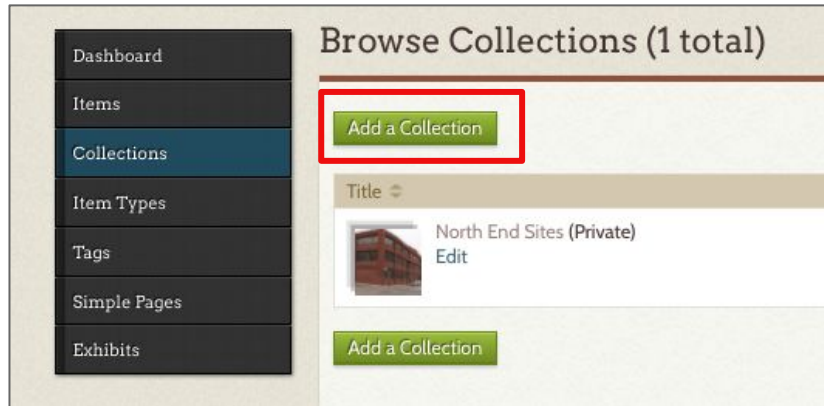


Adding Collections

- Unlike tags, you create a collection before adding items to it
- Adding a collection is a lot like adding an item
 - Under the collections tab, click “Add Collection”
- Remember: items can only belong to one collection
- You can choose whether to make a collection public or not with these boxes

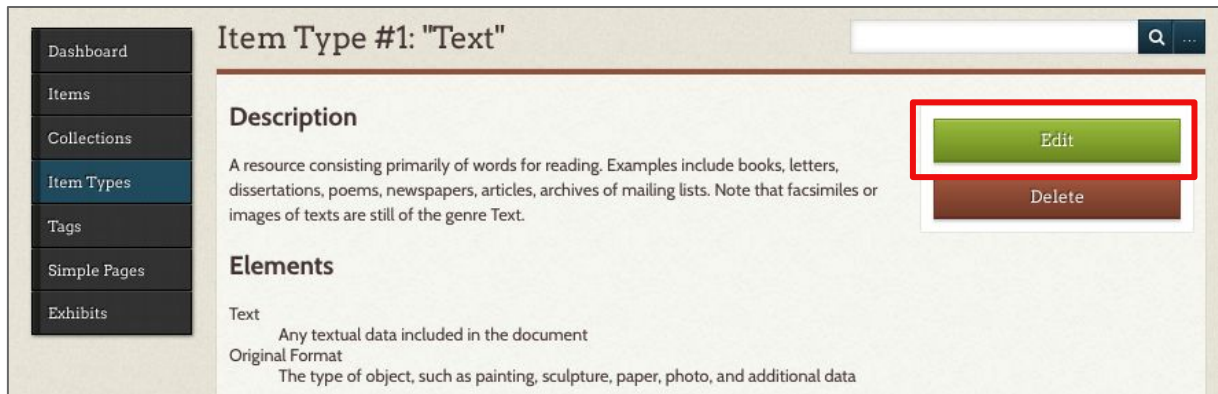


Adding Collections



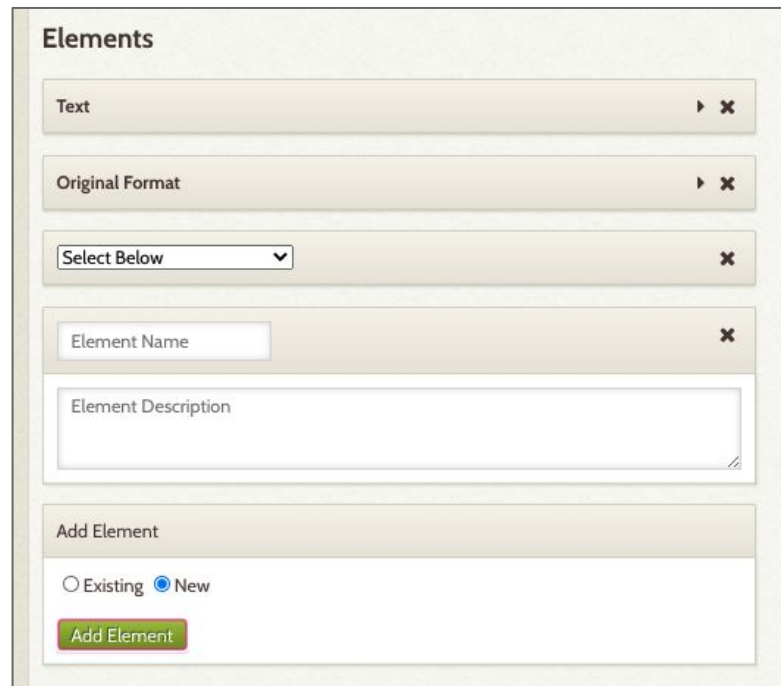
Item Types

- **Item types** are the different categorizations you can assign to an item. These include text, still image, person, email, etc.
- You can edit item types by clicking on “edit,” under the Item Types tab.
- There, you can edit the **description** of an item type and its elements.
- **Elements** are the different attributes of an item type.



Editing Elements for Item Types

- You can add **existing elements** from a list or **create new ones**
- You can also remove the default elements for an item type (but make sure you think carefully before doing this!)



The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Elements" for editing item types. It contains several sections:

- Text**: A text input field with a right arrow and a close (X) button.
- Original Format**: A text input field with a right arrow and a close (X) button.
- Select Below**: A dropdown menu with a downward arrow and a close (X) button.
- Element Name**: A text input field with a close (X) button.
- Element Description**: A larger text input field with a close (X) button.
- Add Element**: A section with two radio buttons, "Existing" and "New" (which is selected), and a green "Add Element" button.



Adding New Item Types

You can add completely new item types by clicking the “Add an Item Type” button, giving the new item type a name and description, and adding elements to it (either existing or new).

Browse Item Types (17 total)

Add an Item Type

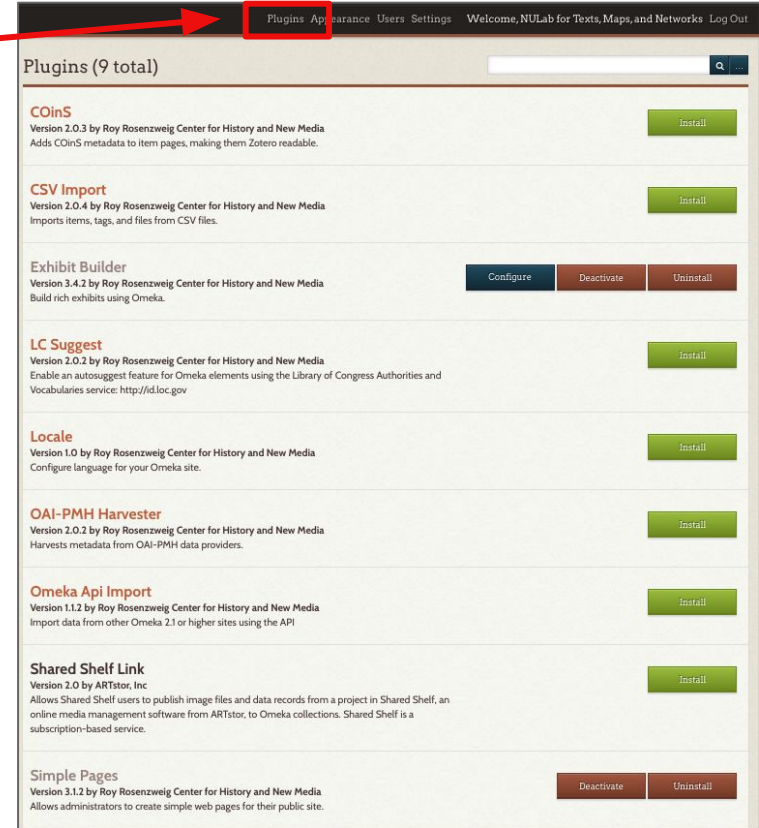
All items have a type.

Type Name	Description	Total Items
<div>Text</div> <div>Edit</div>	A resource consisting primarily of words for reading. Examples include books, letters, dissertations, poems, newspapers, articles, archives of mailing lists. Note that facsimiles or images of texts are still of the genre Text.	0
<div>Moving Image</div> <div>Edit</div>	A series of visual representations imparting an impression of motion when shown in succession. Examples include animations, movies, television programs, videos, zoetropes, or visual output from a simulation.	0



Plugins

- To create **simple pages** and **exhibits**, you first need to install these plugins
- Click “Plugins” in the top menu and install Simple Pages and Exhibit Builder



Creating Simple Pages

- **Simple pages** allow you to create web pages for your digital archive
- To add a page, click “Add a Page” under the “Simple Pages” tab. You can then add a title and edit the slug
- You choose items for your page by entering **Omeka shortcodes** into the text box (you can also use the text box just for text). A complete list of shortcodes can be found [on the Omeka website](#), but useful ones include:
 - [items collection=**1**]
 - [items item_type="**still image**"]
 - [items tags=**commercial,educational**]

You can choose whether to make the page public

Establish navigation by designating parent pages and page order

The screenshot shows the Omeka Simple Page creation form. A red arrow points from the text 'You can choose whether to make the page public' to the 'Publish this page?' checkbox, which is checked. Another red arrow points from the text 'Establish navigation by designating parent pages and page order' to the 'Parent' dropdown menu (set to 'Main Page (No Parent)') and the 'Order' dropdown menu (set to '0'). A third red arrow points from the text 'This shortcode indicates that we want all items in Collection 1 to be included on this page' to the text box containing the shortcode '[items collection=1]'.

This shortcode indicates that we want all items in Collection 1 to be included on this page



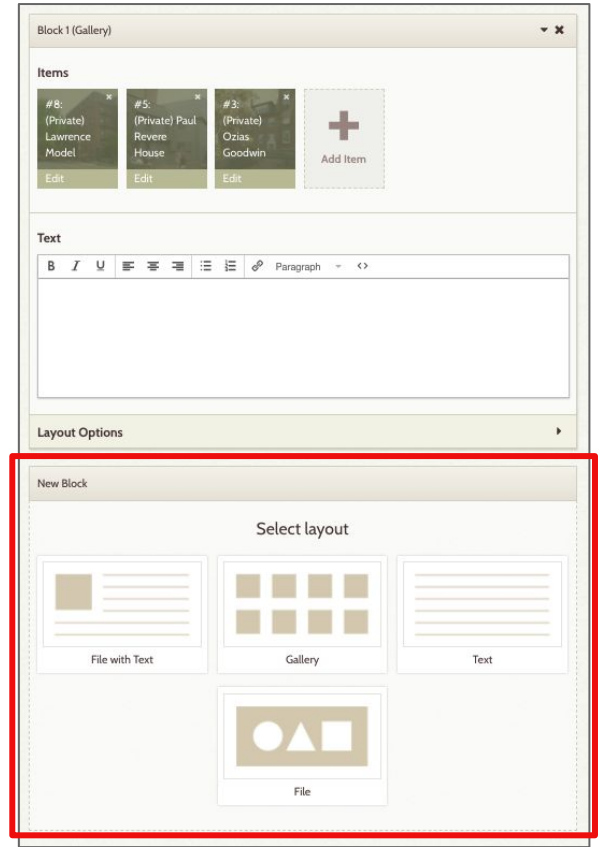
Creating Exhibits

- **Exhibits** are a more robust way to provide access to (and curate!) the contents of your archive. Exhibits are composed of pages (which in turn showcase items).
 - To add an exhibit, click “Add an Exhibit” under the Exhibits tab
 - From here, you can give the exhibit a title, a slug, a credit line, and a description. You can also apply tags and choose a theme and cover image, and decide what you want the starting page to be.
- **You can add existing pages to your exhibit or create new ones**
- Even when you are adding an existing page to your exhibit, you can only establish the **layout** of items on the page through the Exhibits tab



Exhibit Pages

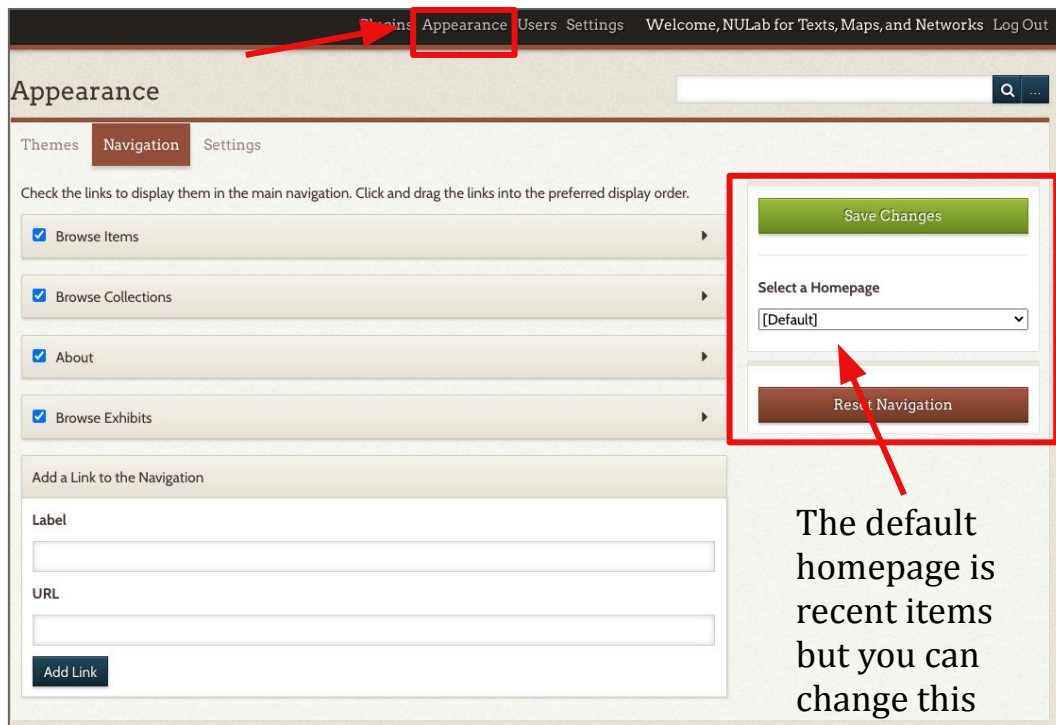
- The contents of exhibit pages are organized by **blocks**
- Layout options for blocks are: file with text, gallery, text, and file.
- Once you choose your layout option for a block, you can select the items to include
- Although some of the layout options display thumbnail images, you are curating the **item**, **not the attached file(s)**, in your exhibit



Themes and Site Appearance

Under the Appearance tab in the top menu:

- “Themes” allows you to choose a visual theme
- “Navigation” allows you to control the main menu bar
- “Settings” offers some display choices, including how metadata appears and how thumbnails work



The screenshot shows the 'Appearance' settings page in the NULab interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Main', 'Appearance' (highlighted with a red box and an arrow), 'Users', 'Settings', 'Welcome, NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks', and 'Log Out'. The 'Appearance' section has three tabs: 'Themes', 'Navigation' (selected), and 'Settings'. Under the 'Navigation' tab, there is a list of links to display in the main navigation bar: 'Browse Items', 'Browse Collections', 'About', and 'Browse Exhibits', each with a checked checkbox. Below this is a section 'Add a Link to the Navigation' with input fields for 'Label' and 'URL', and an 'Add Link' button. On the right side, there is a 'Save Changes' button, a 'Select a Homepage' dropdown menu (set to '[Default]'), and a 'Reset Navigation' button. A red box highlights the 'Save Changes', 'Select a Homepage', and 'Reset Navigation' area, with an arrow pointing to the 'Reset Navigation' button. A text box next to the arrow states: 'The default homepage is recent items but you can change this'.

